has painfully wounded, will after this more violently assault your bitter words? Do you suppose, O most contemptible man on earth, that I think myself sprung [like Athena] from the head of Jove? I am a school girl, possessed of the sleeping embers of an ordinary mind.[11] Indeed I am too hurt, and my mind, offended, too swayed by passions, sighs, tormenting itself, conscious of the obligation to defend my sex. For absolutely everything — that which is within us and that which is without — is made weak by association with my sex.

I, therefore, who have always prized virtue, having put my private concerns aside, will polish and weary my pen against chatterboxes swelled with false glory. Trained in the arts, I shall block the paths of ambush. And I shall endeavor, by avenging arms, to sweep away the abusive infamies of noisemakers with which some disreputable and impudent men furiously, violently, and nastily rave against a woman and a republic worthy of reverence.

January 13 [1488]

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[11] Cereta was eighteen years old when she wrote this letter. [Ed.]

Desiderius Erasmus

1469–1536

Desiderius Erasmus was born in Holland. The illegitimate son of a priest and a doctor's daughter, Erasmus was, from infancy, destined for holy orders. His parents placed him in a humanist school in Deventer. Agricola was a friend of the headmaster, and Erasmus saw him at the school around 1481, shortly before Agricola's death. After his parents' deaths in 1483 Erasmus was sent to a monastery school to prepare for entering the Augustinian order (the same order to which Martin Luther belonged). This he did in 1488 and was ordained a priest in 1492. Wishing to escape monastic life, Erasmus obtained a post as Latin secretary to the bishop of Combrai in 1494, with whom he hoped to travel to Rome to further his humanist studies. Instead, however, Erasmus was sent to Paris to study theology. In Paris, Erasmus became acquainted with a group of English students with humanist interests, and one of them, Lord Mountjoy, brought him to England in 1499. From this point on, Erasmus was given considerable freedom by his order to pursue learning. He would not be formally recalled to the monastery until 1514, when the pope gave him leave to remain in the world outside of the monastery.

In England, Erasmus befriended the humanists John Colet and Thomas More and was a frequent visitor to their circle for the next fifteen years. In 1500, however, he returned to the Continent to study Greek. Erasmus greatly admired the philological work of Lorenzo Valla, and his ambition was to follow Valla's hints for the production of a textually accurate Greek New Testament. Erasmus worked on this project for more than a decade, publishing it in 1516. The book was tremendously influential for the model of humanist scholarship it presented. It also encouraged theologians to focus their study more on the early Church Fathers than on Scholastic commentaries.

Erasmus had obtained Greek manuscripts of the New Testament on a journey to England in 1504. His English friends secured him the post of tutor to the sons of Henry VIII's doctor, and in 1506 Erasmus was able to travel with the family to Italy, where he took a doctorate of divinity at Turin. Erasmus studied in Italy for the next three years, and in 1508 at Venice he published *Adagia,* a collection of three thousand proverbs from classical sources that first established his reputation as a scholar. When Henry VIII, of whom the humanists had great hopes of patronage, ascended the throne in 1509, Erasmus returned to England. On this journey, he may have begun writing *The Praise of Folly* as a gift for More, who would be his host. The work was originally composed in Latin sprinkled with Greek, including the Greek word for *folly,* which is Anglicized *Moria,* a pun on More's name. Erasmus usually referred to the work by this title. It was published in Paris in 1511.

In England, Erasmus accepted a lectureship in Greek at Cambridge, a post he held until 1514. His friend John Colet, now dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, was about to open a humanist school for boys at St. Paul's, and around 1512 Erasmus wrote *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style* (excerpted here; usually called *On Copia*) as a Latin textbook for this school. *On Copia* is generally regarded as Erasmus's most influential work on rhetoric. It dominated rhetoric instruction throughout northern Europe for most of the sixteenth century, including applications in the vernaculars.

On Copia is intended to help the novice attain *copie*, or abundance, in his Latin style. The work is divided into two books, the first being variously translated as *abundance of expression* or *of words* and the second as *abundance of subject matter* or *of ideas*. In the Toronto edition, Book I is divided into no less that 206 chapters (chapter 206 is entitled "No Further"), which catalog a wide variety of figures, tropes, and other methods of amplification. In addition to discussing such stylistic devices as metalepsis, metonymy, and synecdoche, Erasmus lists various ways of expressing syntactic relationships. For example, chapter 129, "Nothing But," contains the following examples: "You are nothing but a poet, you are nothing else but a poet, you are nothing other than a poet, you are merely a poet, you are nothing more than a poet," and so on.[1] Excerpted here is a passage in which Erasmus demonstrates amplification by giving 150 ways to express the sentiment "Your letter pleased me very much" — something the Renaissance student might well want to know, given that one source of humanism was the *ars dictaminis* and that letters were a major vehicle of scholarly exchange. Erasmus frequently cites the authority of Cicero, and displays his prodigious classical learning as well as his own ingenuity in fashioning illustrations.

The stylistic focus of *On Copia* is typical of many rhetoric texts of the period, whether Ciceronian or Ramist in their orientation to the art of rhetoric as a whole. Erasmus's own Latin style was and is generally regarded as excellent. Erasmus's relationship to stylistic rhetoric is subtle, however. On the one hand, he saw himself as reacting against the evolution of Italian humanist rhetoric in the direction of courtly conversation. He was distrustful of *sprezzatura*, thought the good style should not scruple to display its learning and wit, and both defended and exemplified the principle that the eloquent man of wisdom should take public stands on important issues of the day. On the other hand, as *On Copia* and his other works show, Erasmus certainly did not eschew stylistic ornamentation and rhetorical polish. Like Cicero, he believed that the most accomplished and useful rhetorician was one who could turn from amplitude to terseness as the situation required. In the period of Erasmus's greatest influence, stylistic elaborations such as Euphuism gradually began to cloy some palates. By the turn of the seventeenth century, although Neo-Ciceronians still supported a concept of *copie*, it was increasingly under attack by advocates of the new science and of the plainer, so-called Senecan style they developed from Bacon forward.

When Erasmus returned to the Continent around 1515, he traveled widely and also made frequent visits to England. He assisted in the establishment of another humanist school, at Louvain. In Basel, he worked with printer Johann Froben to bring out an edition of his works, as well as a new series of editions of the Church Fathers. His health began to fail, however, and he also became embroiled in increasingly bitter religious controversies. Erasmus supported the Roman Catholic Church while vigorously criticizing its abuses, as in *The Praise of Folly*, and advocating a more simple practice of piety, such as that of the Brethren of the Common Life. These views earned him the hostility of more conservative Churchmen. Philosophically, Erasmus was a skeptic, and he saw this position as congenial to the acceptance of Church doctrine on faith, as a necessity to social cohesion. In 1524 he attacked Martin Luther in print for insisting on certainty in religious matters and for relying on his human reason to achieve it; Luther replied angrily. Although increasingly attacked from all sides, Erasmus continued to work for peace and internal reform until his death in Basel in 1536. While Protestant polemicists attempted to discredit him as an opportunist and lackey of the Church, the Spanish Inquisition extirpated his Catholic followers in that region.

Erasmus is generally regarded as a key figure in the Renaissance, both as one who brought Italian learning north and as one who made major contributions in his own right. Historian Anthony Grafton and literary scholar Lisa Jardine argue that Erasmus attempted to professionalize humanism as a philological discipline.[2] Applied to sacred texts, such analysis could become a means not only to verbal fluency but also to spiritual insight and piety. On the other hand, rhetorician Thomas O. Sloane sees method in the madness of *The Praise of Folly*.[3] Sloane argues that Erasmus, through the persona of Folly, identifies himself with the Greek Sophists and their method of exploring arguments through contraries, or *dissoi logoi*. Sloane maintains that Erasmus saw method as leading ultimately to insight into the fallibility of human knowledge, not to a self-evident world system. If every issue has at least two sides, then one must argue for the most probable. Failing that, one must surrender to folly — that is, give up the idea that reason will provide a definitive answer, and decide on the basis of historically determined constraints and personal circumstances. For most people most of the time, this fallibility of human knowledge requires accepting social conventions, including common beliefs, as the delusions necessary to collective life. For some people at exceptional moments, awareness of this fallibility leads to the rejection of conventional wisdom in favor of a quest for spiritual transcendence that will seem mad to the common folk but that is the only possible antidote to human fallibility.

Selected Bibliography

The standard modern edition, excerpted here, is *Collected Works of Erasmus. Literary and Educational Writings 2: De Copia. De Ratione Studii.* (ed. Craig R. Thompson, *De Copia* trans. Betty I. Knott, 1978). *Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam: On Copia of Words and*

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[1] Desiderius Erasmus, *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*, trans. Betty I. Knott, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Craig R. Thompson, 42 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978) 24: p. 500.

[2] Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 137–45.

[3] Thomas O. Sloane, *Donne, Milton, and the End of Humanistic Rhetoric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 72–84.

Ideas (trans. D. B. King and H. D. Rix, 1963), though not a complete edition, reproduces the flavor of Erasmus's Latin more accurately. A good new translation of *The Praise of Folly* is Clarence Miller's (1979). See also *Stultitiae Laus: A Facsimile of the Froben 1515 Edition with Marginal Drawings by Holbein* (ed. H. A. Schmid, 1931).

Biographies include Roland Bainton's *Erasmus of Christendom* (1969) and J. Kelley Soward's *Desiderius Erasmus* (1975), which gives more attention to Erasmus's writings.

An excellent discussion of Erasmus's concept of *copie* and its sources can be found in Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text* (1979).

Discussions of the skepticism of Erasmus can veer toward either its political or its mystical implications. On the practical side is Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle's *Rhetoric and Reform: Erasmus' Civil Dispute with Luther* (1983). She argues that Erasmus's skepticism led him to espouse a sort of deliberative rhetoric, in opposition to the judicial rhetoric to which Luther was led by his Stoicism. Victoria Kahn's *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Scepticism in the Renaissance* (1985) studies Erasmus, Montaigne, and Hobbes as they grapple with the problem of defining right political action from a skeptical, morally relativistic mind-set.

On the other hand, Erasmus's praise of folly connects him with a long European tradition of the fool as a licensed questioner of social convention and, at times, a forerunner on the way to spiritual transcendence of social norms. See Walter Kaiser's *Praisers of Folly* (1963), which focuses on Rabelais, Erasmus, and Shakespeare, and W. Willeford's *The Fool and His Scepter* (1969), which mentions Erasmus throughout while tracing the fool figure, especially his or her mystical implications, from medieval to modern times.

From *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*

BOOK I. ABUNDANCE OF EXPRESSION

1. Copia: *Dangers Inherent in Its Pursuit*

The speech of man is a magnificent and impressive thing when it surges along like a golden river, with thoughts and words pouring out in rich abundance. Yet the pursuit of speech like this involves considerable risk. As the proverb says, "Not every man has the means to visit the city of Corinth."[1] We find that a good many mortal men who make great efforts to achieve this godlike power of speech fall instead into mere glibness, which is both silly and offensive. They pile up a meaningless heap of words and expressions without any discrimination, and thus obscure the subject they are talking about, as well as belaboring the ears of their unfortunate audience. In fact, quite a few persons of no real education or understanding have, heaven help us, undertaken to give instruction in this very subject, and these, while professing a mastery of *copia,* have merely revealed their own total lack of it.

Such considerations have induced me to put forward some ideas on *copia,* the abundant style, myself, treating its two aspects of content and expression, and giving some examples and patterns. Some of my material I have extracted from works dealing specifically with rhetorical theory. I have also drawn on my own now considerable experience of the art of speaking and writing, and on what I have observed in the course of wide reading over a considerable range of authors. It is not my intention to write a book dealing exhaustively with the whole subject, but rather a short treatise in which I hope merely to open up the way for teachers and students and provide the raw material for future work. One of my reasons is that I have undertaken this task solely out of a desire to be helpful, so I shall be quite content for another to reap the glory, so long as I am ultimately responsible for some benefit reaching the students. Also I am committed to more serious studies which prevent me from expending a great deal of labor on topics which, in spite of their considerable contribution to serious subjects, themselves seem unimportant.

2. Copia: *Its Invention and Practice*

Now in case anyone should feel inclined to despise it as some newfangled discovery recently brought into the world within the four walls of my own study, I would have him know that this whole idea of being able to express one's meaning in a variety of ways is in a number of places touched on by that learned and thorough writer Quintilian;[2] further, that a number of famous sophists blazed a trail,[3] showing how to compress and abridge what was being said, and this they could not have done without at the same time demonstrating how to expand it. If their books were extant, or if Quintilian had been prepared to set out his recommendations in full, there would not have been such need of these modest injunctions of mine.

The whole business is further recommended by the fact that men who were the intellectual leaders of their day were by no means averse from constant practice in it. We have a number of marvelous passages where Virgil tried his skill: descriptions of a mirror, a frozen river, a rainbow, a sunrise, the four seasons, the constellations. There is further evidence in Apuleius' treatment of Aesop's fable about the fox and the crow: first he skims over it briefly with a wonderful economy of words, and then he sets it out expansively and in great detail, thus exercising and displaying his talents. But after all, who could possibly regret an enthusiasm for this subject after observing that Cicero, the great father of all eloquence, was so dedicated to this kind of exercise that he used to vie with his friend, the actor Roscius, to see whether Roscius could express the same material more often using different gestures, or Cicero himself applying the resources of eloquence and using different language?

3. Copia: *Delight Taken by Ancient Authors in Demonstrating It*

Moreover these same writers have quite often taken delight in demonstrating their powers of expression, not only in practice pieces, but in serious works as well, first compressing the subject to such an extent that you can subtract nothing, and then enriching and expanding it so that nothing can be added. According to Quintilian,[4] Homer is equally admirable for fullness and for compression. Although it is not our intention to treat examples in detail at this point, we will nonetheless give one or two examples, using Virgil only. What could be more concisely expressed than his line: "the plains where Troy once stood"? As Macrobius says, in a very few words he has here consumed and swallowed up the city without even allowing the ruins to remain. Now listen to the fullness of expression in this passage:

> Come is the final day, fate's inevitable doom
> Upon Dardanus' city; we Trojans are no more;

Translated by Betty I. Knott.

[1] Horace *Epistles* 1.17.36, a favorite line of Erasmus', quoted again in chaps. 50, 154; see *Adagia* I.iv.i. The proverb refers to the exorbitant price charged by the famous Corinthian courtesan Lais, who would receive no one, however distinguished, if he could not pay. [Tr.]

In the notes a simple reference indicates that Erasmus is quoting an example in the exact words of the original or with slight divergence; "cf" indicates a wider divergence from the original; "see" means that Erasmus is either using the subject-matter of the passage identified, or has invented a grammatical example with the quoted example in mind. [Tr.]

[2] In *Institutio oratoria,* where the importance of *varietas* in every aspect of speaking is mentioned in passing in many places; see fn 15. [Tr.]

[3] Itinerant teachers who traveled from city to city in Greece in the fifth century B.C., giving instruction (for a fee) which purported to enable students to get on in life; the systems of many of them included instruction in the art of speaking. A list is given in Quintilian 3.1.8ff. [Tr.]

[4] See 10.1.46. [Tr.]

that there is absolutely nothing, however brilliant, which is not dimmed if not commended by variety. Nature above all delights in variety; in all this huge concourse of things, she has left nothing anywhere unpainted by her wonderful technique of variety. Just as the eyes fasten themselves on some new spectacle, so the mind is always looking round for some fresh object of interest. If it is offered a monotonous succession of similarities, it very soon wearies and turns its attention elsewhere, and so everything gained by the speech is lost all at once. This disaster can easily be avoided by someone who has it at his fingertips to turn one idea into more shapes than Proteus himself is supposed to have turned into.[16] Also this form of exercise will make no insignificant contribution to the ability to speak or write extempore, and will prevent us from standing there stammering and dumbfounded, or from disgracing ourselves by drying up in the middle. Nor will it be difficult to divert a speech, even when we have embarked upon it rather hastily, into the course we desire when we have so many expressions lined up ready for action. We shall also find it of great assistance in commenting on authors, translating books from foreign languages, and writing verse. Otherwise, if we are not instructed in these techniques, we shall often be found unintelligible, harsh, or even totally unable to express ourselves.

9. Exercises to Develop the Powers of Expression

It remains for me now to give some brief advice on the exercises by which this faculty may be developed. Once we have carefully committed the theory to memory, we should frequently take a group of sentences and deliberately set out to express each of them in as many versions as possible, as Quintilian advises,[17] using the analogy of a piece of wax which can be molded into one shape after another. This exercise will be more profitable if a group of students competes together orally or in writing on a common theme; they will all be helped individually by the suggestions made by other members of the group, and each of them will have his imagination stimulated by being given a starting point. Second, we shall treat a connected line of thought in a number of ways. Here it will be best to copy the expertise of the famous Milo of Croton and develop our powers gradually,[18] first of all rendering it twice, then three times, and eventually treating it over and over again, so as to attain such facility in the end that we can vary it in two or three hundred ways with no trouble at all. In addition we shall add greatly to our linguistic resources if we translate authors from the Greek, as that language is particularly rich in subject matter and vocabulary. It will also prove quite useful on occasion to compete with these Greek authors by paraphrasing what they have written. It will be of enormous value to take apart the fabric of poetry and reweave it in prose, and vice versa, to bind the freer language of prose under the rules of meter, and also to pour the same subject matter from one form of poetic container into another. It will also be very helpful to emulate a passage from some author where the spring of eloquence seems to bubble up particularly richly, and endeavor in our own strength to equal or even surpass it. We shall find it particularly useful to "thumb the great authors by night and day," especially those who were outstanding in the rich style, such as Cicero, Aulus Gellius, and Apuleius. We must keep our eyes open to observe every figure of speech that they use, store it in our memory once observed, imitate it once remembered, and by constant employment develop an expertise by which we may call upon it instantly.

10. Copia: *Preliminary Instructions*

Having said all this by way of introduction, I must now tackle the task of actually setting down my instructions, though what I have said already is instruction of a sort. I think it will be not inadvisable to launch my remarks with a warning to the candidate for *copia* that his first care must be to see that his speech is appropriate, is Latin, is elegant, is stylistically uncorrupt. He should not imagine that the rich style can admit anything which is abhorrent from the unsullied purity of the language of Rome.

Elegance depends partly on the use of words established in suitable authors, partly on their right application, partly on their right combination in phrases. An example of the first is the form *piissimus* [as the superlative of *pius*], which according to Cicero was never heard by Latin ears — though even this form is found in quite respectable authors; so it would be better to use as an example some other barbarous or faulty form, such as *avisare* "advise" instead of *praemonere*. A barbarism is also committed by faulty writing or pronunciation, such as pronouncing *dócere* with the accent on the first syllable [instead of the second], or *Christus* as *Cristus* [without the aspirate], or *perca* as *parca*, or lengthening the first syllable of *lego*.[19]

An example of the second is saying *dedit mihi licentiam abeundi* "he issued me license to go away," instead of *fecit mihi potestatem abeundi* "he gave me leave to go away." In the first sentence every word is Latin; the fault lies in misapplication: *potestas* is a general word for every kind of possibility, *licentia* tends towards a pejorative meaning. So here there is a mistake in the application of a word, as there is in saying *compilare* "gather up" for *colligere* "collect." *Compilare* is a good Latin word, but it has acquired a different sense, "remove by stealth." Horace uses it when talking about "slaves on the run filching their masters' stuff," and in the lines:

"Lest you think that I've been thieving / From runny-eyed Chrysippus' shelves."

The third type of mistake is very like the second, and consists in wrongly combining words perfectly good in themselves, such as using *iniuriam dedit* as the equivalent of *damnum dedit* "he inflicted injury." *Dare damnum* is a correct expression, but *dare iniuriam* is not; the phrase is *facere iniuriam*. *Dare malum* "cause misfortune" is a good Latin expression, but not *dare iacturam* or *dare dolorem* "cause loss or grief." It is *facere iacturam* that is correct, and it means "to sustain a loss," [not "to cause a loss"]; but it is not right to use *facere infamiam* for "suffer a loss of reputation." It is good Latin to say *facere iniuriam* for "inflict an injury," but Cicero says[20] that Latin speakers did not use the phrase *facere contumeliam* for "inflict an insult," although this form of expression is found in Plautus, Terence, and other respectable authors, and it is possible that it had gone out of use in Cicero's time. *Accepit iniuriam* is right for "he received an injury," but I would not like to risk *accepit contumeliam* for "he received an insult." You can say *facere aes alienum* for "contract debts," and also *facere vorsuram* for "raise a second loan," but you cannot use *facere* like this in the phrases *facere invidiam* or *facere simultatem* to mean "generate ill will or animosity against oneself." *Aedes vitium fecerunt* "the building has sustained damage" is all right, meaning that it has disintegrated of its own accord, but I would avoid *rimas facere*, meaning it has developed cracks, because the Latin idiom is *rimas agere*. Likewise *facere stipendium* is right, meaning "to serve as a soldier for pay," but not *facere salarium* [which is another word for a soldier's pay]. *Fecit sui copiam* is right, meaning "he granted access to himself," but again I would hesitate about *dedit sui copiam*, although Virgil with his fine linguistic judgment could write *et coram data copia fandi* "Granted was leave to speak before her." *Fecit spem* and *dedit spem* are both good Latin for "he gave hope."

Sometimes expression is spoiled by an inappropriate word. For example, *quid sibi vult hic*

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[16] A favorite figure of Erasmus. [Tr.]

[17] For this whole section see Quintilian 10.5. [Tr.]

[18] The famous athlete who lifted a calf every day until it had grown into a bull; see Quintilian 1.9.5. [Tr.]

[19] These faults of Latin pronunciation characteristic of the "ignorant crowd" are discussed in *De recta pronuntiatione* (1528) LB I 940E–1B, 951C, 935E–F. In this work Erasmus criticizes especially the pronunciations employed by the Dutch, Flemish, and French. *Dócere* and *lēgo* are typical confusions over vowel quantity and the position of the Latin accent; *Cristus* exemplifies ignorance as to the correct employment of Greek aspirated *stops*, particularly noticeable among Germanic speakers; the change from *er* to *ar* was due to a tendency to use an *e* of too open a quality both in general and particularly before *r*. This change was facilitated by the fact that a similar development was taking place in Erasmus' time in English, Dutch, and French; no doubt speakers carried over this pronunciation from their native language into Latin. [Tr.]

[20] *Philippics* 3.22; Quintilian 9.3.13. [Tr.]

homo? "What is this fellow after?" is appropriate, but *quid sibi vult hic mortalis*? "what is this mortal after?" is foolish.

But to return to the main point, style is to thought as clothes are to the body. Just as dress and outward appearance can enhance or disfigure the beauty and dignity of the body, so words can enhance or disfigure thought. Accordingly a great mistake is made by those who consider that it makes no difference how anything is expressed, provided it can be understood somehow or other. The practice of giving variety to expression is exactly like changing clothes. Our first concern should be to see that the garment is clean, that it fits, and that it is not wrongly made up. It would be a pity to have people put off by a spotty, dirty garment, when the underlying form is itself good. It would be ludicrous to have a man go out in public dressed like a woman, and objectionable to see a person wearing his clothes back to front or upside down. So if anyone sets out to acquire variety of language before equipping himself with a Latinity that is neat and clean, he will be no less ridiculous (in my opinion at any rate) than a beggar who has not got even one garment that he can decently put on, but keeps changing his clothes and coming out in public draped with different sets of rags, ostentatiously displaying not riches but penury. The more often he did it the madder he would be thought. Yet certain persons with aspirations[21] towards the rich style act with equal absurdity; they cannot express what they have to say even once in elegant language, but apparently feeling ashamed if they fail to jabber as well as they can, they display their jabbering in one variation after another, each worse than the last, as if they had entered a competition with themselves to speak just as barbarously as it is possible to speak. Now I would indeed have the furnishings of a wealthy mansion of all sorts and kinds, but I would have it all elegant, not find it everywhere stuffed with things made of willow or figwood, or with cheap pots. I would have all kinds of food served at a splendid banquet, but who could put up with a hundred dishes appearing on the table, every one of them nauseating?

I have deliberately set out these warnings at such length, as I am well acquainted with the headlong presumption that marks most mortal men. As soon as they have passed the lowest stages, they immediately choose to rush on to the heights, all unprepared, "with unwashed feet" as the proverb says.

Nearly as bad a sin is committed by those who mix the sordid with the elegant, disfigure their purple with patches, thread together jewels and paste, and add garlic to Greek confections.

And now I will set out the rules for developing variety of expression, confining myself at this stage to the ones involving richness of vocabulary.

11. Variety of Expression (1): Use of Synonyms

The first and simplest form of variation[22] depends on using different words which indicate the same thing, so that as far as meaning goes it does not matter which you prefer to employ. The grammarians call these *synonyms*. Opposite to these are words called *homonyms*. These two types have also been called *equivocal* and *univocal*, although according to the logicians these terms are more applicable to the things signified than to the signifying words.[23] It will be more accurate to call different words signifying the same thing *ἰσοδυναμούσαι* [isodynamic] and their opposites *πολυσήμοι* [polysemantic]. Examples of the first sort are *ensis, gladius* "sword", *domus, aedes* "house"; *codex, liber* "book"; *forma, decor, pulchritudo* "beauty."

One should collect a vast supply of words like this from all sides out of good authors, provide oneself with a varied equipment, and, as Quintilian remarks, heap up riches so that we find we have a wealth of words to hand whenever we require it. It will not be sufficient to prepare a copious apparatus or an abundant store of such words unless you have them not only at the ready but in full view, so that they present themselves to the eyes even if you are not looking for them. But here we must take special care not to do what some do and use the first thing that presents itself out of the heap in any context without exercising any choice at all. For in the first place you will hardly find two words anywhere so isodynamic that they are not kept apart by some distinction. What could be more identical in meaning than *men* and *mortals*? Yet the man who on every occasion said *all mortals* for *all men* was stigmatized in the words of the Greek proverb,[24] *τὸ ἐν φακῆ μύϱον* (sweet oils on lentils). Sometimes *litterae* and *epistola* signify the same thing [that is, letter], sometimes something different.

Even if we allow that there is absolutely no distinction in meaning, yet some words are more respectable than others, or more exalted, or more polished or delightful or powerful or sonorous, or more conducive to harmonious arrangement.[25] Accordingly the man who is about to speak should exercise choice and take what is best. Judgment is necessary when bringing out of stock, whereas industry is necessary when storing away. You will learn to exercise judgment by carefully observing elegant and appropriate diction, while the assiduous reading of every type of author will allow you to fill your store.

There are many things for which the poets use one set of words, orators another. There are also words peculiar to different ages and centuries, and even the same authors often express the same thing by different means. So the first thing is to extract the best words one can from every type of writer, and, whatever they are like, add them to the collection. No word is to be rejected, provided it occurs in an author who is at all respectable, for there is no word which would not be the best one in some place or other. So however vulgar, unusual, poetic, archaic, novel, obsolete, harsh, barbarous, or foreign it may be, lay it up in its proper niche with its fellows, so that you may summon it if ever a use for it arises. If we are afraid that the antiquity or novelty of our word may offend the ears of our audience, the best thing will be to take Quintilian's advice[26] and remember to forestall criticism by commenting on the word ourselves. Here are some sample ways of doing this: Cato, a glutton for books, if it is right to use such a word of such a noble subject; the master's self, to use a phrase of Plautus'; for why should I not use words employed by Ennius? for I am glad to use a word of Horace's; for that is how your favorite moderns speak; you will recognize a barrack-room word; as the poets say; as they used to say long ago; to speak after the ancient fashion; if I may so express myself; if you allow me to use an everyday turn of phrase; I will say it in Greek, to express my meaning better.

We must do the same with *κακέμφατα* [cacemphatic words],[27] that is, those that lend themselves to an obscene interpretation.

Vulgar Words

Vulgar words are those which will strike the hearer as rather too common for the dignity of the context, like calling one's familiar friend one's "old hearty," or an avid reader "a glutton for literature." I am surprised that Seneca found the words *acetum, spongia, pulegium* [vinegar, sponge, flea-bane] vulgar. I think one could more properly call vulgar the words he himself used in one of his letters: *pilicrepi, botularii, crustularii* [ballplayers, sausage makers, pastry cooks]. Words derived from low trades and occupations, like bath attendant, cook, tanner, and eating-house keeper, are usually vulgar, but we must of necessity use these words if we have to discuss such subjects. Surgeons and doctors often have to use words that are appropriate rather than fine. Pliny jokingly refers to words that originated in the army, and thieves' kitchens have provided us with the word *tuburcinari* "to guzzle."[28] Some words are vulgar of themselves, others only in the wrong context, applied to the wrong persons and circumstances. For example, *dung* and the verb *to dung* are not vulgar if you are talking about farming to farmers, but they are if you are making a speech on affairs of state in the presence of the ruler.

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[21] *Affectatores*, a word taken from Quintilian. [Tr.]

[22] For the first section see Quintilian 10.1.5–15. [Tr.]

[23] See Aristotle *Categories* 1; the terms *aequivoca* and *univoca* were used to represent *δμώνυμα* and *συνώνυμα* by Boethius in his Latin translation of this work. [Tr.]

[24] English equivalent, "jewel of gold in a swine's snout"; *Adagia* I vii 23. See Aulus Gellius 13.29.5–6 where Fronto warns against overuse of *mortales*, quoting the proverb from Varro's *Satires*; Erasmus is quite fond of *mortales* himself (see chaps. 1, 10, 47), no doubt following the example of Sallust, with whose writings he is thoroughly familiar. [Tr.]

[25] See Quintilian 8.3.16. [Tr.]

[26] 8.3.37. [Tr.]

[27] Quintilian 8.3.47. [Tr.]

[28] Probably gleaned from Nonius Marcellus 179, a lexicographer of the fourth century AD, who quotes many excerpts from early poets illustrating interesting word usages,

Unusual Words

At one time common usage had a great deal of authority. Horace says as much in the lines: "Many words that now are dead will come to life again / Words honored now will die the death, shall usage so proclaim." But nowadays we acquire our way of speaking not from the community at large but from the writings of learned men, so usage does not have the same prescriptive power. Even so, words can be considered unusual when they do not occur with any frequency in those authors which provide the bulk of scholars' reading. Today we have to take care not to speak in an artificial manner, and to keep a good distance between ourselves and the aspirations of those who think to speak strangely is to speak well — a mannerism which Cicero remarked on in Lucius Sisenna, who was in many respects a learned man. These same people also think themselves clever if one has to be clever to understand them, as Diomedes wittily remarked,[29] and prefer to write something that will result in amazement rather than comprehension.[30]

An expression can be unusual in several ways, as will be made clear by what follows; to give some examples, the form of expression will be unusual if anyone says *passos senes* "prune-faced old men" for *rugosi* "wrinkled"; uses the [archaic] forms *interduatim* "somewhile" and *interatim* "in the mean" instead of *interdum* "sometimes" and *interim* "meanwhile";[31] employs *titivillitium* "jot and tittle" for something of no account;[32] and the [less usual] form *vagor* for *vagitus* "wailing."

Poetic Words

There are also words in the poets which should be used only sparingly, especially when writing prose. In Horace for example we have *eliminare* "turn out of doors" used to mean "carry a confidence to the outside world" (though Cicero does use it in the sense "eject");[33] *iuvenari* "act the irresponsible youth," a word modeled on the Greek verb *νεανίζειν* or *νεανιεύειν* [with the same meaning]; *furiare* "furiate"; *clarare* "luminate"; *aeternare* "deathlessly memoriate"; *inimicare* "hostilize"; *pauperare* "pauperize"; or a form like *cinctutis* "girthed," instead of *cinctis* "girt"; or [the passive form] *invideor* "I am felt a grudge" instead of *mihi invidetur* "a grudge is felt against me"; or in Virgil *agmen* [usually "line" or "group in motion"] for "movement" or "course" in *leni fluit agmine Thybris* "The Tiber swells with gentle course"; or *indomitum furit* "he rages a boundless rage" instead of using [the adverb] *indomite* "boundlessly"; also *acerba tuens* "glaring savageness" instead of "glaring savagely"; or *sperare* "hope" in the sense of "fear" or "expect, foresee": "Could I this mighty grief foresee [*sperare*] / Then, sister dear, can I endure it." Likewise in Terence: "Now as for your expectation [*speras*] of keeping at bay . . ." Yet Cicero was quite prepared to use this turn of phrase in his letters to friends: "I had no expectation [*non sperabam*] that your feelings towards myself and my family would be so changeable."

The Greeks had a wonderful knack for forming compounds, and the Latin poets sometimes achieved a like felicity when imitating them, but the Latin orators never seemed to be quite so successful at it. Examples of such compounds are *vulnificus* "wound-inflicting," *tristificus* "grief-causing," *tabificus* "corruption-bearing," *fatidicus* "fate-uttering," *laurigeri* "laurel-crowned," *caprigenum pecus* "goat-natured flock," *velivolum mare* "sail-studded sea," *vitisator* "vine-planter," and many more of the same sort. Cato was bold enough to try *vitilitigator* "fault-picker," another person *officiperda* "favor-waster."[34]

The vocabulary of the historical writers is nearly as bold as that of the poets.

Archaic Words

Archaic words add charm if they are incorporated in small quantities and in appropriate places like inlaid decorations: for example, *expectorare* "disbosom," meaning to bring out thoughts and feelings with words;[35] *actutum* "straightway" for *quamprimum* "at once"; *antigerio*,[36] *oppido*, both meaning "verily," in place of *valde* "very"; *creperum bellum* "the twilight of war," for *dubium bellum* "doubtful or undecided war"; *hostire, hostimentum* "requite, requital" for *pensare, pensatio* "compensate, compensation"; *vitulantes* "joyful" for *gaudentes* "glad"; *iumentum* "carriage" for *vehiculum* "vehicle"; the [old] words *perduellis* and *perduellio* "foeman";[37] *duellum*, an [old] form of *bellum* "war"; *cernere* "determine the issue" for *pugnare* "fight"; *temetum* "mead" for *vinum* "wine"; and *Aemathia* [an old name] for Thessaly.

Obsolete Words

Unusual words are those which appear only occasionally, archaic ones those culled by later generations from texts discarded because of their antiquity, such as the Twelve Tables, Ennius, Lucilius, Naevius, Pacuvius. Obsolete ones have fallen completely out of use and passed into oblivion, for example, *bovinari*, the equivalent of *tergiversari* "to shuffle, evade"; *apludam edit et flocces bibit* "he eats draff and drinks the lees of wine" (using *apluda* and *flocces* instead of *furfur* and *faeces* for chaff and dregs) — an expression that Gellius derides with good reason. The ancients used *hostis*, now meaning "enemy," for "guest" and "stranger," but anyone would look a fool who tried to use it in that sense now.

I cannot see what use could arise for obsolete words, unless by way of joke and irony — if for example one wanted to stigmatize some bungling imitator of antiquity by calling him a fellow who deserves "to eat draff and drink lees."

On this question of words we must take into account not only the actual date, but also the predilections and affectations of writers. There is a stage of antiquity already superseded, and one still crude, as we see it at the time of Livius Andronicus; at which period the slow process of refinement began, and continued until the period of Cicero, when Roman eloquence attained such a peak of perfection that there was no possibility of further development, but, as is usual in human affairs, a gradual decline from that brilliance followed; it was inevitable that later generations should speak worse when they tried to speak differently. Yet, although Sallust wrote at the same period as Cicero, his style is more like Cato the Censor's than like Cicero's; and Maecenas[38] lived at much the same time, yet he falls very far short of the pure style of his age. Likewise Valerius Maximus, who belonged to the period of the Emperor Tiberius, when the brilliance of the Ciceronian age had not yet declined, nonetheless writes more in a style peculiar to himself than in that of his contemporaries. I shall say nothing of Tacitus, Suetonius, the two Plinys, Aelius Lampridius,[39] and other later writers.

While one must applaud the practice of those who set themselves to imitate the felicities of that great age, all the same I cannot approve of those who shudder at anything they find in the later

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and whom Erasmus appears to be using extensively in this chapter. [Tr.]

[29] Not Diomedes but Quintilian 8 preface 25. [Tr.]

[30] Suetonius *Augustus* 86.2, where Augustus criticizes Mark Antony's style in these terms. [Tr.]

[31] Festus 234 (*Gloss. Lat.* IV Lindsay); Festus was a grammarian of the second century AD whose lexicon was printed at Milan in 1500. [Tr.]

[32] *Adagia* IV viii 3; in medieval fancy a goblin Titivillus gathered up in a sack the unconsidered trifles of careless speech let fall by monks. [Tr.]

[33] There seems to be no record of Cicero's using this word. Possibly Erasmus has confused it with *exterminare* or *expectorare* which have a related meaning. Nonius Marcellus quotes all three (39, 27, 16), giving quotations from Cicero for *exterminare* and *expectorare*. [Tr.]

[34] *Disticha Catonis* ed M. Boas (Amsterdam 1952) 4.42; this collection of gnomic sayings in verse was much read in the Middle Ages, and supposed to have been composed by the Elder Cato, though actually belonging to a period several centuries later. It was edited by Erasmus and published at Louvain in 1514; see 628.20n. [Tr.]

[35] Quintilian 8.3.31. [Tr.]

[36] Rejected as excessively antique by Quintilian 1.6.40, as is *oppido* 8.3.25. [Tr.]

[37] *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.10.15, where this word is given as an example of affected archaism. [Tr.]

[38] The literary patron of Virgil and Horace; his Latin style was considered extravagant and decadent. See Seneca *Epistles* 114.4–8. [Tr.]

[39] Historian of the fourth century AD. [Tr.]

writers as if it were a barbarism, especially as it is possible that the very feature from which they recoil was actually used by Cicero in books which have not come down to us.[40]

Harsh Words

Harsh expressions are those used in an uncomfortable metaphorical sense. One speaker earned censure[41] by saying that Rome was "castrated" by the death of Camillus, meaning that the strength of the city collapsed at his death. Horace[42] obliquely censures a certain Furius for writing "Jove has the Alps with hoary snow bespewed." Another similar example is: "He destroyed the plains of peace, and raised the mountains of war."[43] The metaphor would have been less violent if the writer had used the image of a calm sea and a stormy one.

Foreign Words

Foreign words also have a charm of their own when introduced in the appropriate place, like using *gazae*, a word meaning "treasures" taken from the Persians, since the Persians are famous for their opulence and for the luxury that accompanies it. *Acinaces* "scimitar" for *gladium* "sword" is borrowed from the Medes, and *essedum* "wagon" for *raeda* "carriage" from the British. *Ungulum* is Oscan for *anulus* "ring," *cascus* for *vetulus* "old" Sabine. *Uri* "wild oxen" is Gallic, as also *merga* "marle," the marrow or fat of the land, which is dug out to manure the fields, also *gaesa*, a sort of weapon. *Parasang*, a distance of thirty stades, is Persian. *Camurus* "with crumpled horn," that is, turned in on itself, will also be listed among foreign words.

The early Christians adopted the words *nonnus* and *nonna* "holy man, holy woman" from Egypt, because it was in Egypt that crowds of male and female recluses were at one time earning their reputation for holiness.

If ever we are forced to use barbaric words, we must always preface their introduction with an apology, as Pliny says. There are many other words which have found their way in, together with the things they name, from barbarian nations to the Greeks, and from the Greeks to us, such as *sinapi, piper, zinziber* [mustard, pepper, ginger], etc.

Indecent Words

Indecent words should be utterly unknown to Christian speech, and no attention should be paid to the Cynics, who consider no act shameful to name that is not shameful to perform, and an act that is not shameful to perform in private not shameful to perform in public; like making water or evacuating the bowels. On the other hand, it is not automatically shameful to talk about an act that is shameful to perform. One can name parricide and incest without loss of modesty, though they would both be utterly shaming if committed. Again there are certain parts of the body which are not dishonorable in themselves, yet are kept covered because of a sense of decency peculiar to civilized man; likewise there are some actions which in themselves are neither good nor bad which nonetheless are kept private for modesty's sake. Yet it is not automatically shameful to use the appropriate word for an act that it would be indecent to perform openly. One can talk about giving birth with decency, but it would be shameful for it to happen in public. "To piss" is not an indecent word (though "to make water" is a more decorous expression), but it is immodest to piss in public. On the other hand, "shit" is an improper word, though the action is neutral. The belly can be named with decency, but it is indecent to show it. The word "vulva" is respectable, but "cunt" is highly indecent.

How then do we recognize indecency? Only from usage, and I do not mean the usage of all and sundry, but of those whose speech is modest. The poets, in particular the satirists, have allowed themselves too much freedom in the employment of such words.

Sometimes a metaphorical expression is far more indecent than the direct word, as in "to grind others' wives" (Horace) and "piss into an upper-class hole," or in Catullus "he spat down his uncle" and "take the skin off men." Some perfectly respectable words have been distorted in the direction of obscenity, like *dare* "give, allow" (a modest enough term in *dare fidem* "give one's word"), which nonetheless appears in the Priapeia[44] in an obscene sense: "Much simpler would good plain Latin be: Give me — you know what." And also in Martial: "To give way you wish, but not to give away."

Such obviously obscene words must be totally shunned, but neutral ones can be accommodated to a decent meaning, like using *exosculari* or *dissuaviari* [literally "to kiss passionately"] to express great pleasure at the ready wit of some person, or like calling the aspirant after learning "a wooer of Philology."

New Words

Innovations can be taken in three ways: completely new creations, existing words diverted into a new meaning, and new words made by compounding existing forms. An example of the first is Nero's *morari* with a long first syllable, meaning "to fool about," from the Greek word *μωρός* [stupid];[45] of the second, Sallust's[46] *ductare exercitum* "lead an army," since *ductare* "lead about" has an indecent sense in Terence and other early writers, for example, *ut meam ductes gratis* "so that you can lead off my girl for nothing." Likewise *patrare bellum*, equivalent to *gerere bellum* "wage war," since *patrare* "achieve, perform" was earlier used of the endeavor to beget children. Of the third, *vitilitigator*, "brawler," compounded from *vitium* "the fault," *litigandi* "of picking quarrels," which I mentioned earlier, and *bubsequa* [from *bos* "ox" and *sequor* "follow"], equivalent to *bubulcus* "cowherd," and Pacuvius'[47] *Nerei repandirostrum incurvicervicum pecus* "the snout-upturned, neck-arching flock of Nereus," all examples which Quintilian mentions. To this class belong new words created by derivations from existing forms, like *vituperones* "vituperists," *amorabundus* "love-bound," *nupturire* "be wedding-mad," *verbigerari* "word-bandy," the sort of words particularly favored by Apuleius, Martianus Capella,[48] Sidonius Apollinaris,[49] and those who model themselves on those writers. Such words have their own charm, if they are sprinkled here and there with discretion and in the appropriate place. As Quintilian[50] neatly remarked, in food a touch of sharpness can at times give pleasure.

Not a little charm is added by the judicious mingling of Greek forms with the Latin. This can be when the Greek word is more expressive, like *λογομαχία* [battle of words] for "dispute" or "quarrel"; or shorter, like *φίλαυτος* [self-lover] for a man who is self-satisfied; or more forceful, like *γυναικομανής* [mad on women] for a man who is over-fond of women; or more agreeable, like using *μετεωρολεσχεῖν* [star-gazing] for a man prating on involved but useless topics, or calling *μωρόσοφος* [fool-wise] a man who is a fool but thinks himself wise.

No Latin expression can approach the charm of a Greek one in which we allude to a passage or remark of some author; if, for example, in reprimanding someone for speaking without thinking, we quote Homer's line *ποῖον ἔπος* . . . ["What a word escaped . . . "] or, in pointing out that someone has failed to keep to the point at issue, we say in Greek *ἄμας ἀπῄτουν* [I was needing sickles]. If we were to say in Latin *falces petebam*, all the attractiveness disappears.

There is an allusion also in Horace's lines: "Anointed, thrice through Tiber's waves shalt pass, / At eve, in liquor soaked *corpus habeas*." The speaker is Trebatius, a legal expert, and they enjoy words out of the Twelve Tables, a feature that Cicero imitates in his books on the laws.

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[40] A reference to Erasmus' long-standing battle with those who applied strict canons of classical conformity and would have no prose author used as a model but Cicero. See Erasmus *Ciceronianus* (1528). [Tr.]

[41] See Cicero *De oratore* 3.164; Quintilian 8.6.15 (death of Africanus, not Camillus). [Tr.]

[42] *Satires* 2.5.41, referred to in Quintilian 8.6.17. [Tr.]

[43] See *Ad Herennium* 4.10.15, the passage that criticizes *perduellio* above 312:10. [Tr.]

[44] A collection of obscene verse in honor of Priapus, a fertility god: 3.9–10 (misremembered). [Tr.]

[45] See Suetonius *Nero* 33, where Nero says of Claudius *morari eum desisse inter homines*, punning on the already existing verb *morari* with a short vowel, meaning "stay, hang about"; Erasmus explains this in detail in *De recta pronuntiatione* LB I 945B–C. [Tr.]

[46] *Jugurtha* 38.1; See Quintilian 8.3.44, who comments on the change of meaning. [Tr.]

[47] Quoted by Quintilian 1.5.67. [Tr.]

[48] Author (fifth century AD) of a famous allegorical poem on the marriage of Mercury and Philology; it describes the seven liberal arts. [Tr.]

[49] Christian Latin poet and bishop (fifth century AD). [Tr.]

[50] 9.3.27. [Tr.]

Finally we can use Greek words when we wish our meaning not to be understood by all and sundry; and — not to go through every possibility — whenever there is a certain convenience, we are justified in mixing Greek with Latin, especially when writing for the educated public. But to produce a half-Greek, half-Latin mixture of set purpose when there is no particular justification for it may possibly be forgiven in the young who are endeavoring to acquire facility in both languages, but in grown men, in my opinion, such exhibitionism would be quite out of place, and would no more suggest seriousness of purpose than writing a book in a mixture of prose and verse — though we observe that some educated men have done even that, like Petronius Arbiter[51] whose book however has a certain air of mad irresponsibility, and Seneca in his mock-encomium of Claudius.[52] Boethius,[53] more surprisingly, did so in a serious work, though in the poems he is so different from his usual self that scholars are not inclined to believe that he wrote them unaided. Boethius was copied by Jean Gerson[54] who would be a writer of some standing if his lot had fallen in the present age.

It sometimes happens that we either have to express our meaning by a circumlocution, or borrow from the Greeks, for example, *πολυπραγμοσύνη* [officious meddling in many affairs], *φιλαυτία* [esteem for oneself], *ἀφαμαρτοεπής* [talking at random], *πολυφιλία* [abundance of friends], *δυσωπία* [being put out of countenance], *περισσολογία* [talking too much], *ταυτολογία* [saying the same thing again], *βαττολογία* [talking gibberish],[55] and thousands more of the same sort, which I shall perhaps discuss on another occasion.

There are quite a number of Greek words which were given Latin citizenship in the classical period, and these may be used just like native Latin ones, for example, *rhetor/orator*; *hypotheca/pignus* "surety"; *elleborum/veratrum* "hellebore"; *feniculum/marathrum* "fennel"; *sycophanta/calumniator* "slanderer"; *praebibo* (used by Apuleius)/*propino* "drink a health"; *mastigia/verbero* "scoundrel." In some cases the borrowed word has become the standard one and there is no native Latin form, for example, *philosophus, theologus, grammatica, dialectica, epigramma*. With these words we can provide variety by declining them sometimes according to the Greek pattern, sometimes according to the Latin, for example, *scorpius/scorpio; elephantus/elephas; delphinus/delphin; lampas/lampada lampadae; grammatica grammaticae/grammatice grammatices*. . . .

33. *Methods 1–20: Practical Demonstration*

To make it easier to understand what I have been saying, let us have a practical demonstration. We will take one or two sentences and see how far we can go in transforming the basic expression into a Protean variety of shapes — not that every method of variation can be applied to any one sentence, but we shall apply the ones that lend themselves to the example in question. Let us, for example, take this sentence: "Your letter pleased me mightily" *tuae litterae me magnopere delectarunt*.

your: There is no synonym for "your," but a periphrasis is possible: Your excellency's, your highness's, your majesty's. If we insert a proper name such as "Faustus"[56] and say "Faustus' letter," we employ two forms of heterosis, the substitution of a noun for a pronoun and of a third person for a second. If we say "Faustine letters," using a derivative adjective instead of the genitive of the noun, that is yet another form of heterosis.

letter: epistle, letter, note (synonym); epistolet, letterette, notelet (heterosis, [using a diminutive form]); pages, lines (synecdoche); what you wrote to me (periphrasis).

pleased:[57] delighted, refreshed, exhilarated (synonyms, though "exhilarated" is better considered a metaphor); brought pleasure, were a pleasure, were delightful (these and similar expressions illustrate periphrasis); bathed in delight, were honey-sweet, and so on (transferred or metaphorical expressions); were not unwelcome, not unpleasing (these result from the interchange of opposites).

me: my spirits, my heart, my eyes (periphrasis or synecdoche); us (enallage of the number); Erasmus (heterosis of the person).

mightily: greatly, intensely, extremely, wonderfully, marvelously, extraordinarily (synonym); mightily, hugely, superlatively, exceedingly, singularly (*αὔξησις* heightening); in no scant measure, on no small scale, in no common manner (opposites and negatives); it is impossible to say how much, it is beyond belief, I could not find words to express (these and similar expressions are on the way to hyperbole).

Other points can be conveniently illustrated only in the context of a complete sentence, so let us move on to our demonstration:

Your letter mightily pleased me; to a wonderful degree did your letter please me; me exceedingly did your letter please. (So far hardly anything has been changed but the word order.)

By your letter was I mightily pleased; I was exceedingly pleased by your letter. (Here only the voice of the verb is altered.)

Your epistle exhilarated me intensely; I was intensely exhilarated by your epistle; your brief note refreshed my spirits in no small measure; I was in no small measure refreshed in spirit by your grace's hand; from your affectionate letter I received unbelievable pleasure; your affectionate letter brought me unbelievable pleasure. (Here we have both hyperbole and reciprocal expression.)

Your pages engendered in me an unfamiliar delight; I conceived a wonderful delight from your pages; your lines conveyed to me the greatest joy; the greatest joy was brought me by your lines; we derived great delight from your excellency's letter. (Again we have examples of reciprocal expression.)

In the other examples the reader will easily identify the figure for himself:

From my dear Faustus' letter I derived much delight.

At your words a delight of no ordinary kind came over me.

I was singularly delighted by your epistle.

In these Faustine letters I found a wonderful kind of delectation.

To be sure, how your letter delighted my spirits!

Your brief missive flooded me with inexpressible joy. (Here we have a metaphor.)

As a result of your letter, I was suffused by an unfamiliar gladness.

Your communication poured vials of joy on my head. (Again a metaphor.)

Your epistle afforded me no small delight.

How delighted I was to read your letter!

The perusal of your letter charmed my mind with singular delight.

Your epistle was delightful to a degree.

Your letter affected me with extraordinary gladness.

As a result of your letter I was affected with singular gladness.

Your epistle was the greatest joy to me.

Your missive was to me a very great delight.

Your epistle was an incredible joy to me.

How exceedingly agreeable did we find your epistle!

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[51] Nero's famous "Arbiter of Elegance" in the *Satyricon*, a picaresque novel retailing the adventures of three rascals; the *editio princeps* (without the section known as *Trimalchio's Feast*) appeared in 1482. [Tr.]

[52] *Apocolocyntosis* "The Pumpkinification," first printed in 1513; included in Erasmus' edition of Seneca (Basel 1515). [Tr.]

[53] *Consolatio philosophiae*, in which verse and prose alternate. [Tr.]

[54] 1363–1429, a distinguished chancellor of the University of Paris; in his *Consolatio theologiae* (1418) he deliberately imitates the form of Boethius' work and the meters used. [Tr.]

[55] From Battus, a bad poet whose verses were full of repetitions; *Adagia* II i 92. [Tr.]

[56] Erasmus is presumably thinking of his friend of early days in Paris, the poet Fausto Andrelini. See Ep 84 introduction. [Tr.]

[57] The arrangement of LB I 23E–F, where the sections follow the Latin word order of the specimen sentence, has been adjusted to accord with the English word order. [Tr.]

You could scarce credit what relief I find in your missive. (Cicero frequently uses "find relief" in the sense "take pleasure.")

Your epistle was to us one of great delightfulness.

Your letter was very sweet to me.

Your letter was the source of singular gladness.

Your letter made me positively jump for joy.

Your letter having arrived, I was transported with joy.

When your letter was delivered, I was filled with delight.

Once I had read your affectionate letter, I was carried away with a strange happiness.

On receipt of your letter, an incredible delight seized my spirits.

Your epistle poured the balm of happiness over me.

Your writing to me was the most delightful thing possible.

The fact that you had written to me was extremely pleasurable to me.

Your honoring me with a letter was the most agreeable of occurrences.

Your brief note made me burst with joy.

How overjoyed I was by your letter!

I was both pleased and delighted that you communicated with me by letter.

When your letter arrived, you could have seen me jumping for all the joy I felt.

That you paid your respects by letter was assuredly a satisfaction to me.

Nothing more wished for than your letter could have been brought me.

Your letter has reached us, and eagerly looked for it was.

Nothing more desired than your letter could have been brought us. (These last three illustrate metalepsis, or at any rate synecdoche, for things that we greatly desire are pleasurable when they arrive.)

Faustine letters cannot but be most delightful to Erasmus.

Not unpleasing was your epistle to me.

Your by no means displeasing letter has arrived.

Your missive by no means failed of a welcome.

Your epistle was to me the sweetest of the sweet.

I read and reread your letter with great pleasure.

It was not without the greatest pleasure that I received your letter.

The man who delivered your letter conveyed a wealth of joy.

Wonderful to relate how your letter entranced me.

The pages I received from you sent a new light of joy stealing over my heart.

Your letter promptly expelled all sorrow from my mind.

I sensed a wonderful happiness in my spirits when your letter was handed me.

From your letter an unaccustomed happiness swept over my spirits.

Your letter caused me to rejoice to the full.

Because of your letter my whole self exulted with joy.

It is difficult to say how much happiness was occasioned in me by your letter.

I can hardly find words to express the extent of the joy to which your letter gave rise.

It is wonderful to tell what a ray of delight beamed forth from your letter.

Good God, what a mighty joy proceeded from your epistle!

Heavens, what causes for joy did your letter provide!

Ye gods, what a power of joy did your missive supply!

The happiness occasioned by your communication is greater than I can describe.

Your messenger brought me a deal of pleasure.

You could scarce credit the load of happiness your letters conveyed to my mind.

I cannot find words to tell the joys that your letter loaded on me. (Why hesitate to use such an expression, when Terence spoke of the day being "loaded" with blessings?)

Your letter heaped joy upon me.

I rejoiced greatly at your letter.

I found singular pleasure in your letter.

Your missive showered a wealth of gladness upon me.

Your epistle was most delightful to me.

Your letter caused me quite to smooth my brow.

At the sight of your letter the frown fled from my mind's brow.

As I read the words you wrote me, a marvelous happiness stole over my mind.

As soon as I looked into your letter, a strange force of joy occupied my mind.

As my eye fell on your letter, an incredible tide of joy swelled in my breast.

When I received your most gracious letter, boundless happiness occupied every recess of my soul.

May I die the death if anything more delightful than your letter ever came my way.

May I perish if I ever met with anything in my whole life more agreeable than your letter.

As I aspire to the love of the Muses, nothing more gladsome than your letter has ever ere this befallen me.

Never believe that fortune could cast anything more delightful in my path than your letter.

As you are dear to my soul, even so does your letter delight me.

Ye heavens, what joy your letter roused in me!

What gaiety, what applause, what exultation your letter occasioned!

Reading your tasteful letter, I experienced an uncommon joy.

Your pen sated me with delight.

Your epistle provided me with much pleasure.

Your graceful epistle filled me wholly with delight.

Your charming epistle filled every corner of my heart with delight.

Your letter cast a dew of rare joy upon me.

Your epistle bedewed my spirit with an unfamiliar delight.

Nothing more delightsome than your letter ever came my way.

I never set eyes on anything more gladly than your letter.

There is not a thing that I would receive with more pleasure than the latest letter from my dear Faustus.

Can you imagine the tide of joy on which I rode as I perceived in your letter your affection for me?

When the messenger handed me your letter, my spirit immediately felt the motions of an inexpressible delight.

What need have I to tell you of the pleasure that stirred the soul of your Erasmus on the receipt of your letter?

My soul overflowed with joy when your letter was delivered.

How glad I was to receive your epistle!

After your note was handed me, my spirit quite bubbled over with joy.

I was beside myself with joy when I received your letter.

The charm of your letter put shackles of delight on my soul.

I cannot but rejoice mightily whenever a missive of yours comes flying to me.

Your letter was pure honey to me.

Whatever kind of a letter leaves your hand seems to me flowing with sweetness and honey.

I was most luxuriously refreshed at the sumptuous banquet of your letter.

What you wrote is sweeter to me than any ambrosia.

The pages of my dear Faustus were more splendid to me than Sicilian feasts.[58]

There is no pleasure, no delight, that I would willingly compare with your letter.

All else is utterly repellent compared with your letter.

In the perusal of your affectionate letter the heart of Erasmus leapt for joy.

The pages scratched by your pen filled every part of me with joy.

Anything that arrives written by you is pure delight to my heart.

Your epistle exudes nothing but joy.

The man who brought your letter brought a feast day.

[58] A proverbial expression; see Horace *Odes* 3.1.18: *Siculae dapes; Adagia* II ii 68; ultimately derived, like the expressions on 354:6, 8, 10, 12, from *Paroemiographi graeci*, a collection of proverbs originating in antiquity but given definite form in the early Middle Ages. [Tr.]

A triumph came with the man who delivered your letter.
Nectar I would not prefer to a message from you.
Could I possibly compare Attic honey with your dear letter?
Sugar is not sugar when set beside your letter.
The lotus tastes not as sweet to any mortal man as your letters do to me.
Your letters are to me like wine to a thirsty man.
Like clover to the bee, willow leaves to goats, honey to the bear, even so are your letters to me.
Your highness's letter was to me more honeyed than any honey.
Once I had received your longed-for letter, you might have said Erasmus was drunk with joy.
When your letter was delivered, you might have seen us tipsy with excess of delight.
I love you as no one else, and I delight in your letters as in nothing else.
Your lines seem to me pure enchantment.
Sweetmeats do not so delight the palate as your letter charms my soul.
No delicacies give such pleasure to the palate as your communication to the mind.
The man who delivered your letter brought *ἁμάξας ἡδονῶν* [cartloads of pleasure].
Your messenger brought *Δάθον* [an Eldorado][59] of joy when he delivered your letter.
He who handed over your pages brought with him *θάλασσαν* [a sea] of joys.
Your letter was to me a positive *Διὸς ἐγκέφαλος* [choice morsel] for a Persian, as the Greeks say.

If anyone thinks that some of these suggestions would hardly be tolerable in prose, he should remember that this exercise is designed for the composition of verse as well.[60]

Let us now test out our skill in variation in the same way on some other sentence, and let us choose one that is not of itself particularly fertile or suggestive, so that it may be all the more apparent how effective this technique of substitution can be, when it is confirmed by practice and constant use.

So let us take this sentence: "Always, as long as I live, I shall remember you" *semper dum vivam tui meminero*. In the first place, to take the adverb *semper* "always," there is no other word corresponding to it that has the same force, and *semper* itself cannot generate other forms by inflection. Then *vivam* "live" is likewise without anything closely corresponding, and, as it is an intransitive verb, it has only forms belonging to one voice, and the only noun derived from it is *vita* "life." *Memini* "remember" is not only an intransitive verb, but is also defective and incomplete, and almost entirely unproductive, as it has no offspring but *memor* "preserving the memory of" and *memoria* "memory." Besides, the two verbs paired with these, *mori* "die" and *oblivisci* "forget," are themselves both defective and unproductive. All the same let us make a start. The reader will recognize the different types of variation from the examples given earlier.

Always, as long as I live, I shall remember you.
Never, as long as I live, shall I fail to remember you.
Never during the time I yet shall live shall forgetfulness of you overcome me.
At no time while I have life shall you disappear from my thoughts.
Never while I live will you find oblivion in me.
Never, as long as I remain among the living, shall oblivion of you find us.
I will not cease to remember you before I cease to live.
The memory of you will not leave me before life itself departs.
As long as I have breath, I shall be found mindful of you.
While I enjoy the light of life, you shall be fixed in my thoughts.
I would leave the fellowship of the living sooner than have the memory of you removed from my breast.
I shall myself depart from the living before More departs from my memory.[61]
The light of day shall fail me, before I begin to be forgetful of you.
Life shall desert me not a moment later than the remembrance of one so dear to me.
The same day shall snatch from me the memory of you that shall snatch life from me.
That same dawn is destined to bring oblivion of you that shall bring our death.
There shall be the same end for our memory of you and for our life.
As long as I shall be mindful of myself, I shall never be sorry to remember you.
There shall be no other extinction of our memory of you than the extinction of the light of day.
That day alone shall quench my memory of you that quenches my life.
I shall begin to forget myself before I begin to forget you.
The memory of More will not steal from our breast before this soul steals from us.
Save only death, no mischance shall cast you forth from my heart.
Could I ever while alive forget so delightful a companion?
Only then will Erasmus prove able to forget his beloved More, when he ceases to be mindful of himself.
As long as any consciousness is left to me, you shall always be present to my thoughts.
You are too dear to my heart ever to pass into forgetfulness, at least while I have life.
More is hidden deep within my heart, and nothing can cast him out from thence, save only Death.
I shall myself be delivered to Death before I consign you to oblivion.
While my spirit rules these eyes, these hands, you shall be fixed within my breast.
While the spirit directs these limbs, I shall remember you.
As long as breath remains in us, I shall be incapable of forgetting you.
While I am active in life, so long shall the memory of you live in me.
That day will end my life that begins oblivion of you.
The same fate shall tear this soul away and tear you from my love.
While the gods above grant me existence, I shall continually bear you in my thoughts.
While any spark of vital heat shall pulse within this breast my remembrance of you shall never fade away.
Life shall not be more lasting than the recollection of your services to me.
My memory of you will prove no shorter than life itself.
The remembrance of your dear head will be no less lasting than this life I live.
The day that takes away the memory of you will separate me from myself.
I shall be stolen away from myself before I cease to hold you in my thoughts.
My enjoyment of the light of day will last no longer than my remembrance of your benevolence.
Life will not go on longer than my recollection of you.
I shall be outside this self before More ceases to be within this breast.
This life and my remembrance of you shall keep pace together to the goal.
Erasmus will no longer exist when he is heedless of More.
This person will not be in existence, when I prove capable of forgetting so unique a friend.
As long as I shall be active in this world, I shall not allow my remembrance of your kindness to fade away.
As long as I breathe this common air, you shall many a time be present in my thoughts.
It shall never be that Erasmus retain life longer than his memory of you.
I shall not make an end of thinking of you till Atropos[62] severs the fatal thread.

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[59] Dathus was a colony of the Thasians, proverbial for its wealth; *Adagia* I iii 33. [Tr.]

[60] Erasmus was himself an accomplished writer of Latin verse, which is collected in Reedijk. Most humanists wrote Latin (and sometimes Greek) verse, with greater or less skill, and schoolboys were expected to compose verses. [Tr.]

[61] Sir Thomas More, Erasmus' dearest friend; see Ep 114. [Tr.]

[62] One of the three Fates presiding over the lives of

If any day shall ever bring forgetfulness of you, it shall certainly never precede the one that deprives me of the very light.

This sun that beholds everything shall never behold me unmindful of you.

Death alone shall dislodge from this heart the recollection of you.

As long as any portion of life shall remain in these limbs, More will never be absent from the thoughts of Erasmus.

While any drop of blood retains its warmth in this feeble frame, the memory of More will never grow cold in my heart.

As long as life shall remain mine, you shall never be absent from my thoughts.

How long soever shall remain unbroken this union of soul and mortal clay, never for one moment shall you be severed from my thoughts.

Sooner shall there no longer be soul within this body than you no longer in my thoughts.

Rather shall the spirit remove from this poor body's lodging than your image be erased that I bear engraved upon my heart.

My recollection of you shall equal my course through life.

The same finishing-post shall be set for my life and my thoughts of you.

My remembrance of you shall know no narrower bounds than life itself.

As long as any vein shall pulse with vital heat, to remember you shall ever prove delightful.

However long Lachesis[63] shall draw out my thread of life, so long shall be drawn out my memory of you.

Life and thoughts of you shall have equal measure.

So long as the vital state shall maintain this body's mass, I shall retain a mind that above all remembers you.

While heaven's kindness grants me to enjoy the light of day, I shall always bear you in my thoughts.

While the gods above grant us life, we shall not allow carelessness of our loyal confrère ever to take us unawares.

While consciousness remains to me, I will never lay aside these remembering grateful thoughts.

As long as heaven wills that I enjoy the circling sun, so long shall you have in me a man who is mindful of you.

He who finds Erasmus heedless of you will not find him alive.

For all the time that life shall last for me, this mind of mine shall continue full of thoughts of you.

As long as it shall be my lot to enjoy this sky above our heads, it will not be my lot to forget you.

As long as life continues, you will always be present to the eyes of my heart.

I will forget my own name before I forget so rare a friend.

I shall lose myself before I lose the image of your face.

More will never pass from Erasmus' thoughts, while Erasmus lives.

No passage of time shall ever obliterate my memory of you.

The memory of you will only be extinguished when I am.

You will never be cast out of the doors of memory before the day that brings my destined end.

I will not stop remembering you until my death.

I will not cease to recall you until my latest hour.

Not until the last threads in my web of life are spun could I be forgetful of you.

While Erasmus lives, More's memory will never fade away.

My recollection of you no passage of time shall ever take off the statute book.

Before my final day the memory of you that I bear shall never be rescinded.

No injury inflicted by place or time shall cause me in this life not to recall you vividly.

I will remember you throughout all my life.

However long I shall have this mortal life, it will always be joined with memory of you.

My recollection of you shall follow me as far as the very grave.

I shall lose consciousness of myself before I shall lose the memory of a man most dear to me.

I shall be torn from these very limbs before you are rent from my mind.

Death shall find me sooner than forgetfulness of a head so dear.

I shall assuredly meet my end rather than cease to preserve your memory.

Your memory shall never be buried in me till I am buried myself.

My recollection of you shall perish with me or not at all.

The memory of my beloved More shall breathe within me until I breathe my last.

So long as we shall sojourn in this world, never shall oblivion of your grace assail me.

Until I meet my end, never shall forgetfulness of you occur to my mind. (Seneca uses an expression like this.)

This mortal life can produce no fate so harsh that it can hammer your memory from this heart of mine.

Nothing so cruel can happen to me in this mortal life as to cause me heedlessness of you.

While I live, nothing can arise that would occasion forgetfulness of your kindness towards me.

The memory of you is so deeply rooted in me that it will give way before none of those mischances that befall us in this life.

You are consecrated in my heart in a monument that no passage of years can demolish, save only death to which every mortal thing must yield.

Were I not mortal myself, I would not hesitate to declare this memory of you that I hold to be immortal.

If Erasmus were immortal, the memory of you that he bears would likewise be immortal.

Your kindnesses have set up a statue in the inmost recesses of my heart such that no mischance can cast it down, as long as the earth shall support me.

More is inscribed in my heart in letters that no injurious time can ever erode.

My recollection of you will only grow old as the years grow old.

I shall be cast out of myself before the name of More is driven from my heart's shrine.

This one thing I declare and shall make good, that as long as I shall be numbered among mortal men, you shall never be removed from the records of my memory.

Though Time has power over all, this one thing surely shall never be granted him, to cause me to forget you while I live.

Always this spirit of mine shall remember you above all else, and no passage of time, however long, shall teach me to forget.

As long as the earth shall nourish me, the one thing I shall never be able to unlearn is the remembrance of my dear companion.

As long as I shall be *ἐπιχθόνιος* [earth-propped], to use a Homeric word, I shall continually preserve the memory of More.

As long as it shall be my lot to be numbered among *οἶτον ἔδοντας* [the eaters of bread], to speak in Homeric fashion, never shall the face of More fade from this breast.

ὄφϱ'ἂν ἔγωγε / ζωοῖσιν μετέω ϰαὶ μοι φίλα γούνατ' ὀϱώϱῃ [As long as I shall associate with the living and my limbs shall bear me about], as Homer says, you can never be forgotten.

ἐμεῦ ζῶντος ϰαί ἐπὶ χθονὶ δεϱϰομένοιο [As long as I am alive and capable of perception], as we find written in Homer, forgetfulness shall never bear you from me.

I shall prolong the memory of you to match the course of my life.

While Erasmus survives, no day shall ever expunge the recollection of your highness.

I may be separated from you in body, but I shall always behold you in my mind, so long as the gods grant me the gift of life.

So long as the breath of life shall govern these limbs, you shall never for one moment be absent from my thoughts.

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individuals. Clotho held the distaff, Lachesis spun the thread of life, Atropos inexorably cut it off. [Tr.]

[63] See preceding n. [Tr.]

The memory of you is so deeply impressed on my heart that it cannot by any means be erased from there.

All things fade and fail with time, but your memory will flourish to the close of my days.

My beloved More is so closely embraced in my soul that he cannot escape while I live.

The day that sees me mindless of you will also see me lifeless.

You have engraved such a living image of yourself on my heart that hardly death itself will wipe it away.

Erasmus will not be more long-lived than his recollection of you.

Your memory will be so enduring that I myself will not endure any longer.

More's memory will never perish within me, unless I perish myself.

You will always find this man mindful of you, as long as he has any share in life.

I shall be separated from life before I am alienated from my memory of you.

My recollection of you is so tenacious of life that I shall not survive it.

You are too deeply embedded in my memory for anything to be able to dislodge you from there.

You cling too tightly to my heart for anything but the mischance of death to be able to cast you out.

You are too deeply hidden in this breast of mine to be driven out by any means, as long as the fates shall not grudge me life.

You are too deeply implanted in my thoughts for me to survive if you are rooted out from there.

Your image is too firmly impressed on my heart for me to outlive it, should it be torn from thence.

The picture of you is so deeply embedded in my thoughts that no passage of time will ever efface it.

While life is mine, nothing that happens will ever be strong enough to cast down the statue of More set up in my thoughts.

It will never be that I live and am heedless of you.

As long as I dwell among men, not even all the waters of Lethe will be able to dissolve my recollection of you.

As long as I feed on the breezes of heaven, I shall constantly recall you.

Provided God grants me life, I promise you a mind always thoughtful of you.

Far from forgetting you while I live, if there is any consciousness when life is past, I shall recall my beloved friend.

The last thing that shall befall me in this life is forgetfulness of you.

The rivers will run backwards to their source,[64] as the Greek proverb has it, when Erasmus shall prove capable of forgetting his dear More.

Only that man will see me heedless of you who sees the rivers, as Horace says, "From the plains glide backwards up the mountain steep / And Tiber reverse his stream."

Sooner shall fleet-footed deer feed among the clouds than forgetfulness of More take Erasmus while he lives.

Your portrait is painted on the tablet of my heart in colors so vivid that no long line of years can ever make it fade.

The last day of my life will discover me still mindful of you.

My life being safe, your memory will not flee from me.

This life being preserved, my memory of you will not die.

As long as this life bears me company, so shall the remembrance of you.

This life will depart from one still mindful of you.

Except life fly away, my memory of you will never do so.

Our recollection of you will endure to the furthest confines of existence.

In preserving your memory I shall never be untrue to my nature, unless I cease to live.

As long as the kindness of heaven shall preserve to me this gift of life, the memory of your kindness will never die away within me.

I shall sooner have done with life than cease remembering you.

I will meet my end sooner than consign you to breezes and winds.[65]

More is fastened in my memory with adamantine nails which death alone can break.

I shall go on remembering you till I am nothing but ashes.

The memory of you shall keep pace with me to the furthest limits of old age.

Erasmus will remember More throughout his whole life.

The recollection of your kindnesses to me will be prolonged until I rest upon the pyre.

Even that final fatal day shall find me mindful of you.

I shall see to it that the recollection of your kindness is preserved until my encounter with Death.[66]

No experience in life, whether glad or sad, will ever be able to expel from my heart's recesses the memory of your name.

As long as this soul is tethered to this poor frame, More shall be no stranger to my thoughts.

I am more likely to carry your memory with me to the other world than abandon it in this.

I shall cast out my own soul before I cease to keep you in my thoughts.

If the body can escape from its own shadow, then this mind will be capable of forgetting you.

Not until I conclude the very last day of my life shall I cease to carry in my thoughts your generosity to me.

However long a life is granted me, my recollection of you will equal it.

Life and memory will be granted us in equal measure.

I shall recall you as long as I breathe in the vital air.

Heaven grant my recollection of you be not briefer than my life.

However long Erasmus shall survive, he will never find your memory unwelcome.

I shall be deprived of life before your memory abandon me.

I shall be bereft of this upper light, as they said in olden time, sooner than More be expunged from my mind.

This feeble frame shall chill in death before your memory grow cold within me.

I shall always maintain your memory unquenched.

For all the time that I shall have the pleasure of my soul (for thus speaks Sallust), so long shall I remember you.

Without surcease shall I prove heedful of you.

Without end shall I recall you.

No event shall bring me oblivion of you, save one that takes me from the light.

I will change the world more easily than this mind that remembers you.

That event shall withdraw me from life, that introduces forgetfulness of you.

I shall find my rest among the cruel shades, as the poets say, ere I cease to recollect you.

I shall myself be borne to the grave before your memory is borne from my heart.

The recollection of you shall follow my corpse to the grave.

Not even when I have gone hence could I forget you, let alone while I live.

The recollection of a man so deservedly loved will never grow dim for me while living.

When shall it be that the memory of More fades from Erasmus' mind? Only when life shall be failing him.

I shall be mindful of you the whole time I am in this world.

As long as I breathe, I shall bear you in my heart.

As long as I shall be allowed to have the pleasure of my soul, to speak after Sallust's fashion, I will not cease to take pleasure in recollecting you.

But let us make an end, as it is not our purpose to demonstrate how far we ourselves can go in inventing alternatives, but to show students by actual example the value of this exercise for the development of wealth of expression, for we have put one basic sentence, and that not particularly fertile or productive of variation, into about two hundred different forms, I should think, and even so we have not pursued with finicking exactitude every minute possibility.

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[64] A poetic commonplace; for example, Ovid *Amores* 2.1.26: *inque suos fontes versa recurrit aqua; Adagia* I iii 15. [Tr.]

[65] Another commonplace; *Adagia* III iv 46. [Tr.]

[66] Libitina, the Roman goddess of death and burial; used for Death in Horace *Odes* 3.30.7. [Tr.]

The next thing to do, it seems, is to set out examples illustrating various points of Latin usage. We do not intend to pursue every possible one, though this would be extremely useful, as it would involve endless work; but we shall provide a few by way of illustrative example, and either our readers can invent similar phrases for themselves, or someone else who has more leisure than we have can look for phrases illustrating the various points in all the different authors, and so provide more copious and detailed information for our candidate for *copia*.

34. How to Combine Predications of Equal Weight

est vir tum eruditus, tum probus: he is a man both learned and good.

est iuvenis et formosus et bene ingeniatus: he is a young man both handsome and of a fine disposition.

atque deos atque astra vocat crudelia mater: "Both gods and stars she heartless calls / Who once his mother was" (*atque* repeated like this is a poetic usage, here illustrated from Virgil).

vir doctus pariter ac probus: he is learned even as good.

est vir doctus simul et integer: learned and at the same time upright

est vir tam doctus quam bonus: he is as learned as good.

vir est doctus iuxta ac bonus: learned and together with it good

vir est non minus probus quam litteratus: no less good than cultured

vir est non inferior litteris quam moribus: not inferior in learning to what he is in character

est ex aequo probus atque doctus: in equal measure good as learned

vir est aeque litteratus ac incorruptus: equally cultured as honest

vir doctus aeque ac probus: learned equally as good

vir perinde doctus ac probus: in like manner learned and good

exquisite doctus est, itidem et facundus: a fine scholar, and likewise eloquent

vir est non minore morum probitate quam doctrina praeditus: endowed with integrity of character to match his knowledge

vir est quemadmodum doctus, ita et integer: as learned, in like manner upright . . .

BOOK II. ABUNDANCE OF SUBJECT MATTER

Enrichment of Material: Method 1

We have now presented as briefly as possible such thoughts as occurred to us on the subject of abundance of expression, so our next task is to review with equal conciseness abundance of subject matter. To start off this part of the work with material as similar as possible to that used in the corresponding section in Book 1, the first method of enriching what one has to say on any subject is to take something that can be expressed in brief and general terms, and expand it and separate it into its constituent parts. This is just like displaying some object for sale first of all through a grill[67] or inside a wrapping, and then unwrapping it and opening it out and displaying it fully to the gaze.

Here is an example of the method. Let us take the sentence: *He wasted all his substance in riotous living*. This is expressed in summary fashion, and is, so to speak, wrapped up. We can open it out by enumerating all the different types of possessions and setting out the various ways of wasting them: All he had inherited from mother or father or acquired by the death of other relatives, all that was added by his wife's dowry (and that was nothing in the ordinary run of things), all the increase that accrued from various legacies (and that increase was very considerable), all he received by the prince's generosity, all that he raked in during his military service, all his money, plate, clothes, estates and land, together with farm buildings and stock, in short everything, chattels and real estate, even his very household, he threw away on degrading affairs with low women, revelry every day, extravagant parties, nights spent wining and dining, luxurious foods, perfumes, dicing and gambling, and all in a few days so squandered, gobbled up, and sucked it out that he did not leave himself two half-pennies to rub together.

In this way the two phrases "all his substance" and "wasted in riotous living" are explicated via their constituent parts.

Here is another example: *He completed a thoroughly comprehensive education*. This general statement can be expanded by listing all the separate disciplines and every aspect of learning: There is absolutely no area of learning in which he is not meticulously versed; there is no branch of learning which he has not grasped down to the last detail, and so grasped that he would appear to have labored at it to the exclusion of the rest; he has such a wonderful knowledge of all the tales of all the poets; he is so richly supplied with the finest turns of expression employed by the orators; he has so sifted the laborious rules of the grammarians; he is skilled in the subtleties of dialectic; he has probed the secrets of physical science; he has scaled the heights of ultramundane knowledge; he has penetrated the inmost recesses of the theologians; he has a thorough understanding of the demonstrations of mathematics; such is his knowledge of the movements of the stars, the principles of number, the dimensions of the various lands, the position and name of cities, mountains, rivers, springs, the harmony and intervals of musical sounds; such is his memory of ancient and modern history; every good writer, whether of ancient or of modern times, he has them all; add to all this an equal skill in Greek and Latin language and literature; in short, whatever learning has been discovered and handed on by distinguished authors, this one man has completely assimilated and understood and holds fast in his memory.

Again, to expand the phrase *Endowed with every blessing of nature and fortune*, one can mention every separate good point of the body and then every separate gift of intelligence and spirit, and finally birth, wealth, nationality, success, and whatever comes to us from fortune. A third example is provided by *Hippias the omniscient*.[68] To elaborate this, one may introduce all the things listed by Apuleius in his description of this person in the *Florida*, a passage that is incidentally not devoid of diversity and richness of expression.

There is a very good example of this procedure in Lucian's *Harmonides*, where he could have said baldly *τὴν αὐλητικὴν ὅλην ἐκμεμάθηκα* [I have thoroughly learned the art of flute-playing], but he preferred to make a display of *copia* by setting out the parts inherent in the total idea. The passage does not go very easily into Latin, but I will make some attempt to translate if for the sake of those who do not know Greek: "You have by now taught me to tune the flute accurately and breathe into the mouthpiece gently and tunefully, to put the fingers down flexibly and in time with the constant rise and fall of the melody, to move with the beat and play in unison with the chorus, and to observe the characteristics of the different modes, the sublime frenzy of the Phrygian, the Dionysiac storming of the Lydian, the solemnity and dignity of the Dorian, the elegance of the Ionian. [All this I have learned from you.]"

If we had decided to do with all the separate disciplines in our example above what Lucian has done here with the single discipline of music, you can see what riches of material would have been thus provided.

Here I would make what I think is a helpful suggestion: have the general statement set out right at the beginning, and then take it up again in a different form of words, returning to the basic idea as if you have wearied of enumerating details, even if in fact nothing has been omitted.

Furthermore, we should take care not to throw the proper order of the various parts into confusion by mixing everything up in an indiscriminate chaos of utterances, and piling up a boring mass of words totally devoid of attraction; but instead we should rather prevent tedium in reader or hearer by skillful arrangement, appropriate allocation, and elegant disposition.

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[67] Cicero, *De oratore* 1.162. [Tr.]

[68] Of Elis, a sophist (297:14n and 583:5) contemporary with Socrates; equipped with a wide if superficial knowledge of many branches of learning and of art, combined with practical skills; he professed to be able to speak on any topic, and declared that everything he wore was made with his own hands. He was a celebrated figure, though criticized for arrogance and boastfulness. [Tr.]

Division of a Whole into Parts

We may include here the kind of example where some whole made up of subordinate parts rather than of a group of disparate items is separated out into its parts. Take the sentence: *He is a total monster*. This will be filled out by first dividing the man into body and mind, and then touching on the separate parts of the body followed by the separate parts of the mind: He is a monster both in mind and in body; whatever part of mind or body you consider, you will find a monster — quivering head, rabid eyes, a dragon's gape, the visage of a Fury, distended belly, hands like talons ready to tear, feet distorted, in short, view his entire physical shape and what else does it all present but a monster? Observe that tongue, observe that wild beast's roar, and you will name it a monstrosity; probe his mind, you will find a horror; weigh his character, scrutinize his life, you will find all monstrous; and, not to pursue every point in detail, through and through he is nothing but a monster.

It is clear what fullness the speech would acquire if anyone chose to dwell on the depiction of any of these separate items.

Here is another example: *He was quite drenched*; he was drenched with rain from the top of his head to the soles of his shoes; head, shoulders, chest, belly, legs, his entire body in fact, dripped with rainwater.

A small point, but one quite worth mentioning as possibly applicable to this type, is the introduction of the genus if we are speaking of a species. This is usually done just for the sake of amplification: Learning of every kind both adorns and assists the race of men, but philosophy does so pre-eminently; Lust is disgusting at any age, but is most disgusting of all in old age; Prudence is of great importance in all human affairs, but especially in war. Here the simple statement would have been: Prudence is of great importance in war. Cicero has an example of this type in his speech *De domo sua*, delivered before the college of priests: "Our ancestors, your reverences, invented and established many practices in their extraordinary wisdom, but nothing was more striking than their decision that you, the priests, should direct both the worship of the immortal gods and the highest affairs of state."

But there is little point in quoting this one specimen when examples of the type lie ready for the finding on every side.

Variation: Method 2

The second method of variation is very like the first. It arises when we are not satisfied with stating the final outcome and leaving preceding events to be deduced, but rehearse in detail everything which led up to the final result. Here is an example of what I mean: *Cicero crushed Catiline's designs*. This may be elaborated as follows: The wicked designs of Catiline, put into effect through young men of desperate character plotting the ruin and destruction of the whole Roman state, the consul Marcus Tullius Cicero immediately sniffed out with his customary sagacity, hunted down with remarkable vigilance, caught by exercising great prudence, revealed with wonderful devotion to the country, convicted with incredible eloquence, broke by the weight of his authority, extinguished by the use of force, and with the aid of fortune removed for ever.

Here is another: *He acknowledged a son born to him from the girl*. You may expand this as follows: He fell passionately in love with the girl, who was extremely pretty. Unable to control his affection, he assailed her simple mind with promises, bribed her with gifts, cajoled her with flattery, induced her by kindnesses to return his affection, and overcame her by his insistence. Finally he became intimate with her and deflowered her. After some time the girl's belly began to swell as, of course, a child had been conceived. At the end of nine months she went into labor and produced a boy.

Here is yet another example: *He took the city*, which may be amplified as follows: First of all the heralds were sent to demand reparations and also to offer terms of peace. When the inhabitants refused to accept these, he gathered forces from all quarters, brought in a great supply of engines of war, and moved his army and the machines up to the city ramparts. The inhabitants replied by fiercely repelling the enemy from the walls, but the general eventually got the upper hand in the fighting, and, scaling the walls, invaded the city and seized control of it.

Method 9

The ninth method consists of amplification or building up, of which Quintilian[69] lists a considerable number of types. We shall briefly deal with those that are relevant to our present purposes.

The first type uses augmentation, in which one advances by regular steps not only to the maximum, but even in a way beyond the maximum. An example of this may be found in Cicero's fifth speech against Verres:[70] "It is an offense to tie up a Roman citizen, a crime to flog him, equal to the murder of a kinsman to put him to death. What shall I call crucifying him? It is not possible to find a word to fit such a heinous act."

There is also a variety of this figure in which we heap up "circumstances" while observing some kind of order, and let one run on from another so arranged that the next thing is always greater than the one that went before, as in Cicero's passage in the *Second Philippic*[71] about Antony's vomiting: "What a disgusting thing, not only to see but even to hear! If this had happened at dinner when you were quaffing those monstrous tankards of yours, who would not think it disgraceful? But it was in a formal assembly of the people of Rome, engaged in conducting the business of the state, holding the office of Master of the Horse, for whom it would be a disgrace even to belch, that this fellow spewed up morsels of food stinking of wine all over himself and all over the speakers' platform." Here each individual word has more effect than the one before. In the first place the action was disgusting in itself even if it had not been in an assembly, or if in an assembly not one of the people, or not of the Roman people, or if he had not been conducting formal business, or not formal public business, or if he were not Master of the Horse.

If anyone took these items separately and dwelt on the individual stages, he would indeed extend his material, but an amplification of this type would be less effective than the one we have.

The opposite method to this is comparison. In augmentation, the movement is constantly towards something more impressive; a comparison gets its effect by starting from something less striking. The comparison may be based on a supposition or may employ a real event. We had a supposition, for which the Greek term is *ὑπόθεσις*, in the first part of the example we quoted from Cicero, for he puts forward the supposition that it happened at a dinner party to a person holding no public office. There is another one in the well-known passage from one of the Catilinarian[72] speeches. "Upon my word, if my slaves feared me the way all your [fellow citizens] fear you, I should feel that I had better get out of my house."

When a real situation is used, we put forward a genuine circumstance that has some similarity with the thing we are boosting, and proceed to show how this is very close to it, or equal to it, or even greater. This is what Cicero does in the *Pro Cluentio*.[73] He describes how a certain woman of Miletus received money from the reversionary heirs in return for having an abortion. He goes on: "While Oppianicus shares the crime committed, he deserves much greater punishment. She ill-treated her own body, and brought suffering on herself, but he achieved the same result through another person's suffering."

In this type we not only compare one whole situation with another, but we can compare one detail with another, as is done in this passage from the *Pro Milone*:[74] "Scipio, that distinguished figure, when holding no public office, killed Tiberius Gracchus when he was causing a moderately serious political upheaval in Rome; shall we, when clothed with the dignity of consul, stand by while Catiline seeks to lay the whole world waste with fire and slaughter?" Here Catiline is compared with Gracchus, the situation in Rome with the world, a moderate upheaval with slaughter and burning and desolation, a man holding no office with those who are entrusted with the highest. Again if anyone wished to expand these sections, he would have topics full of possibility at every point.

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[69] 8.4, from which chapter Erasmus takes his examples. [Tr.]

[70] *Verrines* 5.170; quoted in Quintilian 8.4.4. [Tr.]

[71] *Philippics* 2.63; Quintilian 8.4.8. [Tr.]

[72] 1.17; Quintilian 8.4.10. [Tr.]

[73] *Pro Cluentio* 32; Quintilian 8.4.11. [Tr.]

[74] Actually *Catilinarians* 1.3; Quintilian 8.4.13. [Tr.]

The second method of amplification uses the rhetorical figure known as inference; in this we actually build up one thing, and this suggests the build-up of another, as in this passage: "You, with a gullet of that capacity, with a chest of that girth, with a physique which would do credit to a gladiator, swilled so much wine at Hippias' wedding that the next day you couldn't help being sick in full view of the Roman people." Here one can infer how much wine Antony drank because, in spite of his gladiator's physique, he was not able to carry so much and digest it.

Associated with this is the procedure by which we take the most dreadful deeds and rouse the strongest resentment against them, and then deliberately tone them down so that what follows may seem even more serious, as in this passage from Cicero:[75] "In a prisoner like this these crimes are trivial. The commander-in-chief of the fleet of a noble city had to pay money to save himself from the fear of being flogged. But that's a human enough crime." We must needs expect something absolutely appalling, if deeds which are shocking seem human and normal beside it.

Another method of build-up is the piling up of words and phrases meaning the same thing. This is very like συναθροισμός [accumulation of synonyms] which I discussed earlier. Cicero uses this in his speech *Pro Ligario*:[76] "What was that sword of yours doing, Tubero, that you drew on the field of Pharsalus? Whose ribs was that weapon-point seeking? what was the purpose of your weapons? what was your own mind? what sort of eyes, what sort of hands did you have, what passion drove you on? what did you seek? what desire?" Here the speech grows like a heap by addition. Sometimes the emotional tone of the additions rises ever higher with each one, as in this:[77] "Present was the keeper of the prison gate, the praetor's thug, the destruction and terror of allied and Roman citizens alike, the lictor Sextius."

We can also build up by using a form of "self-correction,"[78] as Cicero does in this passage from the Verrines:[79] "We have brought to your court not a mere thief but a brigand, not an adulterer but a stormer of chastity, not a temple-robber but a sworn enemy of religion and all that is sacred, not a cut-throat but a savage murderer of citizens and allies alike."

There are just as many ways of toning down what we have to say as there are of building it up.

Our utterances may be expanded by everyday and unremarkable methods such as adding adverbs, nouns, and other parts of speech, either to express approval or censure: Cicero delights me to an inordinate extent: it is beyond words how well disposed your father-in-law is toward you; I cannot find words to express what pleasure I take in Cicero — but I have dealt with these methods of extension in Book 1.[80]

A well-known and common method of expansion is to attach a species to its genus: All the disciplines of a liberal education bestow on a man either grace or advantage; eloquence does so beyond all others — though I have dealt with this method before too.[81]

Method 10

The tenth method of expansion depends on inventing as many propositions as possible.[82] I am speaking of rhetorical propositions or themes, which are demonstrated to be true by the exposition of arguments. As for inventing propositions, Quintilian[83] says that this skill cannot be learned as a technique, but comes from imagination and practice. Hence we find that a group of people may have received the same instruction, and may use similar types of argument, and yet one will discover more material than another.

Propositions or themes are derived partly from generalities, partly from the circumstances of the case. We can demonstrate the method with an example chosen by Quintilian:[84] "When Alexander overthrew Thebes, he discovered documents recording that the Thebans had lent the Thessalians a hundred talents. These documents he handed over to the Thessalians as a reward for supporting him with troops in the campaign. The Thebans later had their fortunes restored by Cassander, and demanded repayment of the debt from the Thessalians. The case was taken before the Amphictyonic Council. It was not disputed that the Thebans had lent a hundred talents, and that this sum had not been repaid — the point at issue was the claim that Alexander had given the Thessalians the documents. Nor was it disputed that Alexander had not actually presented them with the money they owed the Thebans."

In arguing this out we need to invent themes and sections of the following sort to provide the framework for our case: (1) Alexander's gift was of no effect; (2) he had no power to give; (3) he did not actually give.

In the first section the first proposition on behalf of the Thebans will be that one has the right to demand back through the law what has been taken away by force. On behalf of the Thessalians it will be propounded that the documents were not simply removed by force but by war, and the rights of war are the most powerful ones known in human affairs; by them are determined kingdoms and peoples and the territories of nations and cities. In answer to this the Thebans declare that not everything falls into the victor's power by the rights of war; the rights of war have no validity in matters which belong to the sphere of civil justice; that things seized by force of arms can only be retained by exercising that same force of arms; where arms hold sway, there is no place for a judge, but where there is a judge, arms have no authority. Here we argue from the circumstances special to the case, which enables us to show why this particular case differs from others. To support this last proposition, we can put forward as a parallel a statement of general validity: Captives become free again if they regain their native land, because ownership of things acquired in war can only be asserted by exercising the same physical force by which they were first acquired. The third proposition on behalf of the Thebans will also depend on the special circumstances of this case: In any case in which the Amphictyonic Council[85] is the judge, the main consideration must be equity. (The same lawsuit requires different handling according to where it is heard, for example, before the Centumviral Court[86] or before an arbitrator.) The effect of these arguments is again to show that this case is on a different footing from those where the rights of war should determine the issue.

In the second section we can state on behalf of the Thebans that the victor had no power to make a gift of a right, because only what can be seized belongs to the victor: a right is an incorporeal thing, and cannot be physically held. To support this proposition we can bring in an argument from the dissimilar: An heir and a conqueror are not in the same case; the right passes to the heir, the material object to the conqueror. The circumstances of the case provide the next proposition, which reinforces the previous one: Even if we concede that in other cases a right passes to the conqueror, certainly the right attached to a state loan could not in any way pass to the conqueror, because if a loan is made by the whole people, the sum is owed to the whole people, and as long as one individual survives, he is the creditor to whom the sum is due; but not all the Thebans fell into Alexander's power. This argument needs no further support.

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[75] *Verrines* 5.117; Quintilian 8.4.19. [Tr.]

[76] *Pro Ligario* 9; Quintilian 8.4.27; see above 320:28ff. [Tr.]

[77] Cicero *Verrines* 5.118; Quintilian 8.4.27. [Tr.]

[78] See book 1 chap 65. [Tr.]

[79] *Verrines* 1.9; Quintilian 8.4.2. [Tr.]

[80] Chap. 46. [Tr.]

[81] At 574:41ff. [Tr.]

[82] See Quintilian 4.4. [Tr.]

[83] 5.10.119–21. [Tr.]

[84] 5.10.111–18; Erasmus changes Quintilian's statement of the case slightly. [Tr.]

[85] Because it was associated with the shrine of Apollo at Delphi, which in theory meant that the council had dignity and authority and that its decisions carried religious sanction. [Tr.]

[86] A court in ancient Rome dealing with property suits; Pliny began his legal career there, and speaks of it in his *Letters*. [Tr.]

In the third section we can have a general proposition (that is, one not specifically tied to any case): When he gave the documents, Alexander did not really give anything, for rights do not reside in documents. This proposition can be supported by arguments of all kinds; such as arguments from a similar case: The man who possesses documents proving inheritance does not necessarily have the right of inheritance; or: If a creditor happens to lose his documentary proof, the debtor is not forthwith released from his debt. The second proposition in this section depends on conjecture: Alexander did not present the Thessalians with the documents to reward them, but to deceive them. This will have to be demonstrated by various suggestions and hypotheses. The third one is not simply a contribution to this stage of the argument, but is more or less the introduction of a new issue. It depends on material proper to the case, and takes this form: Even if we grant the Thessalians all this — that the law of war has authority in civil disputes in general, and before these judges in particular, and in the case of a state loan, and all the other points — all the same, whatever the Thebans lost when conquered by Alexander, they should have recovered when restored by Cassander, especially when this was Cassander's express wish.

[*Example Taken From Speech Discussing Course of Action*]

To give a second example: anyone urging Cicero not to accept Mark Antony's proposal[87] that he should keep his life in return for burning the *Philippics* could use the following propositions: No man of eminence ought to buy his life at the cost of his immortal fame. This general proposition could be reinforced by one dependent on the specific circumstances of this case: Especially Cicero, who by his labors won for himself a name and a glory that will live for ever and eloquently demonstrated in so many wonderful books that death is of no account, particularly as, being already an old man, he probably has not many years still to live. A second major proposition can be derived from the circumstances of the case: Nothing could be more distressing than to have a fine man like Cicero indebted for his life to a villain like Antony. The third proposition will be conjectural: Antony is acting treacherously; when the *Philippics*, which he knows enshrine his own eternal infamy and Cicero's deathless glory, have been burned, he will then take Cicero's life and so blot out the man entirely.

[*Second Example of the Same Kind*]

Again, if you are dissuading someone from matrimony,[88] propositions like this may be used: (1) if you consider your duty to God, matrimony is an impediment to those who strive towards Christ; (2) if you consider your comfort in this life, even a happy marriage brings innumerable cares in its train (and here a wide field opens up of comparison of the advantages of celibacy with the disadvantages of matrimony); (3) if you consider freedom, which many people rate higher than life itself, this above all else the bond of matrimony takes away. Then you may turn to specific propositions, and these can be very numerous: You should not marry this particular woman; you should not marry at this time; you should not marry, because you are poor, old, a student, in poor health.

The number of available propositions increases when we start from a hypothetical situation, as Cicero does in his defense of Milo:[89] "Suppose that Clodius had been killed in the ambush by Milo, Milo should nevertheless be considered worthy of the highest honors for removing such a pernicious member of society, and for risking his own life for the well-being of the state." But then he returns to reality: "But he did not kill him."

The number increases also if, to prepare the way for our case, we set up in advance and outside our main line of argument a proposition that is somewhat startling, so that the one we are really trying to carry seems easy to accept by comparison. Suppose that someone in a consultation were trying to persuade the pope not to make war on the Venetians.[90] Remembering the saying, "Demand the outrageous in order to achieve the reasonable," he would first seek to undermine the proposal as follows: There are authorities of no little weight who consider that empire and earthly sway are inconsistent with the dignity of the supreme pontiff, and with the peace of the church, and with the Christian charity which he should foster, disregarding all else. This proposition may be demonstrated with a wealth of argument almost without trying, there is so much to choose from.

The speaker may then move on to his second proposition as follows: Such arguments and others like them might well be put forward by another; but even if we grant that temporal power does not involve inconsistency, yet to seek to win or regain earthly dominion by force of arms, tumult, slaughter, and bloodshed is totally opposed by the mercy that should be seen in the representative of the Christ who said, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart."

Then he will move on to his third proposition: Even if it were entirely right, all the same it would be unsafe, because the outcome of war is never to be relied upon; consequently, in trying to restore the status of the church through the temporal and the changeable, he is in danger of utterly overthrowing it. This too can be supported by a considerable number of examples, including those drawn from similar situations.

Then he will proceed to his third [sic] proposition: Even if it were fitting, even if it were permissible, even if you were successful, yet such a foul swill of evils follows in the train of even the justest of wars, that even a temporal prince, if he were a Christian, should not consider paying such a price to regain by the sword a few lands or cities, let alone that prince who bears the title of Most Holy. One could add a proposition dependent on the particular person involved: Though it might be fitting for another pontiff[91] it is not fitting for Julius, if we mean that Julius whose mild nature and unequalled holiness of life seem totally incompatible with war.

After our speaker has demonstrated all these propositions by argument, he will then turn to the point at issue: Even if none of the arguments we have advanced deters you from this course, it does seem somewhat unwise at the present time to undertake a war with the Venetians. (This proposition also depends on the details of the actual situation.) This theme will then be subdivided: first, such a conflict cannot be entered upon without grave danger to the whole church; second, the Roman see, which has always honored and rewarded deeds done for the benefit of the church, will seem to have forgotten the services performed time and again by that nation with grave peril to their own lives for the Christian religion; third, there is not even a satisfactory reason to justify taking up arms against those who have done nothing to deserve it.

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[87] A stock theme debated in the ancient schools of rhetoric; see Seneca *Suasoriae* 6. [Tr.]

[88] Erasmus discusses marriage in many writings (see Thompson *Colloquies* 99–100), including an early *Encomium matrimonii* (c 1498; printed 1518; from 1521 on it formed part of *De conscribendis epistolis*) and a treatise, *Institutio christiani matrimonii*, published in 1526. See *De conscribendis epistolis* chaps 47–8, where arguments for and against matrimony are set out at length. [Tr.]

[89] A summary of what Cicero says in *Pro Milone* 77ff. [Tr.]

[90] For this example Erasmus is drawing on his experiences in Italy, 1506–9, where he saw for himself the belligerence and secular ambition of Pope Julius II, whose goal was to reassert the temporal power of the papacy and recover lands nominally under the church's jurisdiction by playing off the various temporal powers against each other and even resorting to war. In 1506 Erasmus was in Bologna, from which he fled to Florence in October, fearing a siege by approaching French forces; the siege came to nothing, and with the departure of the tyrant Bentivoglio the city agreed to acknowledge papal suzerainty; Erasmus was back in Bologna in November at the time of Julius' triumphal entry into the city.

The arguments against war in these pages of *De copia* reappear in the important essays "Dulce bellum inexpertis" (*Adagia* IV i 1), "Sileni Alcibiadis" (*Adagia* III iii 1), "Scarabaeus aquilam quaerit" (*Adagia* III vii 1), and *Querela pacis* (all of 1515; printed separately 1517); and see *Institutio principis christiani* (1516). Erasmus' hatred of war is expressed in many of his writings, including *The Praise of Folly* and the *Colloquies* (for example *Charon*). His detestation of Julius II is found most memorably in his brilliant satire, *Julius exclusus*. He did not publish this, but few scholars question his authorship. The text is available in *Opuscula* 65–124; a translation in *The Julius exclusus of Erasmus* trans and ed Paul Pascal and J. K. Sowards (Bloomington, Indiana 1968). [Tr.]

[91] Julius Caesar, who as Pontifex Maximus was the supreme religious head of the ancient Roman republic. Erasmus on several occasions compares Pope Julius with Julius Caesar (for example below 625:1), a comparison not meant to be flattering; see Ep 205:42–3 (from Bologna, concerning the pope's triumphal entry). [Tr.]

These might well be considered reasons rather than propositions, but there is nothing to prevent the same statement being a proposition and a reason.

To take yet another example: if someone were trying to persuade some king[92] not to undertake a war against the most Christian king of France, he could construct his line of argument with propositions of this sort: first, to engage in war is not natural to man who was born to feel good will, but to brute beasts whom nature has supplied with weapons of a sort (a general proposition). The next proposition will reinforce this one: it is not natural to all beasts, but only to wild ones; and the next again supports this one: and not even wild beasts fight among themselves in the way that mortal men do: tiger does not war with tiger, nor lion with lion; but man does not show to any other animal the savagery that he shows to his fellow men; wild beasts only fight to defend their young, or when driven mad by hunger; man is incited by bloody wars by vain ambition and foolish and pretentious titles. The next proposition will be more specific, and will function as a new stage: Granted that men do make war, it is the mark of uncivilized ones to do so, men not all that different from wild beasts, not of those that live under the rule of law. A fifth point could be that, even if civilized men make war, it is not the mark of Christian men to do so, seeing that the Christian faith is peace pure and simple. As a sixth we could say: Even if it were proper to undertake the war, it would not be to your advantage because, when all is weighed up, the evils that are endured for the sake of war are far greater in number than the advantages that even the victor secures. (This will have to be argued out.) Seven: Even if it were advantageous, it would not be safe, as the outcome of war is always uncertain, nor do those always win whose cause is the better, or whose equipment is superior, and quite often the troops turn their arms against their own leader.

All these propositions are for the most part general ones; one may next proceed to the particular ones derived from the issues more specifically related to the case in question: Leaving aside everything else, no war should be undertaken by you, especially with such an adversary. This one admits of many subdivisions: because you are a boy with no experience of war, or have only recently come to the throne (and so on — I am only showing how one sets about it); again, you should not fight this king who is so powerful, or who did your father such great service, or who is bound to you by so many ties, or who has shown such regard for you; or, not on this pretext, not at this time, not with these forces.

[*Another Example*]

Similarly, someone who was intending to convince a person that he should not study Greek literature[93] could start off by stating that literature of any sort is no great help towards Christian happiness, and can even be an obstacle. Having demonstrated the validity of this by argument, he can then come to the point at issue: Granted that there is reason why we should study other literatures, we should certainly refrain from studying Greek literature, because it is so difficult that the life of man, fleeting, brief, and feeble as it is, is not equal to the task of learning it; and even if one had years enough, it does not bring sufficient reward to make it worth acquiring at the cost of even moderate toil; finally, those who have devoted themselves to the literature of Greece have themselves been overtaken, through some fate or other, by the misfortune suffered by that ruined and oppressed land. Or we could say that, even if other people should study it, this particular person should not. We have now moved on to specific propositions, and there will be plenty of these one can use.

With these propositions it is important, I think, to arrange them as far as possible so that one moves comfortably from one to another as down a flight of steps. Lucian does this splendidly in *Tyrannicida* (a work which we have translated into Latin):[94] If I had only attempted such a deed of derring-do at such risk to my own life, I should deserve a reward for that; but (he goes on) I did not only attempt it — I actually beat off the bodyguard and killed the son. Shall I not receive a reward? But (moving on to the next point) I also removed the father, by providing the occasion of his death.[95]

He does it again in *Abdicatus*,[96] which we have also translated into Latin: It is not allowed to disinherit someone whom you have already disinherited once and received back into the family. Even if it were allowed, there is this good reason for not being allowed to do so now. Finally, even if there were very good cause for doing so now, his earlier services are so great that out of regard for them a father should overlook his faults.

If we are not happy with a whole troop of propositions, we can embrace the essentials of the case in three or four, and then, as we handle each of these, move off into other propositions if we feel like it. These main propositions are quite often advanced in the division, by which I mean the section of the speech immediately before we step off into the argument, where we set out in general terms what we are going to say, and in what order. Quite often as we handle the case, we find we can move from one proposition to another by natural steps, but if they do not cohere naturally, we shall ourselves invent suitable transitions which will connect them neatly together.

Anyone aiming at the abundant style must observe three things: he must discover those propositions which embrace in entirety everything pertaining to the case; he must properly subdivide them; and finally arrange them in the order most appropriate to the case. By this means the speech is not confused by the wealth of material, as the listener always has something definite either to concentrate on now, or to remember, or to look forward to. Besides, the speaker will not flounder in his argument while the next point is ready to hand to help him back onto his course.

As I said,[97] Quintilian does not consider that the invention of propositions can be taught, though it is both an essential preliminary and something difficult. There are, however, things that help: primarily those which are especially effective in any sphere, that is, natural ability and imagination; next, a knowledge of the law, particularly valuable in law-court speeches, and of moral philosophy, history, and a wide range of authors, in speeches intended to urge a course of action or do someone honor; finally, experience, practice, and imitation. Similar situations will readily provide propositions based on similarities, and also on dissimilarities, though general propositions will be suggested by the overall nature of the case, specific ones by a careful scrutiny of the special circumstances involved on each occasion. Finally a lively imagination will be stimulated by the precepts of the rhetoricians concerning the main types of issue, which Quintilian[98] calls *status,* the Greeks *στάσεις* [categories]. The "persuasive" type of speech has its natural topics which may act as a source of propositions — the right, the praiseworthy, the expedient, the safe, the easy, the unavoidable, the pleasant. The laudatory or vituperative type likewise has its own topics, I mean the main types of "good thing" with all their subsidiary concepts.

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[92] Among his other moves against the French subsequent to 1510, Julius II induced the young Henry VIII of England to send expeditions against France in 1512–13 (see below 601:20–9). This was a disappointment to Erasmus, who had formed high hopes of Henry as an enlightened Christian prince. In *Julius exclusus* the pope boasts of fostering war against the Venetians and of inciting Henry to attack France. [Tr.]

[93] This illustrates the ability of the trained man to argue on either side of a case, according to the precepts of the ancient schools of rhetoric. Erasmus was convinced of the humane value of Greek studies, and himself persevered in the acquisition of Greek in the late 1490s and early 1500s in spite of having no suitable teacher and no money to buy books (see Ep 138); but in the company of More and other English scholars his Greek studies flourished. In 1516 and 1518 he published a translation of books I and II of Theodorus Gaza's Greek grammar to encourage the study of Greek. [Tr.]

[94] Lucian was a favorite author with Erasmus, as with Thomas More, Rabelais, and many other Renaissance writers. Lucian's literary influence endures in Erasmus' and More's most popular writings, *The Praise of Folly* and *Utopia*. In 1505–6, when Erasmus was in England, he and More made Latin versions of thirty-two works by Lucian: twenty-eight (some very brief) were by Erasmus, four by More. These, and a declamation by each replying to Lucian's *Tyrannicida*, which each had translated, were published in Paris by Bade late in 1506. A later edition (Paris: Bade 1514) contained seven additional translations of Lucian by Erasmus. His authorship of another work (*Longaevi*) formerly attributed to Lucian is disputed. The text of Erasmus' translations, ed Christopher Robinson, is available in ASD I-I 361–627; of More's in the Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St Thomas More III I (1974): *Translations of Lucian* ed Craig R. Thompson. [Tr.]

[95] *Tyrannicida* is a display speech on a fictitious subject: the speaker intended to kill the tyrant, but finding only his son killed him instead; the tyrant, discovering his son's body, committed suicide; the speaker now claims reward as a tyrannicide. On this declamation and the replies to it by Erasmus and More see *Translations of Lucian* ed Thompson xxx–xxxix, 79–127, 147–56. [Tr.]

[96] Another display speech: a disinherited son studies medicine and so is able to cure his father's madness; he is received back into the family, but on refusing to heal his stepmother is disinherited again; he claims this is unjust. [Tr.]

[97] See 595:16. [Tr.]

Method 11

The eleventh method[99] of enriching our style depends on the accumulation of proofs and arguments. The Greek word for these is *πίστεις* [reasons for belief]. Different reasons can be brought forward to confirm one and the same proposition, and the reasons themselves can be supported by further arguments.

Proofs fall into two classes: *ἔντεχνοι* [of the art], invented or artificial proofs, and *ἄτεχνοι* [not of the art], given proofs.[100] This second type is drawn mainly from previous legal judgments, hearsay, evidence extracted under torture, written evidence, oaths, and witnesses. The former type is derived first from "indications," which are very like the *ἄτεχνοι*. (Of these "indications," some are "compelling," for which the Greek term is *τεϰμήϱια* [evidence], some are "noncompelling," *σημεῖα* [signs].) Second, they are derived from "arguments" — Quintilian at any rate makes a distinction between these and "indications." Arguments can be likely, possible, and not impossible. Most of these are derived from the circumstances of the case, which cover persons or things. "Persons" takes in family, nation, country, sex, age, education, physical condition, material circumstances, state, disposition, occupation, ambition, previous actions, previous statements, motives, purpose, name; "things" includes cause, place, time, opportunity, previous contemporary and subsequent events, means, instrument, method.

Commonplaces

There are also certain topics appropriate to all types of speech or even to all sections of a speech, whereas the ones I have just been discussing, though they can on occasion be handled in other contexts, are more suited to controversial issues dealt with in a court of law, and within this class, to cases which turn on a question of fact.

Generally speaking, arguments are derived from definition or defining formulae, from description, from exposition of the meaning of a word, which is a form of definition, or from things which definition by its very nature includes: genus,[101] species, properties, differentiating characteristics, subdivision, classification (this last takes various forms, for example, a consideration of aspects such as commencement, completion, development); or from deductions based on similar or dissimilar situations; from contraries, contradictions, consequences, related propositions, causes, results, comparisons (of which there are three forms: comparison with something greater, smaller, or equivalent), and from self-evident statements,[102] and from all the others that have been suggested, since writers agree neither on the order of presentation, nor on the number, nor on the names to be used. The subject has been dealt with at length by Aristotle[103] and Boethius,[104] in fair detail but not very clearly by Cicero,[105] briefly by Quintilian.[106] Anyone training with a view to acquiring eloquence will have to look at all the possible topics in turn, go knocking from door to door[107] so to speak, to see if anything can be induced to emerge; but with practice the right ones will come to suggest themselves naturally, without this process being necessary.

Again, arguments can be derived from a "supposition," which is itself appropriate to many contexts, and finally from the circumstances peculiar to the case in question.

[Illustrative Examples]

A most effective means of making what we are saying convincing and of generating *copia* at the same time is to be found in illustrative examples, for which the Greek word is *παϱαδείγματα*.[108] The content of the examples can be something like, unlike, or in contrast to what we are illustrating, or something greater, smaller, or equivalent. Contrast and dissimilarity reside in features such as type, means, time, place, and most of the other "circumstances" I enumerated above. We include under "examples" stories, fables, proverbs, opinions, parallels or comparisons, similitudes, analogies, and anything else of the same sort. Most of these are introduced not only to make our case look convincing, but also to dress it up and brighten, expand, and enrich it. Anyone therefore who chooses to furnish himself with a mass of material from the possibilities here listed can make what he has to say as copious as he likes, without thereby producing a meaningless accumulation of words; furthermore the variety of the material will prevent boredom. This is not the place[109] to discuss how to discover such material or how to apply it, but anyone who wants this information may find it in Aristotle,[110] Hermogenes,[111] and Quintilian, who have written in great detail on these very topics. I shall deal with anything relevant to *copia,* but only briefly, so as not to appear to have written a whole book rather than a set of notes.

In the development of *copia,* then, illustrations play a leading role, whether the speech is the sort that debates what action should be taken, or urges to a particular course of action, or is intended to console someone in grief, or is laudatory or vituperative; in short, whether one is trying to convince one's audience, move them, or give them pleasure.

It is not enough to provide oneself with an enormous and very varied supply of illustrations, and to have them ready for use at a moment's notice; one must also be able to handle them with variety. Variety can be provided by the very nature of the illustrative examples themselves. They can be things done or said in the past, or be derived from the customs of various nations. There will be differences according to whether they are drawn from historians, or from poets (and poets include writers of comedy, tragedy, epigrams, epic, and pastoral poetry), or from philosophers (and again there are various schools of philosophers), or from the theologians, or the books of the Bible. Some variety will be provided by the differences between nations: the institutions and illustrative examples of the Romans are different from those of the Greeks, and among the Greeks those of the Spartans are not those of the Cretans and Athenians; nor again do we find the same habits among the Africans, Jews, Spaniards, French, English, or Germans. Or it may be a question of period: early times, then the subsequent periods of antiquity, recent history, and things in our own lives; or some inherent quality in the incident recorded: military or civil actions, examples of clemency or bravery or wisdom (and so on ad infinitum, for there is no end to this list); or the status of the person concerned: one finds different behavior in a prince, judge, parent, slave, rich man, poor man, woman, girl, or boy.

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[98] 3.6.3. [Tr.]

[99] This section summarizes material in Quintilian 5.9 and 10. The material is so compressed as to be difficult to follow; Quintilian's more extended version with examples is much clearer. [Tr.]

[100] Quintilian 5.1. [Tr.]

[101] See Quintilian 6.3.66, a section on sources of jests. [Tr.]

[102] For example, those who perform a just act, act justly. Quintilian 5.10.58. [Tr.]

[103] *Topica*. [Tr.]

[104] He translated Aristotle's *Topica* and wrote a commentary in six books on Cicero's *Topica*. [Tr.]

[105] In *Topica*, professedly based on Aristotle's work. [Tr.]

[106] 5.10, a long chapter dealing with all kinds of argument. [Tr.]

[107] Quintilian 5.10.122. [Tr.]

[108] Quintilian 5.11.1. [Tr.]

[109] He deals with it later, at 635ff: Assembling illustrative material. [Tr.]

[110] *Rhetoric* 2.20ff. [Tr.]

[111] Rhetorician of the second century AD, who wrote a series of textbooks on rhetorical technique much read in succeeding centuries, including four books, *πεϱὶ εὑϱεσέων*, on invention. [Tr.]

One should therefore apply as many different illustrations as possible at each point, derived not only from the whole range of Greek and Latin literature, but also from the history of other nations. We can also derive material from popular sayings. People are most impressed however by examples that are ancient, splendid, national, and domestic. In fact each nation, each class of person prefers what is his own, or else something that makes him feel superior, such as anecdotes about women, children, slaves, and barbarians.

Treatment of Examples

But examples not only acquire variety in our handling of them; they are also enlarged and expanded. I shall indicate some of the ways of doing this: first by "commendation," when we introduce a section in which we praise the incident, or the author, or the nation from which the illustration is drawn. If one quoted something done or said by a Spartan, for example, one could preface the anecdote by remarking that this people was always superior to the rest in wisdom and in military and civil organization, and abounded in splendid moral object-lessons. Or an example from Plutarch could be introduced by saying that this writer was of all authors particularly worthy of respect in that he combined a thorough knowledge of philosophy with the eloquent style of a historian, so that one would rightly expect to find in him not only a trustworthy account of events, but also the authority and judgment of a revered and learned philosopher. If one wished to use as an illustration the story of how Marcus Atilius Regulus[112] returned to the enemy, one could begin with something like this: Among all the honorable examples of Roman courage, there was never any act finer or more celebrated than that of Marcus Atilius.

One may invent little passages of commendation like this, making them long or short according to the requirements of the context; but one should take care to invent one that is appropriate; for example, if one is quoting something to illustrate faithfulness, one will commend one's source for seriousness and good faith, or if one wishes the audience to see something as an example of proper feeling, one will make proper feeling the subject of one's remarks. And so with other qualities.

Second Method of Expanding [Examples]

Next illustrative anecdotes can be presented in a richer form if we expand them and broaden the treatment by incorporating amplifications and extensions. Anyone who is concerned to be brief will find it enough merely to refer to the incident as being well known, as Cicero[113] does in the *Pro Milone* when he says: "If it were a crime to put villains to death, we would have to view as criminals famous men like Servilius Ahala, Publius Scipio Nasica, Lucius Opimius, and the whole senate headed by myself as consul."[114] But the speaker whose purpose is the rich treatment will narrate the incident in a more substantial manner, as we find Cicero doing in another passage from the same speech.[115] An officer in the army of Gaius Marius, who was a relative of the commander, made a sexual assault on one of the soldiers, and was killed by the man he was trying to force. Cicero then added one of those remarks which effectively round off a story (*epiphonema*): "The fine young man preferred to act and incur peril rather than submit and incur disgrace." The great Marius acquitted him of guilt and let him go free.

In passages introduced for display purposes one may spend even longer on elaborating such illustrative anecdotes, especially if the subject is such that sheer pleasure will induce the audience to pay attention. For example, if someone were trying to urge the idea that foreign travel and the enlargement of personal experience do much to make a man wiser, he could dwell for a time on the praise of Solon, and then launch into an extended account of the city that Solon left, his reasons for going, the seas he crossed, the foreign peoples he visited, the dangers he encountered among them, the persons he met, the wonders he saw, how long he was away, and how much more famous and more wise he was when he returned to his native land.

Of the same sort are Jerome's anecdotes about the wanderings of Pythagoras and Apollonius in the preface to his complete edition of the Holy Scriptures. But the most convenient example of the whole procedure is to be found right at the beginning of the second book of Cicero's *De inventione*, where he tells the story about Zeuxis, who, when he was going to paint a picture of Helen, asked for a number of girls of outstanding beauty so that he could take the best feature from each and so produce a flawless portrait of beauty.

Fictional Examples

The same applies to fictional examples, for these too can be treated extensively or concisely as the subject-matter and context demand. When we use an anecdote which cannot possibly be believed, it will be best, unless we are being humorous, to preface it by saying that those wise old men of long ago did not invent stories like this for no good reason, nor was it for nothing that they have been current by general consent for so many centuries. Then we can interpret the meaning. For example, if a speaker is saying that one should not pursue that for which one is not naturally suited, he can point out that those wise old writers were well aware of this truth, and demonstrated it by inventing the very apt tale of the Giants whose rash attempts came to no good end. Or if he is depicting a miser, he can first say that the miser is deprived of what he actually possesses as well as of what he does not possess, and then go on to the story of Tantalus. Or if he is arguing that the function of the wise man is to control his emotions by reason and judgment, he can bring in Homer's story in book I of the *Iliad* where Achilles is already laying his hand on the hilt of his sword and Pallas Athene calls him back from behind. Again, if one is putting forward the idea that a genuine reputation for courage can only be won by the man who has been tossed by misfortune and tested by all sorts of danger, after the sort of introduction I have indicated, he can bring in Ulysses as Homer depicts him.

Although the principle of the allegory or hidden meaning is not equally obvious in every case, experts in antiquity are agreed that under all the inventions of the ancient poets there does lie a hidden meaning,[116] whether historical, as in the story of Hercules fighting the twin-horned Achelous; or theological, as in that of Proteus turning into all kinds of shapes or of Pallas springing from the head of Jove; or physical, as in the story of Phaëthon; or moral, as in the case of the men whom Circe turned into brute beasts with her cup and wand. Quite often there is a mixture of more than one type of allegory. In some instances it is not particularly difficult to grasp the sense of the allegory: it is quite obvious (I prefer to take examples of moral allegories) that the tale of Icarus falling into the sea warns that no one should rise higher than his lot in life allows, and the story of Phaëthon that no one should undertake to perform a task that is beyond his powers. Salmoneus[117] cast headlong into hell teaches us not to emulate what lies far beyond our fortunes, and Marsyas[118] flayed alive teaches us not to try conclusions with those more powerful than ourselves. The story of Danaë tricked with gold can only mean (and this is how Horace interprets it too) than there is nothing so walled in that money cannot storm the defenses, nothing of such integrity that it cannot be corrupted by bribery; the labors of Hercules tell us that immortal renown is won by effort and by helping others; the wish of Midas[119] that the greedy and insatiable are suffocated by their own wealth, the judgment he gave[120] that intellectual power is incompatible with the desire for money; Bacchus set on fire by the thunderbolt and plunged into the waters of the nymphs that the fire of wine must be quenched by the sober element (an interpretation which we find in one of the Greek epigrams). The story of Circe turning men into beasts by her spells can only indicate that those who will not be guided by reason, which is man's prerogative, but abandon themselves to base desires no longer have any human characteristic except the name of man, and have sunk to the nature of beasts, lust turning them into bears, somnolence and sloth into pigs, savagery into lions, and so on. Ulysses, who was the only one not changed after drinking the cup and being touched with the magic wand, demonstrates that firm and constant purpose characteristic of the wise man, which cannot be weakened by fear or deflected from what is honorable by any blandishments of the emotions. The lotus, which prevented his companions from leaving after they had once tasted it, teaches that the sweet, insidious poison of base pleasures, from which it is not all that difficult to abstain, is very difficult to give up once one has tasted it. The songs of the Sirens teach that flattery is the most seductive thing there is, and the most pernicious. Scylla and Charybdis, separated by such a narrow space, teach that the path of virtue is a narrow one, with related vices threatening on either side, for example, the path of frugality between extravagance and meanness; and one must steer one's course in life between them in such a way that, since it is extremely difficult to pursue an exactly middle course in all things, one inclines to the side where there is less danger, as Ulysses did. And the moly, with its black root and milk-white flower, "a plant very difficult for mortals to find," can only indicate wisdom, towards which the first steps are difficult and full of effort, but the fruits are very sweet. Similarly the golden bough in Virgil typifies wisdom set apart in a hidden place and found by only a few.

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[112] Consul during the First Punic War between Rome and Carthage; he was captured in Africa by the Carthaginians and sent to Rome to arrange an exchange of prisoners, under strict oath to return if he were unsuccessful. He dissuaded the Roman Senate from accepting the terms offered and returned to the enemy, who tortured him to death; see Cicero *De officiis* 3.99. [Tr.]

[113] *Pro Milone* 8; Servilius Ahala as Master of Horse in 439 BC killed Spurius Maelius on suspicion of aspiring to tyranny; Scipio Nasica, an exconsul, led the mob of senators that killed the reformer Tiberius Gracchus in 133 BC (see 593:27ff); Lucius Opimius as consul hounded down Gaius Gracchus in 121 BC. [Tr.]

[114] A reference to Cicero's execution of the Catilinarian conspirators when he was consul in 63 BC. [Tr.]

[115] *Pro Milone* 9, quoted in Quintilian 8.5.11; a speech in defense of the young man is found in Quintilian *Declamationes maiores* 3, *Miles Marianus;* see 500:26n. [Tr.]

[116] In *Enchiridion* (LB V 7F) Erasmus says that all of Homer's and Virgil's poetry may be read allegorically. [Tr.]

[117] Who made himself equal with Zeus (Virgil *Aeneid* 6.585–6). [Tr.]

[118] Ovid *Metamorphoses* 6.382ff; Marsyas presumed to challenge Apollo to a musical contest which the god won. [Tr.]

But not to go on at too great length, any number of interpretations of this sort can be found in Eustathius,[121] the commentator on Homer. I myself, in my young days, wrote quite a lot on this subject in the books I called *The Antibarbarians*.

Somewhat easier are the things invented by the poets for this very purpose, like their inventions about the gods which imitate human life, such as Homer's tale about Mars caught in the net by Vulcan, or where he makes Jupiter ἀγκυλομήτης [crooked in counsel] send out a dream which makes the Greeks think that they will capture Troy, though what he was purposing was very different: it is the policy of kings deliberately to spread certain rumors among the people when they have decided on something very different in their own minds.

Even easier are stories which are so handled by the poets that we think of them as true stories rather than invented ones, like the story of Orestes[122] who murdered his mother, and the friendship between him and Pylades. Some people think that these stories really do record an actual event, like Alcestis saving her husband's life by sacrificing her own, which Valerius Maximus mentions as well as the poets. Likewise the deaths of Codrus and Menoeceus can be classed together with the deeds of Q. Curtius and the two Decii, and among pairs of friends we count Theseus and Peirithous, and Castor and Pollux. There is also the story of Arion carried to his homeland on the dolphin's back, which St. Augustine considers to be true.

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[119] When offered a wish by Apollo, he chose that all he touched might turn to gold; even his food turned to gold in his mouth and choked him. [Tr.]

[120] He was freed from the curse of the golden touch, but continued to choose the worse rather than the better; he judged Pan's playing superior to Apollo's, and to punish him for his crassness his ears were changed into those of an ass; see Ovid *Metamorphoses* 11.85–179; *Adagia* I iii 67. [Tr.]

[121] Twelfth-century scholar and ecclesiastic who wrote, among other things, a vast commentary on the Homeric poems. [Tr.]

[122] A theme treated by all three Greek tragedians, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. [Tr.]

Certainly there is no doubt that a good many incidents in Virgil and particularly in Lucan are real historical events[123] — though much that Herodotus puts into his history is quite unbelievable, and Xenophon wrote his *Cyropaedia* more as a manifesto on the training of the young than as a genuine historical record. If the audience take these as true, they will be effective because people believe them; if they take them as inventions, since they are the productions of wise and revered authors, they will be effective for the very reason that they were put out by men whose authority gave what they wrote the force of precept.

On the other hand, poetry provides a lot of material which is to be taken as genuine historical fact, dealing for example with Scipio, Hannibal, Augustus, Pompey, or Julius Caesar; again poetry also offers passages which no one would deny are fictional, but since it is generally accepted that they were invented precisely for the purpose of functioning as examples, and what is more were invented by great writers, they have all the weight of examples; I mean things like the goddess Envy, Rumor, Discord, and Prayers which I mentioned earlier,[124] and also characters in dramatic or mixed poetry, especially comedy, with which dialogues have much in common.

For example, if anyone were speaking to the theme that parents should take care, if they do anything wrong, not to do it so that their children know, an effective illustrative example would be provided by the son Clitipho in the play about the old man tormenting himself with remorse, when the son says:

> Blow me, when he's had a drop too much to drink
> What tales he tells me of the things he used to do!
> And now he says "From another's fate take note
> and learn
> What will be of use" — the cunning rogue!
> Little does he know, my ears are deaf
> To all his prosing.

Or if one were trying to convince an audience that, as the wise man[125] replied to a questioner, a man should take a wife of the same social class as himself (since otherwise, that is if you, being poor, join to yourself a rich woman, you get not a wife but a ruler), an illustration could be provided by Chremes in the *Phormio* who fears his wife Nausistrata as if she were his owner. Again if one were saying that a friendship between a poor man and a rich one is neither secure nor reliable, one could use as an illustration Euclio in Plautus' *Aulularia,* who is trying to avoid acquiring a connection with the rich Megadorus and says: "It occurs to me . . ." (I quote no more — the passage is very well known); or if you were enlarging on the sentiment that it is unjust of fathers to be furious with their sons when they do wrong, when they themselves do worse things in their old age, you could quote the same Nausistrata I mentioned above when she says:

> Does it seem such a shocking thing to you
> That your son, who begins to feel himself a man,
> Should have one mistress while you have two
> wives?
> Are you not ashamed? Have you the face
> To censure him for this? Just tell me that.

But it is foolish to give one or two examples when the whole of comedy is nothing but a picture of human life. I could have produced similar specimens from tragedy, pastoral poetry, and dialogues, but for a work on this scale I think I have sufficiently indicated to students of lively intelligence the way they should proceed.

In my opinion examples[126] may be properly derived not only from the sources I have discussed but also from dumb beasts and even inanimate objects, though these possibly belong rather with ὁμοίωσις [simile or parallel case]. I mean things like holding up the industry of the ant as an encouragement to people to work hard to get what they want, or describing the social organization of the bees in order to promote respect for law and civil discipline. To discourage lack of respect for parents, one could cite the young of the stork who are said to feed and carry the old birds about in their turn when age has made them weak; or when exhorting an audience to show proper care for their children, one could bring in the she-ass which will go through a raging fire to rescue its foal; or if one wanted to hold up ingratitude to obloquy, one could use the story of the lion which Gellius quotes from Apion, or of the snake which, according to Pliny, saved its rescuer when he was beset by robbers; or to censure a man entirely without affection, neither loving anyone nor being the object of anyone's love, one could introduce the dolphin that loved a boy, or the eagle seized by a burning passion for a girl, or the magnet that draws metal to itself. I shall probably say more about such topics when I get to the section on fables. Meanwhile, to return to my subject.

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[123] Erasmus had no high opinion of the integrity of ancient historians. Herodotus and Xenophon are quoted as untruthful in his life of Jerome (*Opuscula* 135:40ff). [Tr.]

[124] See 582:7–8. [Tr.]

[125] Pittacus, one of the Seven Sages of Greece; in Diogenes Laertius I.79–80; *Adagia* I viii I. [Tr.]

[126] Quintilian 5.11.22. [Tr.]

Third Method of Expanding Examples

Illustrative examples of both kinds, that is both invented and real ones, can be expanded by yet other procedures: first, by the "parable," also known as ὁμοίωσις [simile], which Cicero translates by *collatio*; second, by introducing a comparison or antithesis. In the "parable" an appropriate simile reveals the fresh image as like, unlike, or in contrast to the original; first, an example of the like: Just as Camillus[127] by his bravery repelled the barbarian foe and rescued Rome when it was hard pressed by the Gauls and brought to the edge of disaster, so Lorenzo Valla summoned from the grave and restored to their former splendor Latin letters, corrupted, crushed, and extinguished by barbarian ignorance; second, the unlike: We should not feel the same way towards Lorenzo and Camillus, because Camillus was moved by patriotism to risk his own life in saving his country from the barbarians, but Lorenzo was led by the desire for fame, or rather by a passion for attacking as many people as possible, not to restore the oppressed Latin language, but to reduce it to rigid rules, when it could be learnt more satisfactorily from the reading of eloquent authors; third, a contrasting example: Marcellus[128] restored their works of art to the Syracusans though they were our enemies; Verres took them away from them when they were our allies. ("Restore" is the opposite of "take away," "enemy" the opposite of "ally.") Here is another example: Brutus[129] slew his sons when they were plotting treason; Manlius[130] punished with death his son's bravery; and one from Virgil: "But the great Achilles, / Whose son thou falsely proclaim'st thyself to be / Acted not thus towards the foe."

The comparison shows the fresh example as something smaller or greater or equal; smaller: If cities have been overthrown for the sake of broken marriages, what is the appropriate treatment of the adulterer? or another example: "Our ancestors often fought wars because their traders and merchant-men had been insultingly treated; what should be your attitude when so many thousand Roman citizens have been murdered by one edict at the one time? Your fathers were prepared to extinguish the light of Greece, the city of Corinth, because their ambassadors had been insolently addressed; will you leave that king untouched who bound and flogged the consular legate of the Roman people, and most cruelly tortured him to death?"

Cicero is again the source for our example of something equal: "It so happened that I stood for election along with two men of noble family, one a scoundrel, the other a decent, good man; yet I surpassed Catiline in standing, Galba in popularity." Something greater is exemplified in the *Pro Milone*: "They deny that it can be the will of heaven that that man should look upon the light of day who confesses that he has slain a fellow man. Now in what city are fools putting forward an argument like this? Why, in that very city where the first trial ever on a capital charge was the trial of Marcus Horatius, who, although the city itself was not as yet free, was freed from the charge in the assembly of the Roman people, and that though he admitted killing his sister with his own hand."

To sum up, in the illustrative example properly so called, which is a reference to a genuine or apparently genuine occurrence designed to induce people to accept what we are saying, we can either indicate our chosen incident in a few words, as in that example from St. Jerome: "Remember Dares and Entellus";[131] or we can employ a broader treatment and bring it in as an analogous example involving something similar, dissimilar, in contrast, greater, less, or equal. The point of departure may be any special circumstance attaching to things or persons. The example can be further improved by the artifices of language, when we deliberately tone down or exaggerate different points by the use of suitable vocabulary or figures of speech.

Anyone who wishes to give his example the fullest treatment possible will set out all the separate points of similarity and dissimilarity and will compare one with another. This is what Cicero does in the example I quoted above about the murdered legate. He deliberately sets one feature beside another: "They did not put up with any diminution in the liberty of Roman citizens; are you going to ignore their loss of life? They avenged a verbal affront to the rights of ambassadors; will you leave unavenged an ambassador tortured to death? Their splendid achievement was to bequeath to you a great glory of empire; take care that it is not your disgrace to be unable to guard and preserve what you have received."

This kind of thing can be treated very extensively if the speaker compares as many of the attendant circumstances as possible. One could, for example, if urging someone to bear the death of a son with controlled grief, confront him with the woman in pagan tradition who bravely bore the death of several sons. After telling the story, the speaker will proceed to compare the two: Can you, a grown man, not bear what a feeble woman could? She overcame both her sex and her feelings as a parent; will you be defeated by one of these alone? She bore with uncrushed spirit the loss of several sons; do you mourn inconsolably the extinction of one? Furthermore, all her sons perished together in a shipwreck, an inglorious end; yours fell fighting bravely on the field of battle. She had no one to whom she could with honor impute the loss of her sons; you sacrificed yours for your country. They perished wholly and utterly; your son will live for ever in his immortal fame. She gave thanks to nature that once she had been the mother of so many sons; you recall only that you have lost an excellent son. She had no hope of repairing her loss, being of an age past child-bearing; you have a fertile wife, and are still healthy and virile yourself. Can you, a Roman and a man, not evince the qualities that a weak barbarian woman could? She was ignorant of learning and yet she could scorn something that shatters you in spite of your education and your great profession of philosophy. Finally, will a Christian man not manifest the firmness of spirit shown by a pagan woman? She believed that nothing survives the pyre, and still held grief unseemly; you have been taught that those who depart this life with glory have at last truly begun to live, and yet you cry endlessly that your son is lost for ever. Can you not give back to God when he asks it what she calmly resigned to nature? She bravely submitted to necessity; do you rebel against God?

This specimen makes it clear enough what methods one should use in comparing one's examples; but in genuine lawsuits, since there is a greater supply of circumstantial detail, it is even easier to discover different sorts of antitheses.

One should mention, by the way, that in antitheses of this sort sententious sayings and clinching summaries can be very appropriately worked in. To take the same example again, after the first contrast — "Can you, a grown man, not bear what a feeble woman could?" — one could introduce striking sayings such as "Nature made a distinction in sex; do you make no distinction in mind?"; "A woman is not expected by anyone to win praise for courage, but if a man is not courageous he is not even classed as a man"; "The name man indicates both the stronger sex and strength of mind; it is shameful to sport a beard and be surpassed by a woman in firmness of heart." After the antithesis "She had no one to whom she could with honor impute the loss of her sons; you sacrificed yours for your country," one could invent sayings like this: "It is a great comfort in sorrow to have something or someone to whom one can with honor attribute what has happened"; "One cannot sacrifice one's son for anyone more reasonably or more gloriously than for one's country." After the antithesis, "They perished wholly and utterly; your son will live for ever in his immortal fame," one could go on "It is far better to live by fair fame than by the common breath of man. The life of the body is ill-starred, and (even without accidents) brief, and held in common with the beasts; that other life is glorious and everlasting, and carries a man into the company of heaven."

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[127] A successful Roman general who was recalled from exile to save Rome after it had been captured by the Gauls in 390 BC. [Tr.]

[128] Marcus Marcellus, the conqueror of Syracuse in 212 BC. [Tr.]

[129] Not Caesar's murderer, but his ancestor, considered as the founder of Roman liberty in the fifth century BC for his part in the expulsion of the kings; he slew his sons for attempting to restore them. [Tr.]

[130] Manlius Torquatus, as consul in 340 BC, executed his son for disobeying orders and engaging (victoriously) in single combat; see Livy 8.7ff. [Tr.]

[131] Combatants in a boxing match in which the old but experienced man defeats the young and cocksure. [Tr.]

Such striking sayings or maxims could be appended to each section of the compared passages, but these indications will be enough for the time being, as I shall be discussing maxims in the proper place.[132]

Parallels

The more pedantic may wish to distinguish the illustrative example from the parallel, taking the example as something definitely done by someone, the parallel as an analogous situation to be found in events in general, or natural or chance accompaniments of events. Atilius' return to the enemy would be an *example* of adhering to principle and keeping faith; but a ship raising or lowering sail to suit the force of the wind, and tacking from one side to the other, would be a *parallel,* showing that the sensible man should yield to circumstances and accommodate himself to his situation. Even so, the methods of expanding the parallel are exactly the same as those I have illustrated for the example. Sometimes a single phrase is enough: Do you not realize you must turn your sail into the wind? or: Stop washing a brick white. In this form it will be an allegory or metaphor. Sometimes it is expanded and the application made more specific. We have an example of such an expansion in Cicero's *Pro Murena:* "Those just sailing into harbor after a long sea-voyage eagerly give information to those setting out about the likelihood of storms and the pirate situation and what the different places are like, because it is natural to feel kindly towards those who are about to face the dangers which we have just escaped. What then should be my feelings, who am just coming into sight of land after a terrible tossing, towards this man who, as I can see, must go out to face dreadful storms?"

Here is another example from the same speech: "It is commonly said that among Greek musicians those take up the flute who cannot play the lyre; in the same way we observe that quite a number of people who have not managed to become orators have fallen back on the study of the technicalities of the legal system."

St. Jerome imitated the first of these parallels used by Cicero in one of his letters to Heliodorus: "In giving you this advice I am not like a man whose ship and cargo are unharmed, an inexperienced sailor who knows nothing about currents. I am more like a man just cast up on the shore from a shipwreck, in a frightened voice warning those about to set sail. In that tide race the Charybdis of self-indulgence engulfs a man's health of soul; on the other side lust smiling like Scylla with fair face entices the ship of modesty onto the rocks. Here is the shore beset with barbarian foes; here is that pirate, the devil, with all his crew, ready with chains for those he hopes to seize. Do not trust it, do not feel at ease. The sea may smile, smooth as a millpond, the surface of the motionless element may hardly be ruffled by a breath of wind, yet this flat plain contains great mountains. Under the surface is danger; under the surface is the enemy. Ready the ropes, take in the sails. Let the yard-arm be the sign of the Cross before you. That calm is a storm."

This could be greatly extended if the speaker took all the separate dangers which threaten virtue because of sin or wicked men or any other cause and collated them with the various things that endanger the lives of sailors, and then brought in comparisons using situations that were greater, or less, or different, or contrasting, and finally ornamented the passage where appropriate with neat sayings and striking remarks in conclusion.

This is done in the following example: The more precious an object is, the more carefully it is guarded, the more cautiously it is spent. So one should take the greatest care of time which is the most precious thing there is, and make sure that none of it slips by without profit. If guardians are appointed for those who thoughtlessly squander jewels and gold, what madness will it be to throw away time, the fairest gift of immortal God, on disgraceful idleness and dishonorable pursuits? When you waste time, you are wasting your life, and what can be more valuable than life? If one small jewel goes, you call that a loss; but when the whole day has gone, that is, a good portion of your life, do you not call that a loss? especially when lost things like jewels can be replaced by some means or another, but the loss of time is irreparable. Losses that you suffer are usually other people's gain, but the waste of time is no profit to anyone. There is no loss from which someone does not gain some advantage except the loss of time. Further, the loss of material possessions is often to our spiritual good, for riches usually furnish the material for sin, so that it is often better to have thrown them away than to have preserved them carefully. The better the use to which a thing can be put, the more shameful is its waste. But there is nothing finer, nothing more splendid than the good application of good time. However carefully you preserve material possessions, you often have them snatched from you by chance or by man, so that the loss makes you wretched, but nothing more; it does not shame you as well. But the waste of time, which happens through no fault but our own, not only brings misery in its train, but discredit in addition. The worst kind of ill fame is that for which no one can be blamed but the sufferer. With material possessions you could have bought estates and houses, you could not have bought a worthwhile mind; with time you could have acquired other graces of the spirit, and immortality as well. There is no portion of life so brief that it could not have been used to make a great stride towards happiness. Finally, possibly you would have had to account to your father for your bad use of wealth; for your badly spent hours you must account to God.

This is only an indication of how one can expand a parallel example by comparing and elaborating the separate details, but I feel this is sufficient.

One could deal in the same way with parallels based on dissimilarity: A new ship is better than an old one, but it is not so with friendship: A woman who makes free with her wealth deserves praise, but not one who makes free with her beauty;[133] In a relay race the man who takes the torch is better than the one who hands it over, but in a war the general who hands over an army is better than the one who receives it from him.[134]

My earlier remarks have shown how every imaginable thing can be used as a source for the derivation of such analogous cases.

Likenesses

The εἰκών, in Latin *imago* "likeness," is very like the parallel or simile. In fact, if it is expanded, it becomes a simile. For example, the following is a simile: As an ass will not be driven by blows from the pasture until it has had its fill, even so a warrior will not cease from slaughter until he has sated his soul. If however you were to say that someone leapt on the foe like a snake or a lion, that would be an εἰκών. To say that Achilles advanced to battle glowing like fire or the sun in his armor is a likeness rather than a simile. Homer uses both figures very frequently and with great effect.

In a speech the εἰκών is more useful in the cause of vividness or impressiveness or stylistic attractiveness than for proving any point. Examples and parallels also serve these ends, but they often help considerably in generating an attitude of consent in our hearers, especially when they are combined with induction, for which the Greek is ἐπαγωγή. Plato's Socrates makes great use of this.

Here is an illustration of induction combined with example: Tell me, what good did Demosthenes ever get out of his remarkable eloquence?[135] Apart from other misfortunes, an unhappy and pitiable end. What reward did eloquence bring to Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus?[136] A violent death, and that a wretched and shameful one. What to the highly praised Antonius? He too was mercilessly stabbed to death by thugs.[137] Take Cicero, the father of all eloquence, what reward did he get? Death, and a bitter and pitiable one at that.[138] Very well, then, burn the midnight oil and strive to achieve the highest glories of eloquence, when it has always brought destruction on anyone who excelled in it.

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[132] At 627. [Tr.]

[133] Examples taken from Quintilian 5.11.26. [Tr.]

[134] Example taken from *Ad Herennium* 4.46.59, where the explanation is given: because the exhausted runner hands over to a fresh one, whereas the experienced general hands over to an untried one. [Tr.]

Here is induction combined with a parallel: Do you not expect a sailor to talk more knowledgeably about sailing than a doctor? and a doctor more authoritatively about medicine than a painter? and a painter better about the techniques of color and light and shade and perspective than a cobbler? Will not a charioteer be better at discussing the art of driving a chariot than a sailor? (A number of comparisons like this will make everyone prepared to accept the idea that each person will speak best about the thing he knows best. Then one brings in one's parallel case.) But what will the orator discuss best, when he professes to be able to talk on any topic?

There is a very well-known anecdote about Aspasia, illustrating induction from parallel cases, taken from Aeschines.[139]

Comparisons in Epideictic Oratory

There is also a general type of comparison, used especially in panegyric or vituperative speeches, when we confront one person with another for purposes of praise or blame. If one wished to praise Pope Julius, one could set him beside Julius Caesar and compare the benefits conferred by the two men; if one wished to attack him, one could compare their crimes. Likewise, one could praise Maximilian[140] by comparing him with the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.[141]

Things can also be compared. A writer praising history could compare its uses with the benefits of those who have advanced the state by deeds of war; or if he wished to praise poetry, he could compare and balance its advantages with those of philosophy.

One thing can be compared with many: anyone wishing to glorify history could compare it with all the other most highly valued disciplines. There are two ways of using this sort of comparison. For you may tone down the virtues on one side and build up those on the other; or you may praise the other side extravagantly while showing the thing you are really praising to be better or certainly not inferior. In attacking, you magnify the faults, while showing the person you are assailing to be more villainous, or at least equally villainous.

In doing this you must take care that the examples used for comparison are well known and beyond question. A good ruler should be compared with Trajan[142] or Marcus Aurelius the philosopher-emperor, a bad one with Nero or Caligula.[143] A vicious critic should be compared with Zoilus[144] or Hyperbolus,[145] a tale-bearer with a viper or Regulus,[146] an effeminate voluptuary with Sardanapalus.

You will increase the material available for your comparison if, as I just suggested, you bring in several persons or things when praising or attacking just one person or thing. In praising a ruler, for instance, one could extract the best feature from each of a number of people: success and presence of mind from Julius Caesar, generosity of spirit from Alexander, affability from Augustus, courtesy from the elder Titus,[147] purity of life and clemency from Trajan, contempt for glory from Marcus Aurelius, and so on. The same principle is to be used in making an attack.

If you were expressing abhorrence for anger, you could compare it with uncontrollable drunkenness, delirium, epilepsy, demonic possession; or if vituperating a poisonous tongue, you could liken it to the noxious breath of a man suffering from the plague, to the exhalations of snakes which breathe the deadliest poison, and the miasma from certain lakes and caves which causes sudden death.[148]

Judgments

As I said, with examples we can include judgments, which the Greeks call κρίσεις. These are *sententiae* or striking sayings of famous writers, of nations, of wise men, of distinguished citizens. A great supply can be discovered in the celebrated poets of old, also in the historiographers, the philosophers, and mystic writings.[149] Judgments accordingly show the same variety as examples. Collections of such things have been made by some of the Greeks, notably by one Stobaeus.[150] There are also apophthegms[151] of wise men, like "The sayings of famous men," and the things recorded by Plutarch.[152] Here too the material is varied: as regards subject-matter, we have military and philosophical sayings; as regards speakers, we have kings, wise men, ordinary citizens; as regards tone, we have serious, humorous, and witty sayings. We can include here proverbs, whether extracted from authors or from popular speech. National customs are in my opinion no different from examples; oracles and replies from higher powers can certainly be included with judgments, for example, if one were to approve Socrates as a wise man, because this was the judgment pronounced by the oracle of Apollo.

Maxims

Next we come to *sententiae* or maxims, which are not extracted from authors but invented by ourselves to suit the matter in hand. These can be introduced into any part of the speech. One passage often generates quite a number of maxims. They can occur in the narration and in passages intended to stir the emotions of the audience, as well as in the proof section. Quite often the transition from one section to another is made by means of one of these terse sayings. By introducing them in appropriate contexts you will provide yourself with a not inconsiderable source of *copia*, which at the same time will lend your speech weight or attractiveness.

There are various forms of maxim.[153] Some of them are καθολικαί [of universal application], such as: Envy brings its own punishment. Others will only do in certain contexts, such as: Nothing is so popular as generosity. Some need a specific person: A prince who will know everything has many things to learn.[154]

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[135] The most famous of Greek orators; he eventually took poison to avoid capture by his enemies. [Tr.]

[136] Two brothers, democratic reformers of the popular party, both murdered in the political upheavals of the second century BC; see 609: 15n. [Tr.]

[137] Grandfather of the famous Mark Antony; he was killed in the civil wars in the time of Marius, and his head was hung in the Forum. [Tr.] This is the Antonius who plays a part in Cicero's *De Oratore*. [Ed.]

[138] Eventually killed by Antony's thugs in 43 BC; his head was hung in the Forum with a needle though the tongue, in revenge for the *Philippic Orations* in which Antony had been mercilessly attacked. See Juvenal 10.114ff, Cicero and Demosthenes destroyed by their eloquence. [Tr.]

[139] Not the orator but a pupil of Socrates, whose writings include Socratic dialogues; passage translated by Cicero in *De inventione* 1.51–2: Aspasia gets Xenophon's wife incautiously to agree that she would prefer her neighbor's gold ornaments if they were better than her own, likewise her dress and other adornments; would she then prefer the other woman's husband? Xenophon likewise is led from neighbor's horse and estate to neighbor's wife. See further Quintilian 5.11.27–9. [Tr.]

[140] A reference to the reigning German emperor, Maximilian I. [Tr.]

[141] The Roman philosopher-emperor, 161–80 AD, author of the famous *Meditations*. [Tr.]

[142] Second of the five so-called "Good Emperors," 98–117 AD; Marcus Aurelius (see line 5n) was the fifth. [Tr.]

[143] The two maddest and most vicious of the Julio-Claudian line of Roman Emperors. [Tr.]

[144] Famous for the asperity of his criticisms of Homer; *Adagia* II ii 55. [Tr.]

[145] Athenian demagogue of the fifth century BC, who violently attacked rival political figures; see Plutarch *Alcibiades* 196. [Tr.]

[146] Not the hero, Marcus Atilius Regulus, but a notorious informer contemporary with the Younger Pliny, who describes him in his *Letters*. [Tr.]

[147] The Emperor Titus Vespasianus (71–9 AD), known usually as Vespasian; his elder son, also Titus Vespasianus, was known as Titus. [Tr.]

[148] Such as Avernus, which provided one of the entrances to hell. [Tr.]

[149] Erasmus means books of the Bible, especially those that lend themselves to an allegorical interpretation; he mentions these as a source in *Adagia* prolegomena v (LB II 5C). [Tr.]

[150] Author of an anthology of excerpts from earlier literature; see *Adagia* prolegomena iii (LB II 4A) where he is cited as a source. [Tr.]

[151] Erasmus published a collection of such sayings, *Apophthegmata*, in 1531 (LB IV 93A–380D). [Tr.]

[152] Collected sayings of kings and commanders, *De scite dictis regum ac imperatorum* (*Apophthegmata*). [Tr.]

[153] For this whole section see Quintilian 8.5.3ff. [Tr.]

[154] This translates the readings of *1512*, *1514*, *1526*, *1534*, and LB: *necesse habet multa cognoscere*. Modern texts of

Some *sententiae* are simple. Love conquers all. Some have some kind of reason incorporated: In every dispute the richer party, even if he is the victim, nevertheless seems the aggressor because he has more power. Some are double, composed of two contrasting statements, without any reason being expressed: Complaisance wins friends; truth begets ill will. Some consist of two distinct statements: Death is not unpleasant; the approach to death is unpleasant. If the argument is spelled out in each section, the *sententia* becomes fourfold.[155] Those who think the faults of youth should be condoned are wrong (this is the first section; now the reason is appended), because that age is [not] a hindrance to sound study; (now the third section) those think wisely who punish the young most severely (now the reason) in order that they may wish to acquire at the age most suitable those virtues which will assist them throughout their lives. Although this example occurs in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium,* I do not think much of it. However, it is not difficult to invent another one of the same sort: Hard work is a good thing in the young, because (reason) it is disgraceful to squander on idleness and base pleasures those gifts which nature supplies in those years so that we may acquire worthwhile skills; but, on the other hand, affluence is a good thing in old age, so that (reason) that period of life which is somewhat lacking in the resources of nature may at least be supported by the props of material benefits. Or another: Old age, if destitute, is piteous; if ignorant, disgraceful; for it is misery to be in need just when the weakness of nature especially needs the support of money, and shameful to be ignorant of all that is best just at the time when not to be learning is right and proper, to be instructing others particularly becoming.

A maxim can be plain:[156] The miser is without what he has as much as what he has not;[157] or it can incorporate a figure of speech: I had the power to preserve — and dost thou ask / Whether I have power to destroy?[158] The straightforward way of expressing this would be: It is easier to destroy than to preserve. It may have a general reference: It is easy to harm, harder to help; or be adapted to specific persons, in which case it is less clearly a maxim, as in this example from Cicero: "Caesar, your exalted position has bestowed on you no greater gift than your ability to save, nature no better gift than your willingness to do so."

There is also the kind of unspoken and concealed maxim that we find in Virgil's line: "She is consumed with hidden fire." Ovid makes it explicit: "More fiercely burns the fire that is concealed." Another form is the type that narrates a past event: The larger party has defeated the better. If this were made explicit, it would be: It usually happens that the larger party defeats the better.

Another form of maxim is the type the Greeks call *ἐπιφώνημα*, Quintilian "acclamation,"[159] that is a final triumphant remark appended either to a narrative, as in Virgil's: "Such toil it was to found the Roman race"; or to the conclusion of an argument, as in this example from Cicero's *Pro Ligario*:[160] "The pardon of these people, Caesar, is the glory of your clemency. Shall their language goad you into cruelty like their own?" Not every *epiphonema* is automatically a maxim, though it usually is, but anything in the closing section of an utterance which strikes on the ear as shrewd and pungent can be called an *ἐπιφώνημα*.

This is a particular feature of epigrams, as in the one about the sheep feeding with her milk the cubs of the wolf: Never once is nature changed by kindness. Martial's poems very often end with such a clinching remark: "Either don't sleep, Nasidienus, or dream about yourself"; or this one: "Shall I tell you what you are? You're a jack-of-all-trades."

Valerius Maximus makes great use of this sort of thing, and Seneca also usually closes his *Epistles* with a summing-up remark. There have been people so fond of using the *epiphonema* that they thought they must work in such an exclamatory appendage all over the place after anything they said. One should however show discretion in using all maxims, including these triumphant conclusions, and only employ them where the context demands it, or at least allows it.

The *noema* is a form of terse remark which is not expressed but understood, as in the story of the man who sued his sister for damages after she had cut off his thumb while he slept, because she was tired of buying him out of the gladiatorial school. She said "you were fit to have your hand complete," implying "so that you could go back and fight as a gladiator all your days."[161]

Hortensius' famous remark is much the same, I think. He said he had never been reconciled with his mother or sister, which gives one to understand that he had never quarrelled with them.

There are novel types of maxim[162] based on the unexpected, on allusion, on metaphorical uses, on using two words instead of one, on contraries. Examples of these may be found in Quintilian by anyone who wants them.

Elaboration

There is a certain affinity between the type of maxim which, as I showed above, consists of four subsections and the procedure known as "elaboration."[163] In this we dwell for some time on the same point, vary the same maxim in all kinds of different ways, and thus enrich it. We may employ variation in language, expressing the same sentiment in different words and different figures of speech; or variation in delivery, using different facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice; or variation in treatment, first saying something in our own person, then putting it into the mouth of someone who expresses it rather differently; or we can put forward an argument coolly, and then produce it in a fierce and heated manner.

A complete "elaboration" contains seven parts: statement, reason, rephrasing of statement (to which one can add the reason restated), statement from the contrary, comparison, illustrative example, conclusion. Here is a specimen.[164] The wise man will shirk no danger required by his country, because it often happens that a man who refuses to perish for his country of necessity perishes with it; and, since all blessings are received as the gift of our native land, no burden should be considered irksome when borne for our native land. (This is the first part, where the basic statement is simply set out and supported by its reasons. Next comes the rephrased statement, expanded by an equal or greater number of reasons.) For men are fools to run away from a danger that must needs be faced for the country's sake (statement — reason) because such a danger cannot be escaped, and because to do so reveals them as ungrateful to the state. (Next comes the section using the contrary statement.) The really wise men are those who at peril to themselves ward off the perils of their native land — (reasons) as they both render the state the respect they owe it, and prefer to perish for the multitude rather than with it. (Now we get opposites.) It is quite indefensible to surrender to nature, when you are forced, that life which you indeed received from nature but preserved by means of the state, and to refuse to give that life freely to the state when you are asked; to prefer, when you could perish for your country with courage and honor, to live in shame and cowardice; to be prepared to face danger for friends and parents and relations, to be unprepared to enter into peril for the state, which holds within itself every name revered by men, including the revered name of Fatherland. (Next we have a comparison.) Just as we rightly despise a voyager who prefers his own safety to that of the ship, so we execrate a man who, when the state is in

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Quintilian read *ignoscere* "must pretend not to know many things." [Tr.]

[155] Example taken from *Ad Herennium* 4.17.25, the section on sententiae. [Tr.]

[156] For this section see Quintilian 8.5.6ff. [Tr.]

[157] Publilius Syrus *Sententiae* ed W. Meyer (Leipzig 1880) 628; part of a collection of moral sayings drawn from the *Mimes* of Publilius and from other writers, going under the name of Seneca throughout the Middle Ages. Erasmus extracted those belonging to Publilius and ascribed them to their true author in an edition of 1514 which included the *Disticha Catonis* and other texts (see Ep 298:11–16). [Tr.]

[158] From Ovid's lost tragedy *Medea,* quoted in Quintilian 8.5.6. [Tr.]

[159] 8.5.11. [Tr.]

[160] 10, quoted in Quintilian 8.5.10. [Tr.]

[161] See Quintilian 8.5.12. [Tr.]

[162] A very compressed recollection of Quintilian 8.5.15–18. [Tr.]

[163] See *Ad Herennium* 4.42.54–8. [Tr.]

[164] The whole example is taken from *Ad Herennium* 4.44.57. Erasmus merely interposes his own comments. [Tr.]

peril, consults his own safety rather than the safety of all. (Now we put in the kind of parallel in which we move towards something bigger.) When a ship has been wrecked, many have often escaped unharmed; no one can swim away with his life from the wreck of the ship of state. (Now an illustrative example.) This was well understood by Decius, who, according to the story, vowed his own life, and to preserve the legions hurled himself into the midst of the enemy. (Next some maxims.) He parted with his life; he did not lose it. In return for something of little worth, he bought something of great value. He gave his life; he received his country. He gave his soul, and received a glory which, transmitted with renown from times long past, each day shines forth ever more splendidly. (Finally we have the conclusion as a kind of epilogue.) If we have proved by reasoning and demonstrated by example that one should embrace danger for the sake of the state, we must consider those men wise who shirk no danger that involves the safety of their native land.

Boys being trained in *copia* may be usefully exercised with themes of this sort — although I do not myself care much for this particular example either, which I have again taken from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium,* except that it does at least illustrate the method. It could be expanded even further if you piled in several rephrasings and reasons to go with them, several similes, and several examples.

Fables

Fables are very similar to legendary tales, except that fables are more immediately attractive and make the point more effectively. Their attraction is due to their witty imitation of the way people behave, and the hearers give their assent because the truth is set out vividly before their very eyes. Fables are particularly effective with uneducated and unsophisticated people, and anyone else whose ways still have a whiff of the days of yore.

The most famous fables are those that go under the name of Aesop, who was numbered among the sages on their account. Quintilian[165] thinks they were written by Hesiod, but certainly recognizes in them the work of some outstanding intellect. If fables are thought of so highly, it is not surprising that Menenius Agrippa persuaded the Roman populace to abandon a most dangerous sedition by inventing for the occasion the fable of the parts of the body conspiring against the belly, as recorded in Livy, or that Themistocles persuaded the Athenians not to replace all their magistrates with his story of the fox covered with flies.

Each person is perfectly at liberty to invent material of this sort, according to his subject, but if you are going to invent something appropriate, you need to be a person of lively imagination, and you must have observed closely the nature of living creatures, and these are of infinite variety. As for using fables, they can be indicated by a single word, just as illustrative examples can, especially if the fable is well known. You could for example say: If the ignorant criticize your work and tear it to shreds, don't be upset. Those who know anything about the subject think highly of it. After all, the cock in Aesop's fable did not appreciate the jewel. Or this: One should not despise or disregard any enemy, however weak and humble, seeing that the eagle in Aesop's tale had to pay for scorning the beetle. Or this: Rely on your own achievements, not on the glory of your ancestors, or you may suffer the same fate as Aesop's crow.

Fables are expanded by an introductory paragraph of commendation. We can commend the author of the fable, or fables as a class. This is what Aulus Gellius does in expounding the fable of the lark. He begins: "Aesop, the famous story teller from Phrygia . . . " (the passage may easily be referred to). Or you may dwell a little on the description of the appearance and nature of the living creatures and things you introduce, since this is just the kind of thing that people enjoy, and is itself part of a liberal education; you can, for example, introduce a description of the dung beetle and tell how it is born from dung, and raises itself on its hind legs, and pushes along balls of dung, and other things of this sort; or say that the eagle holds sway over the race of birds, is Jove's armor bearer, is never struck by lightning, stares unblinkingly at the burning rays of the sun, and soars beyond the clouds on swiftest wing — anything whatsoever in fact that contributes to magnifying the lowliness of beetles or glorifying the nobility of the eagle. All this material I have dealt with in a lighthearted way in my *Adagia.*

We should be sure to include anything told us about the various creatures in the stories of the poets: that the first wolf originated from Lycaon, the first partridge from a young man; that the swan is sacred to Apollo and sings most sweetly at the hour of its death; that the crow is Apollo's messenger and was turned from white to black for dawdling on the way; or any remarkable deed of an animal recorded in historical writings, like the eagle that fell in love with a girl in Pliny, or Bucephalus, Alexander the Great's horse, and so on, for again I am only showing how one goes about it.

Next, when we come to the fable itself, we may tell it fairly easily and expansively. This will not prove boring if we wittily transfer the characteristics of human society to the situation in the fable, especially if we invent conversations, aphorisms, and maxims to match. There is a very good example in Horace's *Satires*:

A country mouse once, as the story goes,
Received a town mouse to his humble hole,
A friend of old repaying a stay of long ago;
A rough soul he was, and close, and yet prepared
To open up and do him proud . . .

(You can refer to the passage.)

There is an example of an expansively told tale in Apuleius about the crow and the fox, and in Aulus Gellius about the lark.

As for the so-called ἐπιμύθιον [moral], that is, the interpretation of the fable, it does not matter much whether you put it at the beginning or the end. You can in fact both begin with it and end on it, provided you incorporate variety of language.

Dreams

Some people invent dreams as well, though possibly these should not be introduced except in display speeches, like Lucian's dream, or when we narrate them as genuine visions in order to encourage or deter our hearers. This is the case with Prodicus' invention about Hercules debating whether he should enter on the steep uphill path of virtue, or the downhill path of pleasure; or the story of Momus finding fault with man because his creator had given him a heart full of hidden corners but no window to look into it, and with the ox because he had not put the eyes at the end of the horns so that it could see what it was butting. Of the same sort seems to be St. Jerome's dream about being flogged for being a Ciceronian. In my young days I too toyed with something on these lines.

Fictional Narratives

If entirely fictional narratives are introduced as if they were true because they will help us to get our point across, we must make them as much like the real thing as possible. There are well-known features, listed in the handbooks of rhetoric, which make a story credible. As an example of this type we may mention the story about Memmius in Cicero, and possibly the one about Volteius in Horace. I observe that some people have been excessively fond of this sort of thing and, relying on the gullibility of the crowd, have imported into Christian literature the most stupid miraculous events as if they were absolutely true.

Stories which are invented to raise a laugh are the more entertaining the further they are from the truth, provided they do not approach the nonsense of old wives' tales, and can also win the ears of the educated by learned allusions. To this type belong Lucian's *True History* and Apuleius' *Golden Ass* which he copied from Lucian's example, further the *Icaromenippus* and lots of other things by Lucian; also nearly all the plots of Old Comedy, which delight us not by presenting a picture of real life, but by allusion and hidden meaning. The type of fiction which is deliberately constructed so as to be a representation of reality is definitely to be classed as an allegory, for example, the description of the cave in Plato, where men are chained and look with pleasure on shadows, taking them for reality.[166]

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[165] 5.11.19. [Tr.]

[166] *Republic* 7.514. [Tr.]

Scriptural Allegories

Whenever we are endeavoring to turn men towards piety or from wickedness, we shall find very useful anecdotes drawn from the Old or the New Testament, that is from the Gospels. The hidden meaning of these can be variously handled; it can be explained in terms of human life, or of the body of the church joined and connected to Christ the head, or of the fellowship of heaven, or of those early days when the faith was newborn, or of our own times. However, I shall deal at greater length and in more detail with this subject in a short work I have in hand on scriptural allegories.[167]

All these types I have mentioned are to be classed as "examples." I have spent rather a long time on this subject because it is from this depository in particular that the equipment for *copia* is drawn. There are however still a few points I should deal with briefly before leaving the topic altogether.

Assembling Illustrative Material

First of all, my earlier remarks have shown how any illustrative example you choose may be variously incorporated by means of a simile, contrary, comparison, hyperbole, epithet, likeness, metaphor, or allegory. I shall now show by what means we may acquire an ample supply of examples, have them ready in our pocket so to speak. What I shall advise is not so much impressive as useful, and I only wish I had carried it out long ago in my own youth (for it occurred to me even then), as I see how much my first efforts at writing would have gained in weight had I done so. However, a generous spirit does not grudge to young people of promise either what was denied oneself by fortune or what one failed to acquire by application.

Having made up your mind to cover the whole field of literature in your reading (and anyone who wishes to be thought educated must do this at least once in his life), first provide yourself with a full list of subjects. These will consist partly of the main types and subdivisions of vice and virtue, partly of the things of most prominence in human affairs which frequently occur when we have a case to put forward, and they should be arranged according to similars and opposites. Related topics naturally suggest what comes next in the list, and one remembers opposites in the same way.

Suppose for the sake of example that the first heading is "Reverence and Irreverence." To these will be subjoined the related subordinate types. Under "Reverence" we shall have different sorts of proper feeling: reverence towards God, patriotism towards one's country, love for children, respect for parents or for those whom one should honor as parents, such as teachers and those whose generosity has preserved us. The opposite of this is "Irreverence," and related to both is "Superstition," so that should be added here. A wide field now opens up covering outlandish forms of worship, and the different rites of various peoples, also the foolish indulgence of parents towards children, which is a misdirected love for the child.

The next heading could be "Faith," which you might subdivide into faith in God, human faith, faithfulness to friends, of servants to masters, good faith towards enemies; and "Faithlessness" could be likewise subdivided. Then could come "Beneficence," and after you have listed its subdivisions, "Gratitude," which is not a subsection of beneficence, nor its opposite, but its consequence and so naturally associated with it.

These topics can be developed through all the standard treatments: what reverence is, how it differs from other virtues, what is its particular characteristic, by what activities it is demonstrated or violated, what nourishes or destroys it, what advantages it brings to man. Here a whole field of illustrative examples and judgments opens up.

But each person should draw up a list of virtues and vices to suit himself, whether he looks for his examples in Cicero or Valerius Maximus or Aristotle or St. Thomas. If he prefers, he can make his list alphabetical — it does not matter much; although I would not have him putting into his lists every smallest hair-splitting subdivision of a topic, but only those that look as if they will often be of use in speaking. This can be discovered by looking at the topics that occur in various types of speech, epideictic, deliberative, and judicial. The headings in Valerius Maximus are mostly of this sort, and quite a lot of those in Pliny.

Topics that do not come under the head of vices and virtues belong partly to "examples," partly to "commonplaces." The first group covers things like: remarkable longevity, vigorous old age, old head on young shoulders, remarkable happiness, remarkable memory, sudden change of fortune, sudden death, self-inflicted death, horrible death, monstrous births, remarkable eloquence, remarkable wealth, famous men of humble birth, cunning, remarkable physical strength, remarkable beauty, outstanding mind in ugly body, and so on. To each of these heads should be attached their opposites and things associated with them: remarkable eloquence has as its opposite remarkable inarticulateness, and associated with it sweetness of voice, grace of movement, histrionic ability, and so on.

"Commonplaces" covers things like: It is very important what interests you develop as a boy; It matters what company you keep; His own is fair in each man's eyes; Offense is easy, reconciliation hard; The safest course is to believe no one; Love as one soon to hate, hate as one soon to love; He gives twice who gives readily; Each man manufactures his own fortune; The wrath of kings moves slowly; The friendship of princes is perilous; War is pleasant to those who have not experienced it;[168] A shared kingdom is insecure; The best provision for old age is learning. But what is the point of going on quoting these when there are thousands of them? One must choose from them the ones that seem most suited to speeches.

"Commonplaces" also includes stock comparisons like: Is the married or unmarried state happier? private or public life? Is monarchy preferable to democracy? Is the life of the student better than that of the uneducated?

Any of the commonplaces I quoted above which seem to have some affinity with virtue or vice can be listed under the appropriate heading. For example, under "Liberality" one could include things like these: He gives twice who gives readily; Nothing costs more than the thing for which you must beg; A service given to the worthy does a service to the giver; No gift is wasted as much as one bestowed on the ungrateful; The value of a kindness is destroyed if it is made a ground for reproach.

In order to avoid confusion caused by a disorganized mass of material, it will be a good thing to subdivide sections that cover a wide range. "Liberality," for example, could be subdivided as follows: benefits performed promptly and quickly, suitable benefits, benefits bestowed on the worthy and the unworthy, kindness made a ground for reproach, mutual benefit; and everything else which you may consider more suitable, for I am just giving a few examples to illustrate what I mean.

So prepare for yourself a sufficient number of headings, and arrange them as you please, subdivide them into the appropriate sections, and under each section add your commonplaces and maxims; and then whatever you come across in any author, particularly if it is rather striking, you will be able to note down immediately in the proper place, be it an anecdote or a fable or an illustrative example or a strange incident or a maxim or a witty remark or a remark notable for some other quality or a proverb or a metaphor or a simile.

This has the double advantage of fixing what you have read more firmly in your mind, and getting you into the habit of using the riches supplied by your reading. Some people have much material stored up so to speak in their vaults, but when it comes to speaking or writing they are remarkably ill-supplied and impoverished. A third result is that whatever the occasion demands, you will have the materials for a speech ready to hand, as you have all the pigeonholes duly arranged so that you can extract just what you want from them.

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[167] Perhaps a reference to *Ratio verae theologiae* (1518), which uses the "tropological" method of scriptural exposition, as does also *Commentarius in Psalmum 1* (1515); LB V 75ff, 171ff. With certain reservations Erasmus accepted the conventional distinctions between literal and spiritual interpretation of Scripture. In *Enchiridion* (1503) he emphasized the danger of excessive literalism (LB V 8D–E, 29B–F). See also *Ecclesiastes*, his treatise on preaching (and last major publication, 1535), LB V 1026C–56E. [Tr.]

[168] "Dulce bellum inexpertis," the title of one of Erasmus' most important writings against war, *Adagia* IV 1. [Tr.]

No discipline is so remote from rhetoric that you cannot use it to enrich your collection. Mathematics seems utterly remote, yet it will provide you with comparisons: the sphere totally consistent with itself, the square standing firm with its four right angles whichever way it falls, with which one can compare the wise man, entirely self-reliant, independent, firm, and unshaken in his virtue whatever the onslaughts of fortune. To say nothing at the moment of the fact that the theologians frequently look to mathematics when expounding mysteries because of the hidden analogy between things and numbers.

Natural science provides not only similes but examples. A simile of this type would be: As the lightning most often strikes the tops of hills, so the position of highest authority is exposed to the worst misfortunes; or, As lightning liquifies bronze but leaves wax untouched, even so a prince should show the utmost severity to the rebellious and disobedient, but display clemency to all others. If one wished to inculcate modesty and reticence in pleasure even in the properly married, one could use as an example the elephant, which out of self-respect mates in concealment. Or to urge the care with which parents should guard and train those first vulnerable years of childhood, one could cite dolphins, which accompany their offspring until they are quite grown up, and do not allow their young to go anywhere unless an older dolphin is with them as tutor and chaperon.

So our student will flit like a busy bee through the entire garden of literature, will light on every blossom, collect a little nectar from each, and carry it to his hive. Since there is such an abundance of material that one cannot gather everything, he will at least take the most striking and fit this into his scheme of work.

Some material can serve not only diverse but contrary uses, and for that reason must be recorded in different places. For example, if you are describing the incurable greed of a miser, you may properly bring in the tale of Charybdis; but if you are talking of insatiable gluttony or woman's inexhaustible lust Charybdis will fit again. Likewise, Aesop's fable about the goat and the fox getting into the water-hole together will do either to illustrate forethought, which means that you do not embark on an enterprise without first considering how you may get out of it, or to exemplify false friends who appear to be consulting a friend's interest but are really doing the best they can for themselves.

The death of Socrates[169] can be used to show that death holds no fear for a good man, since he drank the hemlock so cheerfully; but also to show that virtue is prey to ill will and far from safe amidst a swarm of evils; or again that the study of philosophy is useless or even harmful unless you conform to general patterns of behavior.

This same incident can be turned to Socrates' praise or blame. He deserves praise for showing such a courageous contempt for death when condemned for no fault of his own but purely out of animosity; he is to be blamed, inasmuch as by his useless pursuit of philosophy and disregard of accepted standards he caused bitter grief to his friends, disaster to his wife and children, and destruction to himself, while others are useful to their country, and are an ornament as well as a support to their families; and for that reason the duty of the true philosopher is at some point to abandon the crabbed precepts of philosophy and accommodate himself to the interests and opinions of the majority, to serve the times, as the saying goes.

If you look at this example of Socrates and determine its successive scenes, how many subject headings you will thus elicit! First of all, we find Socrates accused out of ill will by Anytus and Meletus, two most undesirable individuals. This suggests the subject: Truth begets hatred; or Outstanding virtue earns ill will; or Juries often take more account of noble birth than honest character; or There is nothing more shameless than wealth allied to bad character. (For what could be more preposterous than to have Socrates brought to court by men discredited by every crime imaginable?) Another subject could be: Not every act befits all equally. It was for this reason that Socrates did not throw himself on the jury's mercy, for it was not fitting that a man who throughout his life had taught that death should not be viewed with horror unless it was shameful, should now sink to abject entreaties, apparently through fear of death. This too was the reason why he did not do anything to avoid being brought to court in the first place, did not halfway through the trial opt for exile, and finally would not agree to escape from the prison though the chance was offered him, lest he should appear to be deserting his own principles. This is just the first section.

Then when we find him engaging in philosophical discussion so calmly and unhurriedly as his execution rapidly drew near, and drinking the hemlock as cheerfully as he would wine, and, just before he died, joking with Phaedo and reminding him to sacrifice a cock to Aesculapius, this suggests the topic: Death is even desirable to those who are conscious of a well-spent life; or this one: The nature of a man's life is revealed most clearly at his death. This is a good illustrative example of a steadfast and entirely consistent life, since Socrates when faced with imminent death looked and spoke just as he had done throughout his whole life.

The third section tells us that, while Socrates was in prison, there was no sign of Alcibiades, Agathon, and Phaedrus, but only of Crito, Phaedo, and Simmias. This leads to the thought that danger reveals who one's real friends are, for those everyday friends whose presence we have when nothing out of the ordinary is required look to themselves at such times.

In the fourth section he spends a long time discussing the immortality of the soul with his friends, but sends away his wife and family after giving them a few instructions. This gives us the heading: The philosopher should not be deeply involved in human relationships. (This tallies splendidly with the teaching of Christ.)

The fifth section shows the crowd immediately after Socrates' death turning its fury on his accusers, and setting up a golden statue to the Socrates whose loss they now regret. From this we may extract the heading: Fickle is the love or hate of the crowd; or this: Virtue's present form we hate / But when 'tis gone, in discontent / We seek it then — too late; or this: Counterfeit glory vanishes with the life, but the splendor of true virtue grows ever brighter after death.

All this makes it quite plain, I think, how many purposes the same illustrative example can serve.

The same is true of the simile. What a wealth of parallels can be derived from ships and sailing! Just as storms demonstrate the good helmsman, so reverses reveal the good general. No one entrusts the rudder to his closest friend but to the expert in navigation; even so no one will hand over the direction of the ship of state to his favorite, but to the man he considers most competent. Even as the crew take in the sails when a following wind blows too strongly, and spread them when the wind is less favorable, likewise when all is prosperity, the spirit must be curbed to keep it from arrogance; yet when fortune is hostile, it must be expanded and strengthened by courage and hope of better things to come. Again: When we cannot hold a straight course ahead through the storm, we must take a roundabout route and make for our goal just the same. When the uncontrolled violence of a storm is too much for the sailors' skill, they furl the sails and drop anchor; in like manner, one must sometimes cease to resist the raging mob until such time as it becomes ready to listen and manageable. As the sailor does not hold his sail always in the same position but raises it or lowers it, or swings it to this side or that to match the way the wind blows, even so the wise man should not at all times and in all places and in all situations keep the tenor of his life unchanged, but should accommodate to present circumstances his expression, his words, his behavior. As in great storms the most experienced sailors take suggestions even from the inexperienced because in a crisis like this different ideas occur to different people, even so a good king in great national dangers will be willing to listen to anyone's advice. When the danger is slight, the steering is still done by a man who has been tossed in grave dangers; even so, the state is safest when headed by a leader who has been tested in serious situations. Just as the helmsman does not consider he is properly performing his function unless he looks about him and tells each man what he should do, so no one properly acts the prince unless he directs and assumes responsibility for the functions of all his subordinate ministers. Any sailor would be crazy who allowed the vessel to be lost because of his hatred of some of the passengers, seeing that he could not survive himself if the ship foundered; likewise, any man is insane if he does not guard the safety of his country because of some party feeling, since he himself cannot remain in safety if the country is destroyed. As sailors drop the sheet anchor only in the most violent tempests, so one should not resort to the final remedy unless in the gravest peril when all hope is practically gone.

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[169] For all this material on Socrates see Plato *Crito* and *Phaedo*; also *Adagia* III iii 1. [Tr.]

But it is foolish to go on like this, as you can see by now that this one topic can be the source of thousands of similes.

Quite often one aspect of a simile can be applied to various purposes. For example, the frequent changes of the moon can be used for the vicissitudes of fortune, or the mutability of human life, or the irresolution of the foolish. One basic idea can be adapted to various uses: A merry companion is a wagon in the way; Life is pleasanter if one does not pass it alone, but joins with pleasant and cheerful friends; One should always carry a good book, so that one can dispel boredom by reading; If a happy spirit and a clear conscience go with you, no part of life will ever be wearisome; The best companion on a journey is one who speaks of happy things; if he constantly reminds you of unpleasantnesses, he wearies you to death.

The same is true of proverbs and sayings, and the use of these I demonstrated at the beginning of my own collection of proverbs.

Some extracts must therefore be written out in more than one place, or at least jotted down, for sometimes it will be sufficient to indicate the contents by a word or two accompanied by a reference to the source, especially if it is something that cannot be set out properly in a few words.

To make the whole thing clearer by means of an example, I shall take the heading "Changeableness" or "Irresolution," and see how much material I can collect under it. I shall start with the poets and take from them the god Mercury, a cunning divinity, whom we find assuming various shapes, and operating now among the gods, now in the underworld, now among men, and performing various functions, sometimes playing

carrying messages, conducting the souls of the dead to Charon, giving help to businessmen and advocates, and playing his lyre or employing his wand. He has a parti-colored hat, and rejoices in names of all kinds. These occur in Aristophanes' *Plutus*, where he is called *στροφαῖος* [versatile], *ἐμπολαῖος* [trafficking], *δόλιος* [wily], *ἡγεμόνιος* [guiding], *εναγώνιος* [games-presiding]. In Homer and Hesiod he is *διάκτορος* [Guide] and *'Αργειφόντης* [Slayer of Argos]. He is also called God of Cyllene and *ἐριούνιος* [Bringer of Luck]. I shall also take the good Vertumnus, who gets his name from the fact that he is continually changing (*vertere*) his form, and also Proteus who transforms himself into all kinds of incredible things. I shall take Empusa from Aristophanes' *Frogs*, a kind of demon continually presenting itself under different shapes, also Morpheus, assuming any appearance he chooses, and Circe transforming men into various animal shapes with her spells and magic wand (for bad men do not act consistently but are prey to shifting emotions); I shall take *Καιρός* [Opportunity],[170] the mobile god who never stays the same, and one like him, if you will, the Rhamnusian goddess.[171] I shall take Jove, transformed into an eagle, swan, bull, or shower of gold, and Chimaera with the head of a lion, torso of a woman, tail of a dragon, and that variegated monster which Horace invents right at the beginning of the *Ars poetica*. I shall bring in two-faced Janus, and three-bodied Geryon, and Bacchus, to whom the poets attribute *εὐήθεια*, that is a volatile and complaisant nature (and that is how Aristophanes depicts him in the *Frogs*), and any other figures in the poets which exemplify prodigious variety. I shall bring in Ulysses, adopting different characters according to the circumstances, which is why Homer, right at the beginning of his poem, calls him *πολύτροπος* [versatile].

Next I shall turn to science, and use the image of the moon which never returns the same in appearance as before, but is half-full, or full, old, new, pale, reddish, whitish, now precedes the sun, now follows him from behind. I shall use the image of the sky different in spring or autumn, now cloudy, now clear, now calm, now boisterous with winds. I shall extract the simile of the sea continually ebbing and flowing with the alternating tides, especially the Euripus which surges back and forth seven times each day and night. I shall add the polyp, whose changeableness has become proverbial, and the chameleon constantly changing its color, the panther and the pard with their parti-colored spots, and any other animals of the same sort, also the slippery snake, and childhood whose moods change from hour to hour, the peculiar inconstancy of women, the crowd veering at the slightest impulse, the wonderful mobility of quicksilver, the reed bowing to every breeze, the lightness of dry leaves, feathers, shavings, the soft pliable nature of wax, the shifting images of dreams, the mobility of wheels, the weather-vane set atop towers and church spires to record as it swings around the direction of the wind, the pans of the scale lightly dipping to this side and to that, and mosaic work with the wonderful variety of all its little different colored stones.

Some similes can be invented, like comparing the mind of the inconstant man, thinking first of one thing then another, to a reflecting globe hung up in a busy market place, and mirroring a constant succession of different figures as the crowd moves to and fro, or to a glass which appears to take on any color you put beneath it, or to an iron pendulum oscillating to and fro without stopping under the influence of a positive and a negative magnet, or to a ball rolling about on a flat surface.

From the non-fictional writers I shall borrow the inborn lightmindedness of the Greeks, which Juvenal describes; the slippery loyalty of the Allobroges, the Carthaginians of like inconstancy of character, the Scythians changing their pastures daily and having no fixed abode, the rod of Moses changing into one thing after another; Aristippus, playing any part you like, who "was suited by every shade of life," as Horace says, wearing the Cynic's cloak or royal purple as the case may be; also the *ἡμίλευκος* [half-white man] mentioned by Lucian, Catiline with his incompatible characteristics out of Sallust, Hannibal from Livy and Valerius Maximus[172] (both Catiline and Hannibal displayed a quite different tenor of life in youth and old age), Tigellius out of Horace's third satire:

> No consistency that fellow had;
> Often he passed as if fleeing for his life,
> More often still with solemn gait he paced
> Like one bearing Juno's holy symbols.

Comedy will provide us with an example of female inconsistency when Sostrata in the *Adelphi* says "Why man, you must be mad. / Do you consider this a thing to tell abroad?" and then a few lines later says "Not for all the world will I do that. / I'll tell it out." The inconstancy of lovers is demonstrated by Phaedria, who goes to the country and suddenly comes back, the inconstancy of youth by Antipho in the *Phormio*. It would however take too long to pursue this topic properly.

From tragedy I shall borrow Phaedra arguing with herself and changing her mind, now willing, now unwilling; and Medea too, before she murders her children, swayed by different emotions; Byblis and Narcissus from Ovid; and Dido from Virgil at the point where Aeneas is preparing his departure. The poets provide us with countless characters of this type all over their writings.

From fables I shall bring in the countryman who could blow hot and cold from the one mouth to the amazement of the satyr. I could go on, but for the moment I am only illustrating the method. From proverbs I shall borrow *τὴν παναγαῖαν Ἄρτεμιν* [ever-wandering Artemis], *ἀνέμου πεδίον* [a field for the wind], *εὐμεταβολώτερος κοθόρνου* [more adaptable than an actor's sock], *ὕδρου ποικιλότερος* [more pied than a water-snake], *Λιβυκὸν θηρίον* [a Libyan beast] and so on. (I have given the sources for all these in my *Adagia*.) A rolling stone gathers no moss. A tree that is always being moved does not flourish. From apophthegms I shall quote the remark made against Cicero: "to sit in two seats at once," and Sallust's comment on him (written, not spoken), "He says one thing standing up and another sitting down." From Homer we have *ἀλλοπρόσαλλος* [on different sides at different times] — this is the word he uses of the War God when he is favoring neither side definitely, but supporting first one party, then the other. From Ovid, I think, "Constant only in fickleness"; from Horace, "Lighter than bark," and "Turn round to square and square again to round," and "At Rome, as fickle as the wind, / It's Tivoli I love, at Tivoli it's Rome"; from Plautus; "lighter than a water-spider"; from Terence's *Phormio,* "I will, I won't — I won't, I will — what's said is unsaid again," and so on; from Euripides, "Your mind does not run straight — this you think now, / but something else you thought before, and soon / Will think something else again."

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[170] The fleeting decisive moment which must be seized by the forelock as it passes; the divinity was variously represented in Renaissance art with wings, a precariously balanced pair of scales, a lock of hair, and, by fusion with the figure of Fortune, as standing on a wheel or a ball; see *Adagia* I vii 70: "Nosce tempus," where Erasmus quotes both Posidippus' epigram (*Anthologia palatina* 16.275) on Lysippus' statue of *Καιρός*, and Ausonius' (epigram 33) on Occasio where the wheel is already present. [Tr.]

[171] Nemesis, so called from her celebrated shrine at Rhamnus in Attica; her function was to punish presumption and overconfidence by turning prosperity to misfortune, in which her activities resembled those of the fickle goddess Fortune;

[172] Both authors relate incidents illustrating, for example, Hannibal's skill as a general and his magnanimity, also his superhuman cruelty. [Tr.]

By now it is clear, I should think, what a wealth of equipment in this line also we can discover out of all the writers at our disposal.

The same considerations apply to maxims, which one may not only extract from authors but invent according to one's requirements. If you contrast each of these with its opposite, and subjoin related ideas to both headings, you can see what a vast store of speech will be laid up. As all this has so many applications (as I shall explain in detail in my work *De conscribendis epistolis*), there is nothing which you will not be able to apply somehow to the enrichment of your speech. Even opposite ideas can be brought in through irony, or by the adducing of a contrast, or by a comparison. It would be irony if one called Socrates a man who never agreed with himself, when throughout his whole life he was always seen with the same expression. It would be contrast if one said that Julius Caesar never regretted anything he did,[173] whereas this man never decreed anything that he did not before long rescind; a comparison if one said that it was just as difficult to make the famous Cato, whom Cicero calls inflexible, abandon his opinion as to make this man keep to his.

It is easy to modify related ideas and adapt them to neighboring concepts. To take Persius' phrase, "Live in your own house." This properly applies to one aiming higher than his lot in life allows, but since being discontented with one's lot has affinities with inconstancy of mind, it can be wrested in this direction, especially when Seneca writes: "It seems to me a strong indication of a well-ordered mind to be able to stay at home and keep oneself company."

One can even twist material to serve the opposite purpose. If you were praising a man for all seasons, endowed with a versatile and dexterous mind, you could dip into your "inconstancy" cupboard and bring out the polyp which changes color according to the surface beneath it, and then the Euripus, saying that this sea is not so versatile as this man's mind. You could bring out the flame which cannot stand still, the sky which constantly presents a different face, the reed bending according as the breezes blow, and say that it is the mark of a wise man to change his views and his way of life according to events, circumstances, places. Only senseless rocks and the brute earth do not move. Of living creatures, those that are most impressive are the most mobile. In the universe things are nobler the further they are from immobility: earth which does not move is the lowest, then comes water which does move, then air which moves more, then fire which moves even more than air, and finally the heaven which moves most of all. This is why the ancients called the mind of man wind and fire, but the stupid, slow, and foolish they called stones and lead, things to which the word "immovability" is particularly applicable.

By means of passages of this sort you will be able to divert much of your equipment of "constancy" to purposes of blame, and that for "inconstancy" to praise. But as I said a short while ago, this will be dealt with more opportunely elsewhere.

Now I shall deal with the remaining methods of expansion.

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[173] Erasmus specifically says Julius Caesar; according to Suetonius, Titus on his death-bed said: *neque enim exstare ullum suum factum paenitendum excepto dumtaxat uno* (*Titus* 10). [Tr.]

Peter Ramus

1515–1572

Pierre de la Ramée, usually known by his Latinized academic cognomen Petrus, or Peter, Ramus, was born to impoverished parents in Cuts, Picardy. Evidently the family had some ambition for the boy, since he began the study of Latin in Cuts before going to Paris at about the age of eight. And about four years later, at age twelve, he entered the University of Paris. His family was unable to finance his university studies so Ramus, like many other poor scholars, worked his way through school as a servant to wealthier students. He took his master of arts degree in 1536. While a student, Ramus heard German educator Johanne Sturm lecture on Agricola's *De Inventione Dialecticae,* which he later claimed was decisive in shaping his thought. Upon taking his degree, Ramus began to teach dialectic and rhetoric to the boys in various colleges of the university. In 1543 he published two extremely controversial and influential books: *Aristotelicae animadversiones,* attacking Aristotelian dialectic in its classical and Scholastic avatars, and *Dialecticae partitiones,* advocating a new intellectual method.

These books had the effrontery not only to condemn the argumentative methods in use at the University of Paris since at least the twelfth century but also to argue for replacing them with Ramus's way. Led by professor of medicine Jacques Charpentier, all three graduate faculties of the university — law, medicine, and theology — successfully petitioned the French king Charles I to forbid Ramus to teach from the two books. James J. Murphy has suggested that Ramus, far from being chastened by this censure, mounted a vigorous campaign over the next several years to gain acceptance for his ideas.[1] Between 1543 and 1549, eight books appeared by either Ramus or Omer Talon (Latinized as Audomarus Talaeus), who became Ramus's collaborator in 1544. Ramus also defended himself in several public oral disputations with other professors. The books most pertinent to Ramus's views on rhetoric are his attacks on Cicero, *Brutinae questiones* (1547), and on Quintilian, *Rhetoricae distinctiones in Quintilianum* (or *Arguments in Rhetoric against Quintilian,* 1549; excerpted here), and two books by Talaeus outlining a new program for rhetoric, *Audomari Talaei Institutiones oratoriae* (1545) and *Audomari Talaei Rhetorica* (1548). Murphy agrees with literary scholar Walter Ong that Ramus habitually published some of his own work under the name of Talaeus to avoid the royal ban on his ideas.[2] Both rhetoric texts and especially the second one may be Ramus's.

This ban was lifted in 1547, when Henry II became king and Charles of Lorraine, a former college classmate of Ramus's, interceded on his behalf. Thereafter, Ramus's career prospered. In 1551 he was appointed a regius professor of the university; Professor of Eloquence and Philosophy was the title he devised for

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[1] James J. Murphy, "Introduction," Peter Ramus, *Arguments in Rhetoric against Quintilian,* trans. Carole Newlands, ed. James J. Murphy (De Kalb: University of Northern Illinois Press, 1983), p. 9.

[2] Murphy, *Arguments,* pp. 22–26.