



# The fate of an early American school book: Leonhard Culmann's "Sententiae Pueriles"

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The Fate of  
an Early American School Book:  
Leonhard Culmann's *Sententiae Pueriles*

Matthias W. Senger

ON ONE of the many occasions when Mme. de Sévigné felt called upon to warn her daughter to be wary of committing yet another folly, she wrote: "But whatever your philosophy leads you to suppose, it's a dreary business to live in another climate with people you would hate to know in this one. 'We belong to all countries' [On est de tout pays] — that is from Montaigne, but while saying that he was very glad to be in his own home."<sup>1</sup>

Her intention was to dissuade Mme. Grignan from resettling in Canada — a thought that the latter had probably never seriously entertained, despite any difficulties she and her husband might have faced. What makes the passage interesting, besides the humorous value of its innate snobbery, is what one might call de Sévigné's error. For, contrary to her assumption, she does not appear to be quoting Montaigne at all, at least not verbatim.<sup>2</sup> Instead, the words she chose, "On est de tout pays," are the French rendering of an aphorism that Latin scholars learned with their ABC's ever since the rise of the humanist primers: "Quaevis terra patria." Undoubtedly Montaigne would have known the phrase as well, even if he never used it in his *Essais*. That de Sévigné should have chosen to render the gist of *Essai* I, xxv, in these words is therefore less a tribute to Montaigne than to the schoolbook from which she probably learned this and many of the other aphorisms with which she so generously sprinkles her reflections and advice.<sup>3</sup> In this, she represents just one example of

<sup>1</sup> Madame de Sévigné, *Selected Letters*, ed. Leonard Tancock (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1982), p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> See Roy F. Leake, *Concordance des essais de Montaigne*, 2 vols. (Geneva: Droz, 1981), where no corresponding entry is listed.

<sup>3</sup> According to the editor, Roger Duchène, *Essai* I, xxv, is the one on which her quotation is based; see de Sévigné, *Correspondance* (Paris: Gallimard, 1980), I, 1256.

the immense influence wielded by humanist primers. It is to the transatlantic fate of one such work that I should like to turn here.

Despite recent advances in the history of early American education, our knowledge of individual textbooks remains nebulous more often than not. Curricula for the period tend to be rather general; surviving printers' and booksellers' records are fragmentary; and copies of used schoolbooks survive by mere chance. However, there is one work that crops up in virtually all studies devoted to the field — a slim volume of Latin aphorisms commonly known by its short title as the *Sententiae pueriles*.<sup>4</sup> When the work was first used to introduce young American scholars to Latin is unclear, although we do have Cotton Mather's word that the "American Corderius," Ezekiel Cheever, had used it when he taught at the Boston Latin School (from 6 January 1671 to his death in 1708).<sup>5</sup> Verses from Mather's epitaph for Cheever document this fact:

'Tis Corlet's pains & Cheever's we must own,  
That thou, New England, art not Scythia grown.  
The Isles of Silly had o're-run this Day  
The Continent of our America.  
Grammar he taught, which't was his work to do:  
But he would Hagar have her place to know.  
The Bible is the Sacred Grammar, where  
The Rules of speaking well, contained are.  
He taught us Lilly, and he Gospel taught;  
And us poor Children to our Saviour brought.  
Master of Sentences, he gave us more  
Than we in our *Sententiae* had before.  
We Learn't Good Things in Tullics Offices;  
But we from him Learn't Better things than these.  
With Cato's he to us the Higher gave  
Lessons of Jesus, that our Souls do save.

<sup>4</sup> The most "detailed" discussion of the work is the paragraph to be found in Robert Middlekauff, *Ancients and Axioms: Secondary Education in Eighteenth-Century New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), pp. 81-82; more typical is the cursory mention given it by Lawrence Cremin, *American Education: The Colonial Experience 1607-1783* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), pp. 175, 185, and 503.

<sup>5</sup> Cotton Mather had attended the school between 1669 and 1674, by when, at the age of twelve, "he had composed many Latin exercises, had conversed with Tully, Terence, Ovid and Virgil, had gone thro' his Greek Testament, and entered upon Isocrates, Homer and his Hebrew Grammar," John Langdon Sibley, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts* (Cambridge: C. W. Sever, 1885), III, 6; see also Pauline Holmes, *A Tercentenary History of the Boston Public Latin School, 1635-1935* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), pp. 130-131.

We Constru'd Ovid's Metamorphosis  
 But on ourselves charg'd, not a Change to miss.  
 Young Austin wept, when he saw Dido dead,  
 Tho' not a Tear for a Lost Soul he had:  
 Our Master would not let us be so vain,  
 But us from Virgil did to David train,  
 Textors Epistles would not Cloathe our Souls;  
 Pauls too we heard; we went to School at Pauls.<sup>6</sup>

With a few modifications, Mather's list reads just like the stock inventory taken in 1700 for the estate of the Boston bookseller Michael Perry. It included "43 Sententias at 8 d."<sup>7</sup> If one should wish to speculate as to when the *Sententiae* was first used in American schools, it might help to remember that the book had been in use in England long before Cheever came here; and since the schools in the New World were largely an imitation of those in the Old, it is safe to assume that the collection must also have been in use in colonial America from the very start.

Too often one thinks of post-humanist grammar schools as places where teachers did little more than inflict endless hours of tedious repetition and grammatical analysis on more or less willing young boys. This would seem to be confirmed by a curriculum such as the one still used by Nathaniel Williams at the Boston Latin School in 1712. Williams writes: "The three first years are spent first in Learning by heart & then acc: to their capacities understanding the Accidence and Nomenclator, in construing & parsing acc: to the English rules of Syntax Sententiae Pucriles Cato & Corderius & Æsops Fables."<sup>8</sup> However, at least pedagogical theorists — and that tended to include the authors of the most popular schoolbooks — were aware of and committed to the role of the grammar school as a "school for life," a place where teachers inculcated the moral principles by which life was to be led. In view of the amount of time devoted to the study of primers as late as Williams's day, it is hardly surprising that their authors should have sought to use even elementary texts to achieve

<sup>6</sup> Quoted from George E. Littlefield, *Early Schools and School-Books of New England* (Boston: The Club of Odd Volumes, 1904), p. 258, italics mine. The italics of the original were suppressed for the present purpose.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted from Worthington Chauncey Ford, *The Boston Book Market, 1679-1700* (Boston: The Club of Odd Volumes, 1917), p. 175.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth B. Murdock, "The Teaching of Latin and Greek at the Boston Latin School in 1712," in the *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, 27 (1927-1930), 21-29 (23).

their moral goals, as much as to teach Latin. The *Sententiae* was particularly suited to do both.

As the full title indicates, the *Sententiae pueriles pro primis Latinae tyronibus, ex diuersis scriptoribus collectae per Leonbardum Culman. His accesserunt pleraeque ueterum theologorum sententiae de uera religione* is comprised of (approximately 1200) *sententiae*, that is, sayings drawn from the authors of antiquity. Expressing his hope that the sentences of the collection would form his pupils' characters as much as their speech, the anthologist Leonhard Culmann emphasizes the same humanist self-understanding that underlies the schoolbooks of men like Erasmus and Melanchthon.<sup>9</sup> As such, there is nothing particularly original formulated in his aphorisms. One can find the same or similar sentiments in numerous other primers of the time. The long success of this particular primer is undoubtedly due to its somewhat unusual structure.

The sixteenth-century school ordinances of Nuremberg, the city in which Culmann was a schoolmaster until 1546, specified that Latin was to be learned by memorization — two phrases at a time.<sup>10</sup> Although this method lent itself superbly to the assimilation of works such as the popular distichs of Cato, its results must have been less convincing in the case of the other type of primer advocated by the humanists: the dialogue, of which pupils would consequently learn only very small snatches at any one time. It is therefore not surprising that Culmann should have taken a "methodological leaf" out of the *Disticha Catonis* and applied it to yet another popular variant, the florilegium or commonplace book. In doing so, he abandoned the systematic structure characteristic of commonplace books in favor of the progressive structure roughly marking the organization of the *Disticha*.<sup>11</sup> His students would begin learning Latin by memorizing two-word phrases, moving on to phrases with three, four, and more than four words. Within the respective sections, the sentences are ordered roughly alphabetically. The insight that led Culmann to choose this progressive method is mentioned in the dedication of the

<sup>9</sup> See the epistle dedicatory to the revised version of the anthology, cited below, note 27.

<sup>10</sup> See Matthias W. Senger, *Leonhard Culmann. A Literary Biography and an Edition of Five Plays. As a Contribution to the Study of Drama in the Age of the Reformation* (Nieuwkoop: de Graaf, 1982), p. 55.

<sup>11</sup> See *The Distichs of Cato. A Famous Medieval Textbook. Translated from the Latin with Introductory Sketch by Wayland Johnson Chase*, University of Wisconsin Studies in the Social Sciences and History, 7 (Madison, 1922).

revised edition of the work that was printed in 1552. There he explained that since teachers ought to adapt themselves to the learning ability of the young, he himself thought it pedagogically a good idea (intellectually of greatest benefit) to take children through the rudiments of the arts by gradations, so that they could move from easy things to those that are of middling complexity and finally on to really difficult matters.<sup>12</sup> The fact that he abandoned the progressive method in the second part of the book, which presents pious sentences to be learned on Sundays and holy days, may very well be a consequence of the fact that there are only about 300 sentences in this part and that most of these are somewhat longer. Culmann may also have felt justified in departing from his original principle here since, in accordance with the Nuremberg ordinances, his pupils would only be learning these phrases on feast days, on which the course of instruction was varied somewhat anyway.<sup>13</sup>

While the pedagogical advantages of Culmann's method are quite obvious from a linguistic point of view, insofar as the phrases are designed to make ever greater demands on the memory of the young pupils, the method also serves the author's moral aims. Whereas the typical commonplace book gathers all sentences relating to one topic under one appropriate heading, so as to facilitate its use as a storehouse of ideas, Culmann scatters his choice of thoughts on any one subject over all five sections and two parts of his work. As a result, the pupil encounters similar thoughts again and again as he progresses through the book, thereby having teachings reinforced as he goes on. In addition, as the sentences get longer, the maxims become more differentiated. In consequence, as the student gathers an increasing number of sentences on any one topic, his view of the world and his role in it fills out.

The importance of the *Sententiae pueriles* and similar collections as works imparting a fundamental view of the world is possibly indicated by an early Harvard examination practice that also offers a convenient opportunity to consider the type of insights pupils would have been left with by the time they had internalized all the phrases contained in such books. The "Lawes of the Colledge published publicly before the Students of Harvard Colledge May 4. 1655" stipulated that "when any Scholler is able to read and understand Tully Vergil

<sup>12</sup> See Senger, *Leonhard Culmann*, p. 58.

<sup>13</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

or any such ordinary Classicall Authors, and can readily make & speake or write true Latin in prose and hath Skill in making verse . . . hee shall be capab[le] of his admission into the Colledge."<sup>14</sup> To test their skills, the candidates were not only asked to explicate excerpts from, for example, Virgil, Cicero, and the Bible (in Greek) but also to write a free theme on a given topic.<sup>15</sup> With regard to this last part of the examination, a firsthand account gives a clear insight into what was expected. On the last empty leaf of his diary for the year 1742 one Edward Holyoke recorded:

[recto]	An account of our Examination the 13 day of July 1742: viz: Foxcroft Green myself and Putnam: . . . in y <sup>d</sup> afternoon examined by y <sup>d</sup> Pres <sup>dt</sup> who gave us y <sup>d</sup> following Themes: Foxcroft: Sapientia praestat viribus
[verso]	Green: myself: Labor Improbis omnia vincit: Putnam: Semper avarus eget:

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I finish<sup>d</sup> my theme the 19 day of July 1742 & was admitted the [18] of the August following.<sup>16</sup>

In other words, if that year was at all typical, the candidates were asked to write an essay on an adage of the sort they would have encountered in the *Sententiae pueriles*. Although only two of the three themes listed by Holyoke find their counterparts in Culmann's work (the adage "Labor improbus omnia vincit. / Hard labour overcometh all things." is given on pages 22/23, and "Semper avarus eget." is rendered in the *Sententiae* as "Avarus semper eget. / A covetous person always needeth." [pages 4/5]), all three reflect the fundamentally sententious approach to discourse that underlies his and similar collections.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Harvard College Records III*, ed. Samuel Eliot Morison, in the *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, 31 (1935), 329. Hereafter cited as *Harvard Records*.

<sup>15</sup> *Harvard Records*, p. 347.

<sup>16</sup> The diary is preserved in the Harvard University Archives: HUD 746.39. Edward, Jr., was later to become a famous doctor and the recipient of the first M.D. awarded by Harvard. He was the son of President Edward Holyoke, who must also have been the one who examined him for admission; see Sibley, *Biographical Sketches*, XII, 30-41. The date of admission was omitted in the text but supplied from the interior of the diary.

<sup>17</sup> I have discussed the role played by collections such as Culmann's in the intellectual development of the young in a paper given at the "4. Jahrestreffen des 'Internationalen Arbeitskreises für Barockliteratur'" held at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, 23-28 August 1982: "Leonhard Culmanns Sententiae Pueriles. Zur Sentenz als einer prägenden Denkform vom 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert." The paper is to be published in the *acta*

One can well imagine that star pupils looked upon such themes as an opportunity to shine with erudition by paraphrasing lengthy passages from the classical authors they knew. However, the more average student no doubt sought to pad his essay with as many adages as possible. Not only was this practice looked upon with favor by even the professional author, it also had the advantage of enabling the candidate to fall back on those first morsels of Latin that he was no more likely to forget than the modern-day student of foreign languages forgets his first dialog exchanges.

If one extends Holyoke's own topic on the virtues of hard labor to encompass the full range of allied themes ranging from *ars* to *otium*, one finds that the *Sententiae* offers no less than forty-four relevant adages that might have left their attitudinal imprint on the mind of the young scholar. How carefully Culmann planned the choice and distribution of sentences is illustrated by the adages preceding the one on which Holyoke was to write. Accordingly, the scholar first learned the useful thought that "Assiduitas durissima vincit. / Continual diligence overcometh the hardest things." (pages 4/5). This received the somewhat startling extension to be found in the adage "Ars vincit naturam. / Art overcometh nature." (pages 4/5), after which the original idea was varied as "Exercitatio potest omnia. / Exercise can do all things." (pages 6/7) and then intensified as "Assidua exercitatio omnia potest. / Daily exercise can do all things." (pages 16/17), before the sentence "Labor improbus omnia vincit." was learned. Looking at the most striking of these adages, "Ars vincit naturam," one can guess what the pedagogical potential of such a sentence might have been for a teacher faced with a group of rather unruly boys. That such a potential would have been used to advantage by any teacher worth his salt is indicated by the guidelines given by that seventeenth-century pedagogue who did so much to modernize the course of study at grammar schools, John Brinsley. The latter carefully set out in his *Ludus literarius* of 1612 how the *Sententiae* was to be used by the teacher in a manner that would not only teach the Latin but would also make the children aware of content.<sup>18</sup>

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of that conference. The quotations are taken from the 1723 edition of Charles Hoole's bilingual edition, see note 42.

<sup>18</sup> See John Brinsley, *Ludus Literarius: or The Grammar-Schoole; shewing how to proceede from the first Entrance into Learning, to the highest Perfection required in the Grammar Schooles, with Ease, Certainty and Delight both to Masters and Schollars; only according to our common Grammar, and ordinary Classical Authors* (London: T. Man, 1612), pp. 142-144.



The appropriateness of the adage "Sapientia praestat viribus." (Learning marks the man.) to the situation posed by the Harvard entrance examination is rather self-evident, and it is surprising that the phrase is not among those included in the *Sententiae*. However, the collection contains a good number of phrases that would have prepared even the dullest candidate for the exam. In fact, there are as many as one hundred *sententiae* that relate more or less directly to wisdom. That the third of the exam topics should have focused on the theme of the poverty of avarice is as indicative of the Protestant work ethic as is the large number of adages (eighty-seven) in Culmann's work pertaining to avarice and its bedfellow envy. Here the crescendo marked by the succession of phrases dealing with avarice and the miser is striking. These progress from "Avarus semper eget. / A covetous person always needeth"; "Avaritia nihil miserius. / Nothing is more miserable than covetousnesse." and "Alicna concupiscere noli. / Do not covet other mens things." to the frightening assertions that "Avaritia infert Dei oblivionem. / Covetousnesse doth cause forgetfulness of God."; "Avari verbum Dei derident. / Covetous men do deride the Word of God." and "Avaritia cor excoecat & indurat. / Covetousness doth blind, and harden the heart."

That works like the *Sententiae* played a major role in forming the attitudes, or at least the expression of attitudes, of former Latin scholars in later life is indicated by two studies on the proverb lore of Spenser and Shakespeare by C. G. Smith. Smith was able to identify an astonishing number of parallels between the adages contained in Culmann's book and the proverbial phrases these authors used in their poetic and dramatic works. Considering that it was no more possible for an American grammar-school pupil of colonial days to avoid this primer than it had been for the English Latin scholar of the later sixteenth century, much of the Latinate proverb lore of our forefathers must have been derived from it as well.<sup>19</sup>

The earliest extant copy of the *Sententiae* was published by the powerful Nuremberg printer Johannes Petreius in 1540.<sup>20</sup> In his epistle dedicatory to Conrad Koler of Crailsheim, the town where he himself had been born, Culmann explains that the book contains

<sup>19</sup> *Shakespeare's Proverb Lore. His Use of the "Sententiae" of Leonhard Culman and Publilius Syrus* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), and *Spenser's Proverb Lore. With Special Reference to His Use of the "Sententiae" of Leonhard Culman and Publilius Syrus* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

<sup>20</sup> See Senger, *Leonhard Culmann*, p. 54.

adages collected by him for his own teaching.<sup>21</sup> As is typical of textbooks, it has been possible to trace the bibliographical history of the *Sententiae* only to a certain extent. However, from the evidence brought to light by a census taken on the basis of the National Union Catalogue and among more than three hundred libraries internationally, it is clear that the book quickly became popular, being reprinted as far away as Antwerp only two years after the Nuremberg impression of 1540.<sup>22</sup>

It is difficult to say when Culmann's work was first used in England. Although it seems probable that it may have been among the books brought back by the returning Protestant exiles, who instituted a general reform of the grammar schools at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth I, it is not likely that it was brought back by the most famous of them, Roger Ascham, who was strongly opposed to primers of this type.<sup>23</sup> Internal evidence makes it likely that it was an Antwerp edition on which later English editions were based.<sup>24</sup> The oldest surviving dated monolingual (Latin) edition of the *Sententiae* is the Cambridge University Press edition of 1633, preserved in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, but the successful London printer Henry Bynneman had entered the work in the Register of the Company of Stationers, along with other schoolbooks he printed, as early as 1569 or 1570.<sup>25</sup> We also have a copy of an edition in English printed in 1612, on which more below.

<sup>21</sup> According to the 1543 edition by Valentin Otmar, Augsburg, fol. A1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> This edition was published by Antonius Dumaëus and is preserved in the University Library at Heidelberg. For a full listing of extant copies of the work, see Senger, *Leonhard Culmann*, pp. 727-737.

<sup>23</sup> See Joan Simon, *Education and Society in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 316-332; see also Lawrence V. Ryan, *Roger Ascham* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963), pp. 266-267.

<sup>24</sup> This is indicated by certain common differences between these and the German editions I consulted. The former do not contain the verses from Ovid's *Ars amatoria* otherwise appended at the end of the work and also change the title of the second part from "Sententiae sacrae pro trivialibus scholis et Christianis collectae, festibus diebus iuventuti literariae praeponendae" to the shorter version "Sententiae sacrae festis diebus iuventuti literariae praeponendae."

<sup>25</sup> See *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640 A.D.*, ed. Edward Arber (London, 1875), I, 418; on Bynneman, see *A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of Foreign Printers of English Books, 1557-1640*, ed. Ronald McKerrow (London: Blades, Ernst & Blades, 1910), pp. 59-60. Katharine Pantzer of the Houghton Library, who is presently preparing volume one of the revised edition of A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave's *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland,*

The dissemination of the *Sententiae* undoubtedly received a severe blow in 1550, when it was included among schoolbooks prohibited in the emperor's Catholic estates, "so that no curious person might accidentally, by virtue of error or ignorance, mistake troublesome books for good ones, impious works for pious ones, or heretical works for Christian ones."<sup>26</sup> It may have been this prohibition that prompted Culmann to republish the work under the title *Sententiae veterum sapientum morales* in 1552.<sup>27</sup> However, that version does not appear to have been able to compete with the original. Only eleven editions printed before 1584 have survived. The last dated German edition of the original title so far traced was also printed in Nuremberg, by Abraham Wagenmann in 1622; but the work's popularity had apparently already declined some thirty years before.<sup>28</sup> That would have coincided with the rise in popularity of bilingual collections of proverbs indicated by Karl Goedeke for the last quarter of the sixteenth century.<sup>29</sup> Paradoxically, the same development ensured the work's long survival in the English-speaking world.

In 1612, the year in which he praised the *Sententiae* as an ideal text for beginners in his *Ludus literarius*, John Brinsley brought out his own "grammaticall translation," which was to be used parallel with the Latin text. Brinsley's expressed hope for his book was that it would entail "a perpetuall benefit to come to all schools and good learning; in setting all the younger sort in the high way, and guiding them by the hand how to study & proceed almost of themselves to go through all their first usuall Authors with much certainty, pleasant delight, and double fruit, and that almost in one half of the time which is ordinarily spent in them."<sup>30</sup> And certainly his claim (Fig. 1)

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and Ireland 1475-1640, kindly informed me that the Trinity College, Dublin, fragment of the *Sententiae* (STC 6106.3) probably belongs to a London (?) edition of about 1600.

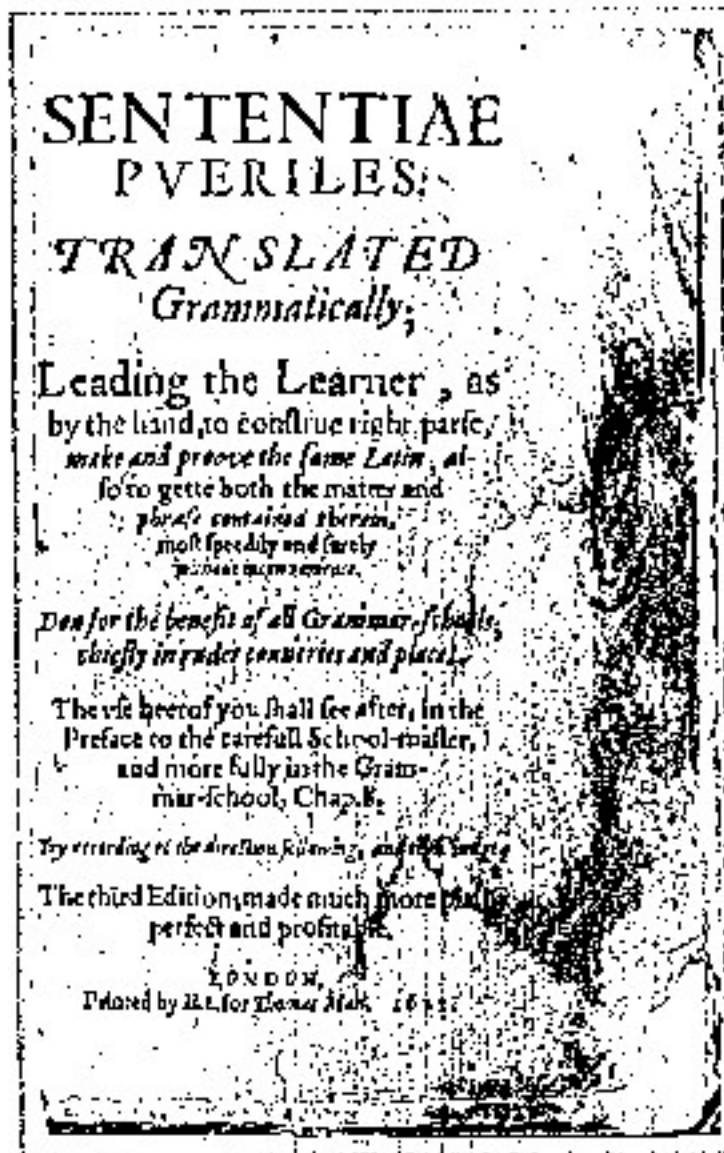
<sup>26</sup> Quoted from Senger, *Leonhard Culmann*, p. 58.

<sup>27</sup> The full title of this version is *Sententiae veterum sapientum morales pro primis latinae linguae tyronibus. Iam denuo auctae. His accesserunt pleraeque veterum theologorum sententiae de vera religione* (Nuremberg: Johanna Petreius, 1552).

<sup>28</sup> The only evidence of an edition between Wagenmann's and the one printed by Abraham Landberg in Leipzig (1589) is the listing of a 1607 Leipzig edition in Paulus Bolduanus, *Bibliotheca philosophica, sive: elenchus scriptorum atque philologicorum illustrium* (Jena, 1616), p. 607.

<sup>29</sup> Karl Goedeke, *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung aus den Quellen*, 2nd ed. (1886; rpt. Nendeln: Kraus, 1975), II, 15-17.

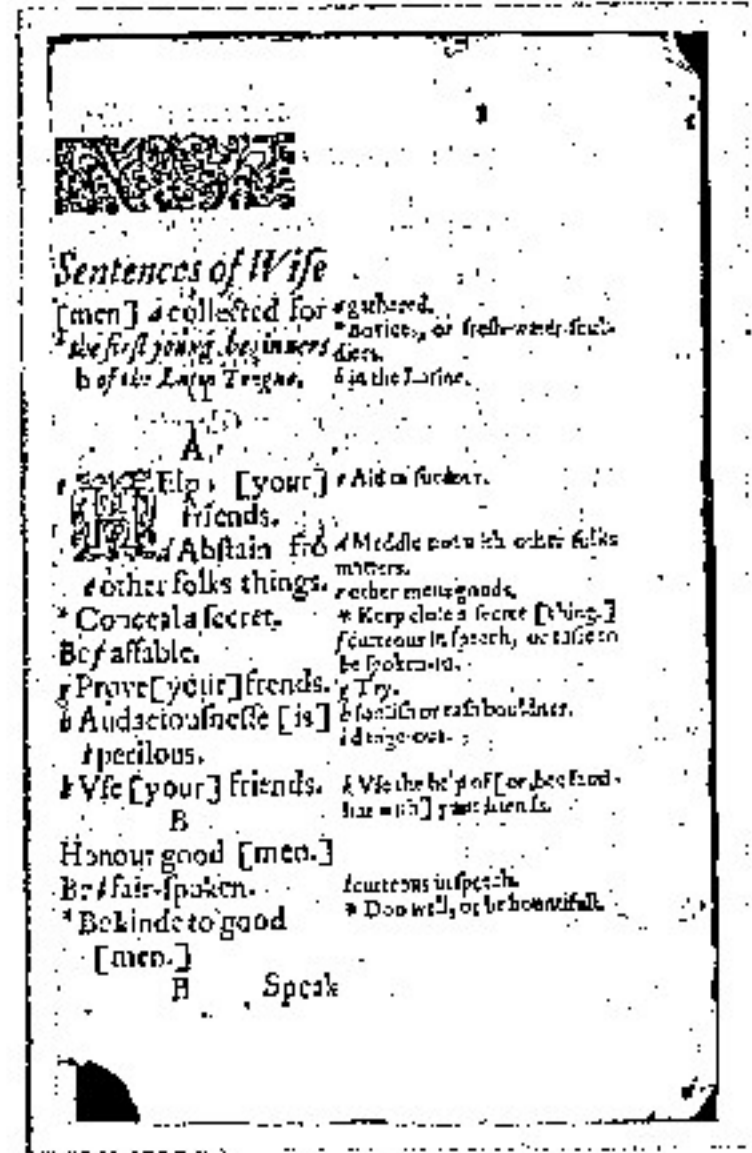
<sup>30</sup> Quoted from *Sententiae pueriles: Translated Grammatically*, 3rd ed. (London: H. L. for T. Man, 1622), fol. A3r.



Houghton Library

FIG. 1

(Type area of original: 13 x 6.5 cm.)



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FIG. 2

(Type area of original: 12.3 x 7.9 cm.)

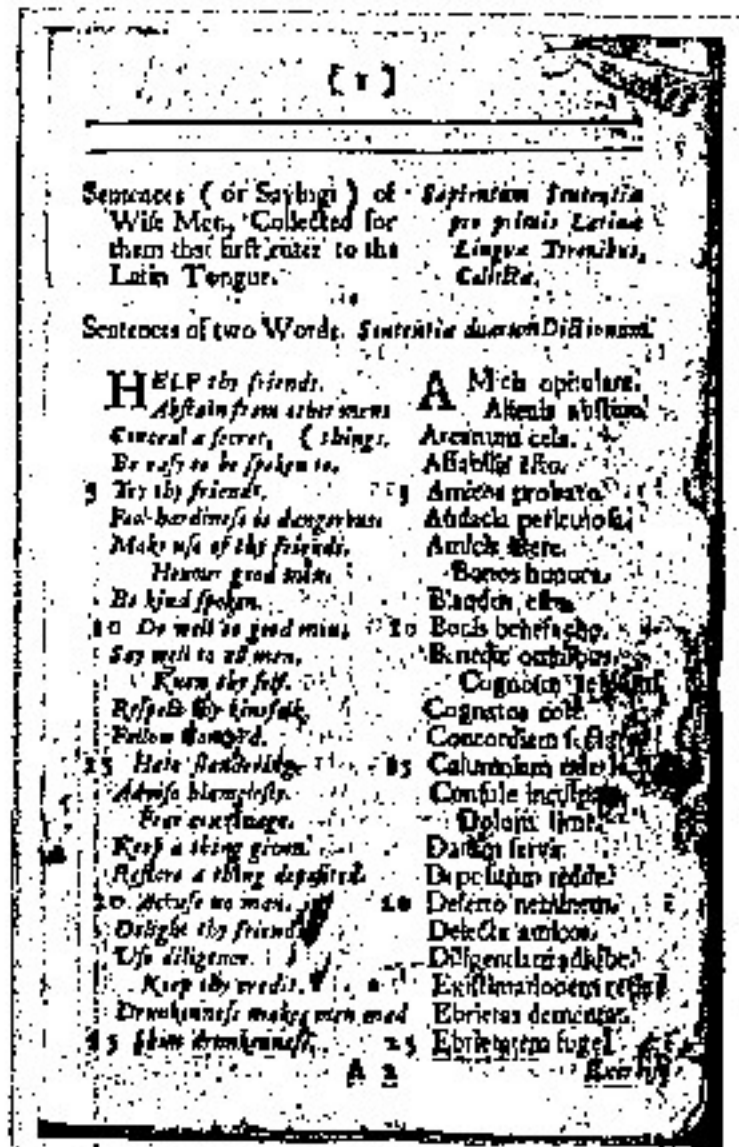
that it would lead "the Learner, as by the hand, to construe right, parse, make and prove the same Latin, also to gette both the matter and phrase contained therein, speedily and surely without inconvenience" was ambitious enough.<sup>31</sup> Despite the fact that his somewhat awkward effort, involving complicated glosses and curiously Latinate formulations (Fig. 2), probably did little to facilitate the process of teaching young boys Latin, his edition received at least two further impressions in 1613 and 1622, both printed, as the first edition had been, by H[ugh] L[ownes] for T[homas] Man.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Quoted from the title page of the third edition.

<sup>32</sup> The original entry in the Register of the Company of Stationers was made on behalf of three other printers besides Man: John Norton, William Leake, and Thomas Adams (6 February 1612, see Arber, *Transcript*, III, 476), an indication that the project had been considered an investment of some importance from the start. It is unclear whether the work continued to be reprinted after 1622. However, Man's partial rights to the work were still being traded as late as 27 March 1637, when Benjamin Fisher, to whom they had passed in the meantime, mortgaged his share to Robert Young (see Arber, *Transcript*, IV, 379).

A second attempt, commercially much more successful than Brinsley's, was made by another of the great English pedagogues of the seventeenth century, Charles Hoole, who was quite prolific in the production of bilingual primers.<sup>33</sup> Besides his edition of the *Sententiae pueriles*, which first appeared in 1658 under the auspices of the Company of Stationers, Hoole was also responsible for no fewer than seven other similar editions, including the ones of Cato's distichs, Mathurin Cordierius's *Colloquia*, and Aesop's fables, that were later probably also used at the Boston Latin School.<sup>34</sup> His edition of the *Sententiae* continued to be reprinted in England at least until 1744, when it was brought out by C[harles] Ackers (London).<sup>35</sup> After that date, we have evidence of two further London editions of the work. However, these were printed exclusively in Latin. The last extant edition came from the press of M[ary] Harrison in 1771.<sup>36</sup>

The difference between Hoole's translations and Brinsley's earlier renderings can, no doubt, be attributed to the fundamental difference in what the two were trying to achieve. Whereas Brinsley drew attention to differences in grammar and syntax, Hoole focused on the adages' moral content. This laid him open to later criticism that he had abandoned accuracy in a manner that contradicted



Houghton Library

FIG. 3 From *Sententiae Pueriles* (Boston, 1702)

(Type area of original: 12.8 x 7.1 cm.)

<sup>33</sup> See Holmes, *Tercentenary History*, pp. 312-313; on Hoole, see *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917), IX, 1193-1194. The British Library has a copy of the first edition: 12934.a.4.

<sup>34</sup> See note 8.

<sup>35</sup> A copy is preserved in the St. Louis University Library, St. Louis, Mo.

<sup>36</sup> A copy of this edition is preserved in the Brown University Library, Providence, R.I. A copy of the previous edition, by John Hayes, Cambridge, England, 1751, is preserved in the Harvard University Library: EducT 20917.51.3.

the purported linguistic aim of bilingual texts.<sup>37</sup> However, it demonstrates that linguistic instruction did not inevitably have to get into conflict with the emphasis on content so necessary if instruction was to pursue the moral goals of the grammar school. If one can draw an inference from the layout of the work, according to which the English text is on the left side while the Latin is on the right (Fig. 3), Hoole also instituted a considerable didactic change through his works. Presumably, students using his editions would read the English first and only then go on to the Latin. This change would have made the *Sententiae* even more conducive to the inculcation of proper morals.

During the early years of American education, copies of the *Sententiae*, as of other school books, were imported from England to be sold to school masters and to the local ministers and town clerks who took on individual pupils in the smaller settlements.<sup>38</sup> It would hardly have been possible for the colonial printing industry to attempt to compete with English printers for books that could be imported at quite low prices as long as the market was as limited as it must have been for Latin primers during the seventeenth century. In 1682, one copy of the *Sententiae* apparently cost 1 s. 0 d., while the wholesale price of 100 copies was £2.5.10 in 1685.<sup>39</sup> The appearance of an American edition in 1702 is a sign of no small importance both for the state of American education and for the popularity of the *Sententiae* in schools. According to G. E. Littlefield, the anthology is one of the earliest American schoolbooks.<sup>40</sup> The edition concerned (Fig. 4) was printed by the Boston printers John Allen and Bartholomew Green, "the most distinguished American printer from 1690 to 1730"; its publisher was Samuel Phillips.<sup>41</sup> An even more formi-

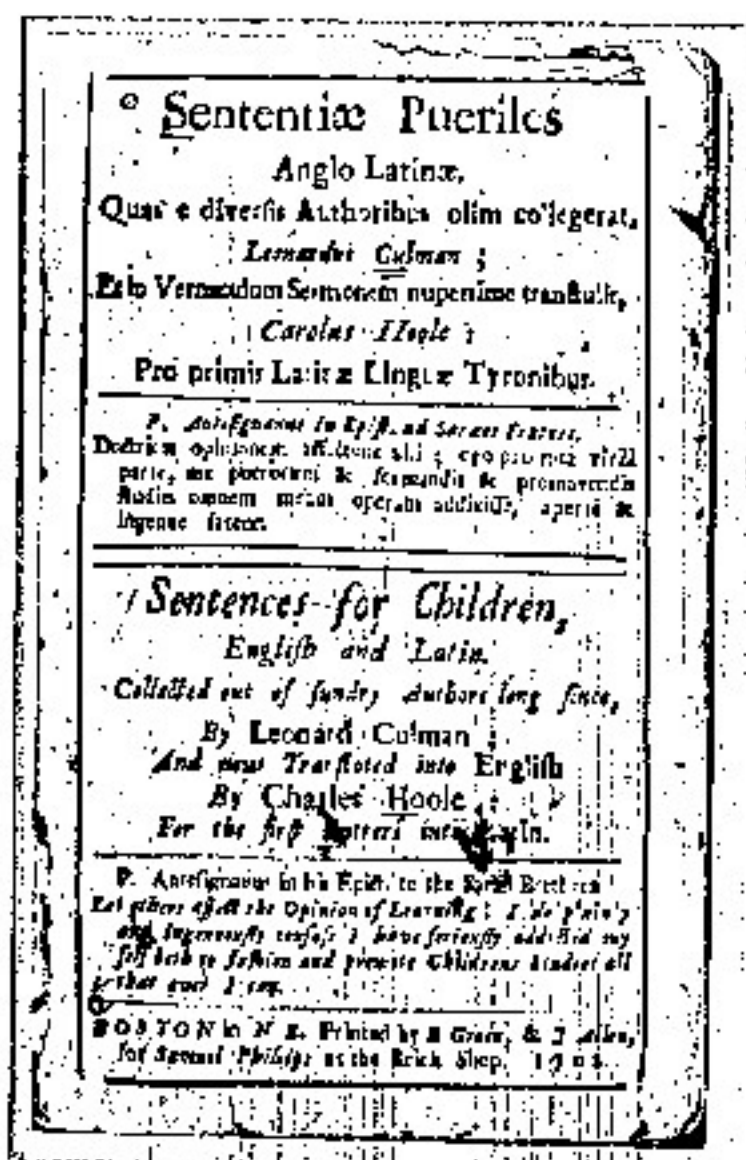
<sup>37</sup> See John Clarke, *An Essay upon the Education of Youth in Grammar-Schools. In which the Vulgar Method of Teaching is examined, and a New one proposed* (London: Printed for John Wyat at the Rose in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1720), who writes: "Hool has indeed translated *Cordery* and *Aesop's Fables*, but then he has frequently departed from the Letter of the *Latin* (which the honest Man takes Care to give the Reader Notice of in the Title Page, for fear his Folly should be over-look'd) and has by that Means render'd his *Translations* in great measure useless" (pp. 32-33).

<sup>38</sup> See Samuel E. Morison, *Three Centuries of Harvard, 1636-1936* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), p. 26; see also Holmes, *Tercentenary History*, p. 313.

<sup>39</sup> See Ford, *Boston Book Market*, pp. 86 and 141.

<sup>40</sup> See Littlefield, *Early Schools*, p. 245.

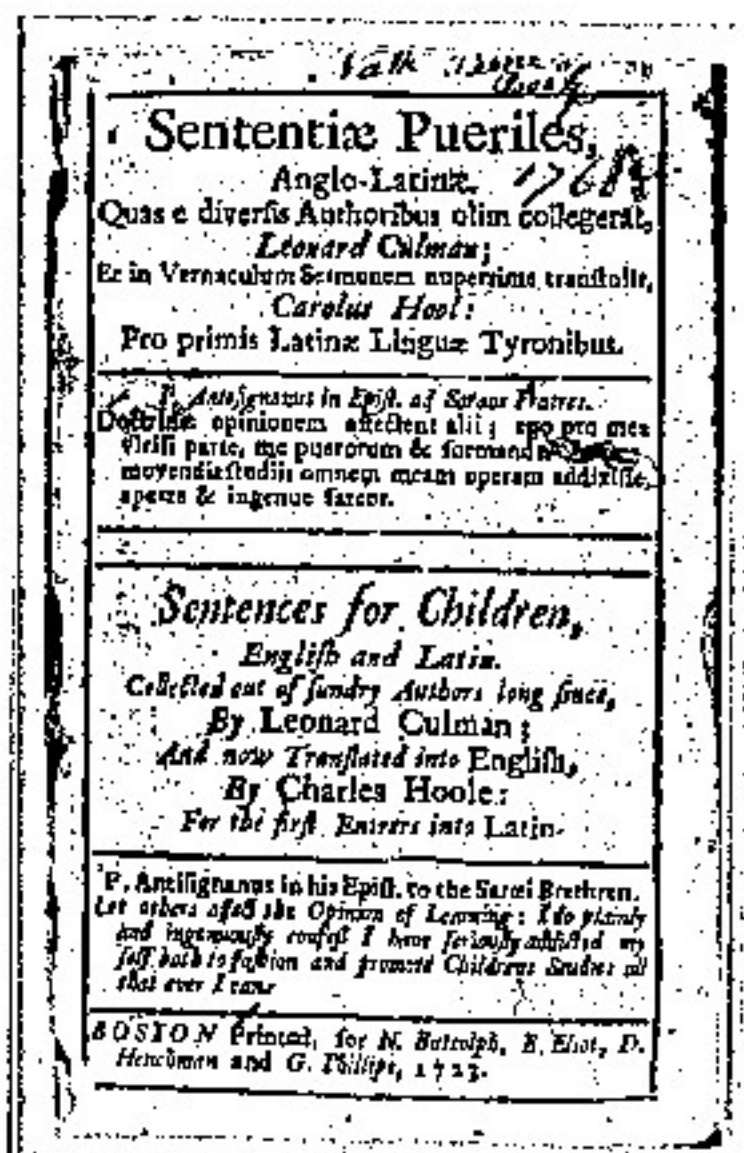
<sup>41</sup> 8°, A-H<sup>t</sup>, 1<sup>6</sup>, pp. 1-3 are numbered individually, pp. 4-37 separately for English (italics) and Latin (roman); on Green, see *Boston Printers, Publishers, and Booksellers: 1640-1800*, ed. Benjamin Franklin, V (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980), pp. 213-219 (213).



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FIG. 4

(Type area of original: 13.5 x 7.3 cm.)



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FIG. 5

(Type area of original: 13.1 x 7.3 cm.)

dable consortium was responsible for the second American edition (Fig. 5), printed in 1723 on behalf of the publishers Nicholas Buttolph, Benjamin Eliot, Daniel Henschman, "the leading bookseller and publisher in Boston during the first half of the eighteenth century," and Samuel Phillips's son, Gillam.<sup>42</sup>

Although the *Sententiae* continued to be reprinted in England for almost fifty more years, the tide of educational fashion had begun to turn even before the date of the second American edition. In 1720, the English educator John Clarke, a follower of the theories of John Locke, published his *Essay upon the Education of Youth in Grammar-Schools*.<sup>43</sup> In the course of his work Clarke not only attacks contemporary pedagogical practices as a whole but also singles out Culmann's primer as a text particularly unsuitable for the instruction of young boys. As to the former, he claims: "The *Vulgar Method* that obtains

<sup>42</sup> 8°, A-H<sup>4</sup>, 16, 71 pp.; on Henschman, see Franklin, *Boston Printers*, pp. 284-291 (284).

<sup>43</sup> See note 37.

in our Schools, is so miserably trifling, that any one, who duly considers it, will have much ado to forbear thinking it has been contrived in Opposition to all the Rules of good Method, on purpose to render the Learning of the Languages more tedious than it needs to be: How else were it possible for Boys of good Parts, to spend five or six Years in a *Grammar School*, without attaining so much of the *Latin Tongue*, as to make Sense of half-a-dozen Lines in the easiest of the *Classic Authors*, unless they lye in some of their old Lessons?"<sup>44</sup> And his comments on the latter are: "The Book Boys begin with in many Schools is *Sententiae Pueriles*; but it may very justly be questioned, whether a Book, consisting wholly of a Parcel of dry, moral Sayings, be altogether so convenient for the Use of Children, as old Men. Upon which Account, I think, it might more properly be called *Sententiae Seniles*, than *Pueriles*, as being better suited to the Reading of those of that Age, than young Boys, who have no Apprehensions, or Relish for such kind of things."<sup>45</sup>

It is difficult to say how soon the work was displaced by the text recommended by Clarke, Mathurin Corderius's *Colloquia*. According to Clarke, Corderius's work contained "such kind of Tittle Tattle for the most Part, as passes betwixt Boys, and therefore finds a more easy Entrance into their Minds, and is therefore most proper for them to begin with."<sup>46</sup> By the time Benjamin Dolbeare attended the Boston Latin School (1752–1759), the *Colloquia* was the only primer in use.<sup>47</sup>

For our knowledge about how a collection like the *Sententiae* was used in the classroom, we are dependent on the advice Brinsley gave in his *Ludus literarius*. A teacher following his guidelines would have used the aphorisms to develop a complicated question-and-answer game, in principle the same "recitation method" that was popular in university education until the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>48</sup> If Brinsley's approach was indeed used in early eighteenth-century schools, one can easily imagine what led Clarke to his criticism that the *Sententiae*, with its impersonal moralistic content, had an oppressive effect on the young. On the other hand, when used by a gifted pedagogue like Ezekiel Cheever, it did allow for a greater variety than one might expect at first sight.

<sup>44</sup> Clarke, *Essay*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

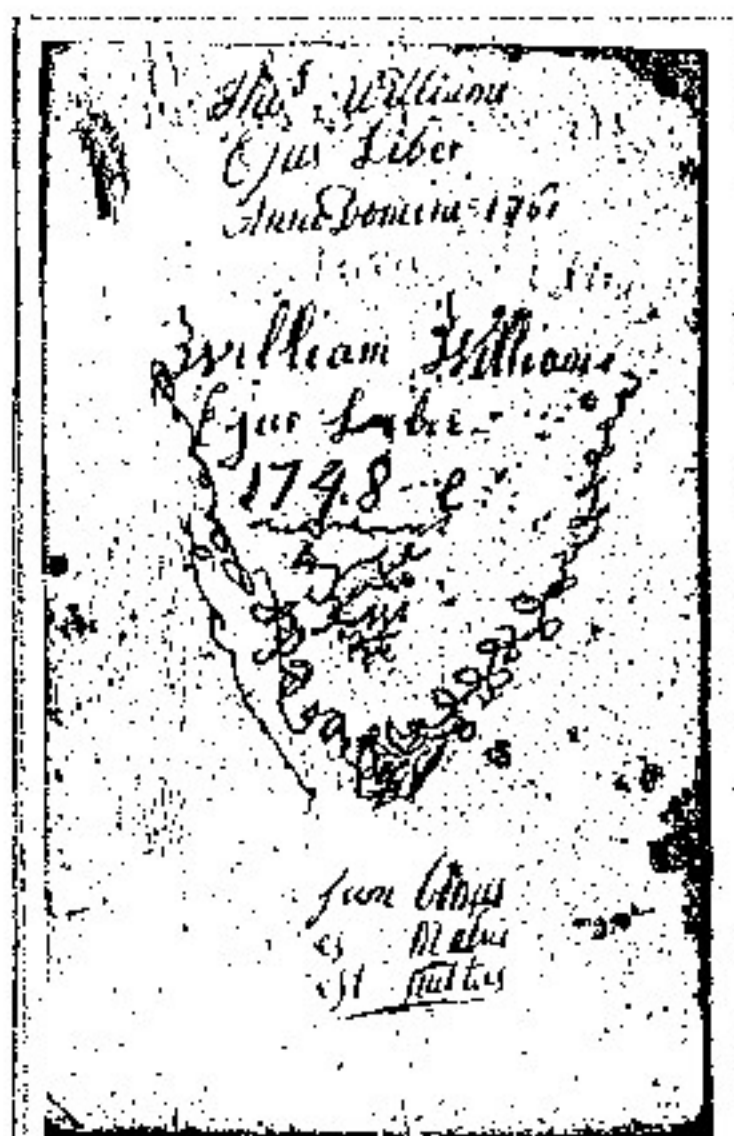
<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>47</sup> See Holmes, *Tercentenary History*, p. 262.

<sup>48</sup> See John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: An American History, 1636–1956* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 82.



Although the *Sententiae* disappeared from the curriculum of the Boston Latin School by the 1750s, that was by no means universally the case. To date, fourteen copies of the two American editions have been traced, and G. E. Littlefield gives evidence of an additional copy in his study on *Early Schools and School-Books in New England*.<sup>49</sup> Since school children have always been fond of marking up their books, these copies are a rich source of historical information beyond the texts themselves (Fig. 6). On the more trivial level, one learns from the Stephen Ford who used a copy of the 1702 edition during the school year of 1722 to 1723 that "Isack Brown is to be had up to cort for det";<sup>50</sup> similarly, the owner of one copy of the 1723 edition (either John Howard, who used it in 1769, or Jonathan Rawson, who had it in the subsequent year) records: "Mr. Egleston to Makeing one pair of leather Slippers February/April heald tapd."<sup>51</sup> From a historical point of view, there are, however, other scribblings that are of greater



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FIG. 6 Flyleaf at back of *Sententiae Pueriles* (Boston, 1702)

<sup>49</sup> The following copies of the 1702 edition were traced: Library of Congress (PA 2084. C. 94.1702); Boston Public Library (\*\*G. 389. 35); New York Public Library (\*KD 1702); Free Library of Philadelphia (available on microfiche: Early American Children's Books from the A. S. W. Rosenbach Collection (Millwood: Kraus-Thomson Microform, 1974), Rosenbach 4; Harvard (EducT 917.02\*). Copies of the 1723 edition were found in the Library of Congress (PA 2084.C. 94. 1723); Boston Public Library (\*\*H. 99b. 73); New York State Library, Albany (N 478.2 C. 96); Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston (E 187); Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia (Am 1723 Cu); Columbia University (Plimpton A 478, 1723. C 89); Harvard (EducT 917.23\*); University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (C 1723 Cu); Yale (Gk 16.6.58 Ce); see also Littlefield, *Early Schools*, p. 247, for a reproduction of the title page of the copy used by him.

<sup>50</sup> Inside the front cover of the copy preserved in the New York Public Library (\*KD 1702).

<sup>51</sup> On p. 71 of the copy preserved at Columbia (Plimpton A 478. 1723 C. 89).

interest. Although one rarely finds someone like Jack Hill (Harvard, 1766), who evidently recorded the names of his classmates: Benjamin Hammatt (also Harvard, 1766), William Cazneav, Peter Dobel, John Nazro, and Samuel Breck, one does regularly find ownership markings that demonstrate how long Culmann's work continued in use.<sup>52</sup> The most startling example of this is in a copy of the 1702 edition preserved in the Library of Congress, which was first used by John Foster (1727), then by Joseph Galper (1742); Reuben Smith appears to have used the volume for a longer period of time (the dates entered by him are 1751–52 and 1754), after which it passed on to James Brown (Harvard, 1780?) and Job Brown Son (1795).<sup>53</sup> As one would expect, most books appear to have been passed on either from older to younger brother, as in the case of Alexander (Harvard, 1764) and Jack Hill, or from one class to the next, as in the case of Israel Dickinson (Yale, 1758), who went to school in Hatfield, Massachusetts, in 1746, and apparently passed his 1702 edition on to William Williams (Yale, 1754), who probably attended the same school and entered his name with the date 1748.<sup>54</sup> William Williams's copy subsequently passed on to a Thomas Williams, who entered his name with the date 1761 (see Fig. 6) and is perhaps identical with the Thomas Williams of Deerfield, Massachusetts, belonging to the Harvard Class of 1765. However, there is at least one instance of a book being passed on from father to son: Timothy Paine (Harvard, 1748) used a copy of the 1723 edition in 1740–41, and his son Nathaniel Paine (Harvard, 1775) used the same copy in 1768.<sup>55</sup> It is hardly surprising that fourteen of the twenty-six identifiable owners later attended either Harvard or Yale.<sup>56</sup> What is more surprising is that it was not possible to trace any of the owners to the other colleges that had been founded by the end of the eighteenth century, but that may be due

<sup>52</sup> The names are written on p. 36 (Hill); p. 38 (Hammatt); p. 40 (Cazneav); p. 42 (Dobel); p. 44 (Nazro); p. 48 (Breck), of the copy preserved at the Massachusetts Historical Society (E 187).

<sup>53</sup> This copy is kept at the Library of Congress (PA 2084.C. 94. 1702).

<sup>54</sup> See note 52; Dickinson's copy is Harvard: EducT 917.02\*.

<sup>55</sup> Harvard: EducT 917.23\*.

<sup>56</sup> In addition to those mentioned in the text, the following are Harvard graduates: Isaac Abbot (1723); Jonathan Hayward (1726); Joseph Storer (1745); Samuel Wood was probably also a Harvard graduate (1745). Other Yale graduates are Samuel Tracy (1744) and John Bliss (1761).

to the fact that the traced names all came from New England.<sup>57</sup> Any knowledge of which schools the boys attended while they were using the *Sententiae* tends to be derived from extraneous sources. Thus George Littlefield reports that Joshua Lamb (born 12 December 1781) used his copy "when he was studying with the Rev. Zenas Lockwood Leonard in Sturbridge, Massachusetts."<sup>58</sup> Similarly, John Sibley reports that the Hill brothers attended John Tileston's school in Boston's North End; and Franklin Dexter reports that Alexander Gaylord (Yale, 1739), a native of East Windsor, Connecticut, was being tutored by the Reverend Timothy Edwards in Longmeadow, Massachusetts, when he must have used his copy of the 1723 edition (1728-29).<sup>59</sup> One last aspect of education that can be deduced from the ownership markings left by these boys relates to the amount of Latin a young man would have had by the time he was admitted to college. Although this apparently varied greatly, some boys such as William Williams came to Yale with presumably no more than two years of Latin, or, like Nathaniel Paine, were admitted to Harvard only three years after beginning their *Sententiae*.

Historically, the most significant information to be derived from many of the entries discussed is that the *Sententiae* continued to be used long after the date of the last American impression and that the collection must therefore be considered to have exerted its influence on American education until well into the eighteenth century. This influence is all the more important in light of the work's character-forming purpose. On the other hand, its demise by no means marked the decline of an emphasis on moral values in American schools. Both John Clarke's *Introduction to the making of Latin* and John Garretson's *English exercises for school-boys to translate into Latin*, which subsequently became widely used, place no less emphasis on moral content than had Culmann in the *Sententiae pueriles*.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> The following owners could not be traced: Stephen Ford (1722-23); Joseph Foster (1727); Joseph Galper (1742); Reuben Smith (1754); John Howard (1769); Jonathan Rawson (1770); David Carrol Pardue (1784); Job Brown Son (1795); Isaac Barnes (n.d.); Josia Johnson (n.d.); J. Tucker (n.d.); ? Colesworthy (n.d.); this last name does not appear to be in a boy's handwriting.

<sup>58</sup> See Littlefield, *Early Schools*, p. 246.

<sup>59</sup> Franklin Bowditch Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College with Annals of the College History. October, 1701-May, 1745* (New York: Henry Holt, 1885), p. 624.

<sup>60</sup> See Holmes, *Tercentenary History*, p. 320.

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