

Ascham began his endeavors. While Ascham had been Grindal's tutor and had himself apparently made suggestions before he became officially tutor of Elizabeth, yet it is clearly absurd to give him the chief credit or discredit for Elizabeth's education. The difficulty is that we have greatly magnified Ascham's own certificate of praise, which he himself a short time later tried to modify slightly, though hardly enough.

Writing to Sturm on April 4, 1550, Ascham praises his endeavors upon this royal maiden, the brightest star of all the learned ladies.

She had me for her tutor in Greek and Latin for two years. . . . She talks French and Italian as well as English: she has often talked to me readily and well in Latin, and moderately so in Greek. When she writes Greek and Latin, nothing is more beautiful than her hand-writing. She is as much delighted with music as she is skilful in the art. . . . She read with me almost all Cicero, and great part of Titus Livius; for she drew all her knowledge of Latin from those two authors. She used to give the morning of the day to the Greek Testament, and afterwards read select orations of Isocrates and the tragedies of Sophocles. For I thought that from those sources she might gain purity of style, and her mind derive instruction that would be of value to her to meet every contingency of life. To these I added Saint Cyprian and Melanchthon's Common Places, &c., as best suited, after the Holy Scriptures, to teach her the foundations of religion, together with elegant language and sound doctrine. Whatever she reads she at once perceives any word that has a doubtful or curious meaning. She cannot endure those foolish imitators of Erasmus, who have tied up the Latin tongue in those wretched fetters of proverbs. She likes a style that grows out of the subject; chaste because it is suitable, and beautiful because it is clear. She very much admires modest metaphors, and comparisons of contraries well put together and contrasting felicitously with one another. Her ears are so well practised in discriminating all these things, and her judgment is so good, that in all Greek, Latin, and English composition, there is nothing so loose on the one hand or so concise on the other, which she does not immediately attend to, and either reject with disgust or receive with pleasure, as the case may be. I am not inventing anything, my dear Sturm; it is all true.⁷

Sturm was much impressed with the interest that Edward, Elizabeth, and the English nobility were showing in true learning as contrasted with the Germans, and wrote Ascham a very complimentary letter to that effect under the date of September 5, 1550, saying that he intended to mention Elizabeth in one of his forthcoming works,⁸ and was sending her and Edward each a little book. No doubt these are the two copies of Sturm's little book, evidently the *De Periodis*,

⁷ Giles, *Ascham*, Vol. I, pp. lxiii-bâv; 191-192.

⁸ Giles, *Ascham*, Vol. I, pp. 195 ff.