

LECTURES
ON
RHETORIC AND ORATORY,

DELIVERED

TO THE CLASSES OF SENIOR AND JUNIOR SOPHISTERS
IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

.....
By JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, LL.D.

LATE BOYLSTON PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC AND ORATORY.
.....

—
IN TWO VOLUMES.
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VOL. II.

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LECTURE XIX.

PROPOSITION AND PARTITION.



THERE are, says Aristotle, only two parts absolutely necessary to every public discourse, and these parts are the proposition and the proof; which are equivalent to the problem and its solution in geometry. The narration essentially belongs only to judicial causes. The exordium and peroration may sometimes be discarded. If a distribution of parts be made only for the sake of discovering how much ingenuity can be wasted upon the multiplication of distinctions without difference, we might treat of a narration, a pre-narration, a post-narration, a super-narration; a refutation, a super-refutation, and the like to an infinite extent. These, as that great philosopher observes,

are ridiculous divisions. But the proposition and the proof are indispensable.

It will thus appear, that he does not even assign a separate apartment for the narration. But in judicial causes, where it is necessary, he includes it within the compass of the proposition.

By the forms of proceeding in our judicial courts the distinction between the narration and proposition is sufficiently clear. They both constitute a part of the written pleadings, which precede the trial of the cause. The narration in the process of the common law is called the declaration, and is inserted into the writ or indictment, with which the suit commences. To this narration the defendant answers by a plea, and a written altercation ensues, terminating in an issue between the parties. The proposition of the plaintiff is that side of the issue, which he maintains. The proposition of the defendant consists in the direct denial of what his opponent affirms, and the issue is the question in controversy between them.

In discourses of the other classes it is not always necessary formally to lay down the proposition. Sometimes it is inferrible from the whole tenor of the speech. Sometimes it comes in most naturally by way of recapitulation at the close of

the narration. In deliberative assemblies the proposition is distinct and separate from the discourse, and appears in the form of a motion, resolution, or amendment.

The proposition may be simple or complicated; and a discourse may be adapted to the support of one proposition of either description, or of several distinct propositions.

A single and simple proposition usually forms the basis of criminal trials, when the only question is whether the party charged is or is not guilty of the offence imputed to him.

A single and complicated proposition often constitutes the foundation of a trial upon a private action, when the facts, the application of the law to them, and the amount of damages, to be allowed the injured party, are all controverted by the same issue.

It is very common upon motions for amendment in deliberative bodies, when the proposition is to strike out some part of a bill or resolution, and to insert something else in its stead.

It is still more usual in discourses of the pulpit, when the doctrines, deduced from the text, arise from various considerations. In all these

cases the proposition is divided into several points by partition.

Finally the discourse may apply to several propositions, entirely distinct and separate from each other. In such cases the orator is sometimes compelled by the abundance of his subject to divide his discourse into several distinct orations, each of itself complete.

The proposition is sometimes used to express the object to be obtained in consequence of the measure proposed ; and in these cases a number of subordinate propositions may be combined for the accomplishment of one. Thus in Burke's speech on conciliation with America, immediately after the exordium and the narration, he says " the proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war ; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations ; not peace to arise out of universal discord, fomented from principle in all parts of the empire ; not peace to depend on the juridical determination of perplexing questions, or the precise marking the shadowy boundaries of a complex government. It is simple peace ; sought in its natural course, and its ordinary haunts. It is peace, sought in

the spirit of peace, and laid in principles purely pacific."

By the proposition he obviously means the end, which his plan was calculated to accomplish. And after opening that plan in all its parts, he proceeds to say, "these solid truths compose six fundamental propositions. There are three more resolutions corollary to these. I think these six massive pillars will be of strength sufficient to support the temple of British concord. I have no more doubt than I entertain of my existence, that, if you admitted these, you would command an immediate peace." So that we have here six fundamental propositions; standing like the pillars of a temple to support the proposition, which is peace.

When the proposition is formally stated, it should be laid down in terms as clear and precise, as the language can furnish to the speaker. It should embrace the whole subject in discussion, and nothing more. Perfect simplicity is enjoined by Horace in the enunciation of the subject, even for the most elevated of all poetical works. It is therefore still more incumbent upon an orator. This statement of the proposition in the forms of oratory, to which we are accustomed, is almost always

provided for by fixed and permanent forms, which apply equally to every occasion.

In deliberative assemblies it is put in the shape of a question, when, after reciting the proposition, the speaker or chairman says, shall this bill, resolution, or the like, pass.

In judicial causes it terminates by an issue, upon which the parties put themselves upon the country for a verdict, or upon the court for a judgment.

In sermons it is substantially contained in the text from scripture, which the speaker selects for elucidation or improvement.

In demonstrative orations for public anniversaries it is often assigned to the speaker. As in the Boston fifth of March orations, the proposition was the pernicious tendency of standing armies in populous cities, in time of peace; and as in the fourth of July orations it is "to consider the feelings, manners, and principles, which led to the independence of these United States." The proposition in this sense is identified with the subject, and has heretofore been largely considered under the denomination of the state of the controversy. But even when the proposition itself is single, the discourse, by which it is supported, cannot be long,

or it must contain a variety of considerations, which derive strength from being methodically treated ; which is usually done by partition or division.

Partition is defined by Quintilian an enumeration, methodically arranged, of propositions, our own, those of our opponent, or both. Its purpose is two-fold ; the one to facilitate the treatment of his subject to the speaker, and the other to facilitate its intelligence to the hearer. It has inconveniences, as well as advantages ; inconveniences so considerable, that some ancient rhetoricians thought it should scarcely ever be used, and the archbishop of Cambray among the moderns has urgently recommended, that it should be excluded from the composition of sermons.

The objections, alledged against the practice of dividing the proposition by a formal partition, are, first, that the speaker is liable to forget some of the points, which he has laid down. Secondly, that he is exposed to omit important considerations, because they do not fall naturally within any of his points of division. Thirdly, that it gives an air of stiffness and premeditation to the discourse, at which genuine eloquence always relucts ; and takes from every argument the impression and the

grace of novelty. Fourthly, that it necessarily and invariably discloses the whole design of the speaker, when his object often requires that he should bring his audience to conclusions unawares even to themselves. Fifthly, that it counteracts and interferes with all powerful appeals to the passions. As nothing can be more opposed to emotion than calculations, so a minute and scrupulous dissection of parts is utterly irreconcilable with those great, sudden, unexpected touches, which extort the suffrage of the hearer from his feelings. Sixthly, there are many arguments feeble in themselves, but which may derive strength from their numbers. These require accumulation, rather than division. And lastly, in the division of judicial causes there must be one point stronger than the rest; of course it makes them useless, and perhaps loses some of its strength by the incumbrance of their alliance. All these objections are fairly and fully stated by Quintilian. When the archbishop of Cambray then affirms, that division is a modern invention, which came first from the schools, he must have reference only to the particular mode of divisions, usually practised in writing sermons. Both Quintilian and Cicero however very explicitly give their opinions in favor of a

partition; and, although it must be admitted that there is weight in some of the difficulties, which I have here stated, yet experience will soon convince every public speaker, that his own convenience and that of his auditory, may in most cases I might say an absolute necessity prescribes the use of some regular partition. It is possible that an orator, after laying down his divisions, may forget to treat of some of them; but it is impossible that he should avoid forgetting many important ideas, if he has not arranged them in some regular order. If he suffers any material consideration to remain without the boundaries of his partition, so as thereby to lose its benefit, the fault is not in the general character of partition, but in the imperfection of that, which he has chosen. The appearance of premeditation it certainly has; but without premeditation to deliver a speech upon a long and complicated argument is not within the compass of human powers. The process of the human mind in the acquisition of ideas is successive, and not instantaneous; our reason is discursive, and not intuitive. In the regions of romance a magnificent palace may rise from the earth like an exhalation, with all its pillars and pilasters, architrave, frieze, and cornice. But such a fabric in

the real world of man is the work of an age, with incessant toil and hands innumerable. But it does not necessarily follow, that the orator, by marking a division of his subject, should disclose his whole purpose, or forestall the arguments, which may produce an impression by their novelty. If indeed the proposition, which the whole discourse is to urge, be of such a nature, that it cannot safely be made known to those, who are finally to act upon it, then the division must be concealed, not for itself, but as constituting the proposition. But such cases can now very seldom if ever occur. When Cicero addressed the people of Rome to defeat the popular project of an Agrarian law, proposed by the tribune Rullus; when Mark Antony harrangued them over the dead body of Caesar, for the purpose of stirring them up to mutiny, a formal division would have been absurd; for the success of the speaker depended upon the concealment of his intention. But there can surely be no occasion for rhetorical instructions predicated upon the purpose of rousing a populace to insurrection; and, strongly as the feature of democracy predominates in all our political institutions, our people has wisely entrusted all the important powers of government to delegated bodies, and has re-

served to itself the exercise of no great object of national concern. Our deliberative and judicial orations must generally be addressed to select assemblies; and the purpose of the speaker must be apparent in the very form of discussion. It cannot be denied, that the construction of a discourse with accurate partition implies composure and tranquillity of mind in the speaker, and that to follow him in his concerted train supposes a similar self-possession in his audience. Yet that it does not preclude the use of pathetic instruments, in the progress of his discourse, is obvious from the orations of Cicero, some of which are equally remarkable for preciseness of partition, and depth of pathos. The accumulation of arguments separately feeble will be rather facilitated, than prevented by a judicious division; and although one point of a pleader's argument may be stronger than the rest, it will not of course be always sufficient to command the decision of the cause. In the conflict of jurisprudence, as in the contests of nations, the strong may be as essentially benefited by the concurrence of the weak, as the weak by their recurrence to the strong.

So great are the advantages of a just partition in giving clearness and perspicuity to a discourse,

so much more easy does it render the treatment of any momentous subject to the speaker and to the understanding of the hearer, that I have deemed it indispensable thus far to attempt its vindication against the speculative objections, which have been at different times urged against it. I call them speculative objections, for, notwithstanding the earnestness and ingenuity, with which they are supported in Fenelon's dialogues, no eminent preacher since the time when he wrote has ever attempted to practise upon his precepts; and the usage of dividing sermons into heads still subsists, and will subsist so long, as sermons worth reading or even worth hearing shall be delivered.

In forming however his division the speaker will need the exercise of great skill, fruitfulness of invention, and solidity of judgment. The forms of division for judicial harangues, recommended by Cicero and Quintilian, were of two kinds, which they denominate enumeration and segregation. The first consisted of a marked distinction, unfolded in precise terms, of all the heads, upon which the speaker was to discourse; and the second of a discrimination between those points, upon which the two parties to a cause were agreed, and those upon which their contest was to turn.

This last form, though not very customary in the modern practice of the bar, might still be employed to great advantage ; it would greatly abridge many a tedious argument, in which learned counsel are apt to waste the time of the court and their own, expatiating upon a series of facts or of legal principles, which their opponents have not a thought of disputing. It would lay out of the cause much rubbish, and remove much useless obstruction from the path of justice.

It can however seldom if ever apply to the discourses of the pulpit, where the forms of division necessarily refer to the practice of making a text from scripture the theme of the discourse. But the same method of division is not suitable for every text. There are two kinds of division, which are to be used according to the substance of the text and the judgment of the preacher. The first, the easiest, and the most common, is to divide the text into its parts. The second is to divide the subject itself, which arises from the text. The division of the text may sometimes be made merely by following the order of the words. But more generally it will be advisable to divide it according to the natural order of the matter it contains ; for which purpose it should be reduced in-

to a formal or a categorical proposition, and then discuss, first the subject, secondly its attribute, and thirdly its incidents, according to the judgment of the writer.

In archbishop Tillotson's sermon upon the advantages of early piety, his text is "remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."* This text he divides by the order of the words; and considers first the duty enjoined, "remember thy Creator;" secondly the special pointing of this duty to your period of life; "now, in the days of thy youth;" and thirdly its further illustration, by opposition to old age, with its cares and griefs, distempers and infirmities.

But in his sermons immediately preceding this, and professedly connected with it, upon the education of children, his text is "train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.† This text he begins by reducing it into the following proposition; "that the careful, and prudent, and religious education of children hath for the most part a very good influence upon the whole course of their lives."

* Eccles. xii. 1.

† Prov. xxii. 6.

And in handling the argument he reduces the discourse to five heads.

1. Showing wherein good education consists.
2. Giving directions for the most effectual management of the work.
3. Noticing the common and principal errors in performing the duty.
4. Demonstrating how good education has so great and happy an influence.
5. A warm exhortation to the discharge of this duty.

I have selected these examples of the two kinds of division from Tillotson, not that I consider them as the most perfect in their kind, for this last in particular is liable to considerable objections ; but because they exhibit clearly the difference of the two modes, and because the series of sermons, in which they occur, contains many admirable specimens of pulpit eloquence, as well as many excellent instructions of morality. To an ingenuous youth, anxious to learn the extent of his duties for the purpose of performing them ; to an ambitious youth, eager to possess the keys to the understanding and the heart ; finally to every parent, who feels the happiness and comfort of his life to be bound up in the fortunes and the virtues

of his children, I know not where I could look for a work more deserving of being recommended to their notice and meditation, than these four sermons.

The division of the subject arising from the text, rather than of the text itself, is recommended for the treatment first of oracular texts in the old testament, such as that in the book of Genesis, which denounces enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman; or those, which relate to the covenant with Abraham. Secondly of controversial texts, the understanding of which depends upon the state of the question, the doctrine to be refuted, and the principles of the inspired writer. Thirdly of texts from the new testament, which allude to passages in the old; and texts of conclusion from a preceding argument. And fourthly of typical texts, which are to be explained as well in their direct, as in their allusive meaning. But besides these subjects, which are not so fashionable in the pulpits of the present age, as they have been in the days of our fathers, an ingenious preacher may always divide his discourse instead of his text; and as he is not in any of the protestant communities bound to take his text from the lesson of the day, he may whenever it suits his convenience treat his

subject at his pleasure, and adapt the text to his sermon, if he meets with any difficulty in adapting his sermon to a text.

But however diversified the forms of partition may be at the bar and in the pulpit, the rules, by which it should be formed, are alike applicable to both; and these rules, as prescribed by Cicero, are, that the division be short and complete and the heads few in number.

In explaining the rule of brevity, as applied to narration, it was shown, that it must be understood in a relative point of view. But the brevity required in partition is positive. It consists in using the smallest number of words possible to express your idea. Every word must be used in its plain, literal meaning, without any admixture of figurative language. A partition is properly the solution of the proposition into its elements. Its perspicuity must depend altogether upon its precision; and what can be more absurd than for that part to be obscure, the only use of which is to throw light upon all the rest?

The partition must therefore be into a few heads. As each member of the division must be short in itself, so the whole assemblage must be short by the paucity of the parts. The most cel-

ibrated of the French writers of sermons rigorously confine themselves to two or three general divisions; and to them a sermon in more than three parts would appear as incongruous, as a tragedy in more than five acts. The rule however did not originate with them; for Quintilian in express terms disapproves of the restriction to three parts, which some rhetoricians then prescribed; justly remarking, that some subjects would not bear division into precisely the same number of parts, but instead of three would require four or five parts. More than this can never be useful or necessary.

These parts may again be solved into subdivisions, which may be submitted to the same process, if you please, until every sentence in the discourse shall bear its number. This is one of the great abuses of division; for although logic, with her formal face and solemn gait, may walk in fetters, the light, and airy, and rapid movements of rhetoric will not thus be trammelled. Subdivision is sometimes necessary, and may sometimes be graceful. But in general it will produce its effects better by being concealed than disclosed. The structure of the human body is not the less admirable, because its mechanism is not exposed

to view ; and the orator should imitate the beneficent kindness of nature, whose economy presents to the eye of the spectator only those parts of the fabric, which are adapted to give it delight.

But though short with regard to the extent of each individual member, and short with regard to the number of its parts, the division must be complete. It should embrace the whole subject, and nothing more. And this rule, though mentioned the last, is in point of importance the first. Its observance may be violated by two opposite defects ; the one of deficiency, the other of excess. If the numbers of a division do not embrace the whole subject, no certain conclusion can be drawn from the argument, and the discourse itself is a fragment. If the divisions are formed so that one of the parts includes another within itself, as the genus includes its species, a confusion of redundancy will ensue. Suppose an orator, says Cicero, should undertake to prove, that all the public misfortunes might be traced either to the passions, or to the ambition, or to the avarice of his adversary. The division would be bad, because the first head is the genus, of which the second and third are subordinate species. This very blunder was committed by lord Hervey, in a satirical epistle in

rhyme, which he published against Pope ; in one line of which he spoke

“ Of sapphic, lyric, and iambic odes.”

Pope did not suffer it to escape him. He says in his reply, “ your lordship might as well bid your present tutor, your taylor, make you a coat, suit of cloathes, and breeches ; for you must have forgot your logic, as well as grammar, not to know that sapphic and iambic are both included in lyric ; that being the genus and those the species.”

The art of dividing his subject is one of those resources, which the orator must borrow from his stores of logic. It belongs essentially to the art of thinking, and is only subsidiary to that of speaking. Its exercise is in meditation, rather than in expression. But it deserves assiduously to be studied, and as it consists more in skill than in genius, it will amply reward all the labor of mind, that you can bestow upon it. Its general principles may be derived from the foundations of analytical science, and their practical application from the examples of the great orators of ancient and modern times. In the first oration of Cicero, which he deemed worthy of preserving for publication, there is a very remarkable instance of form-

al partition. It was on a mere private, judicial controversy, a question upon a mortgage, involving an obscure point of municipal law ; but it exhibits the genius of Cicero at that interesting moment, when it first burst forth upon the astonishment of the world. I have often imagined to myself, what must have been the impressions upon the minds of Aquilius, his associate judges, and the Roman citizens, who attended the trial, on beholding a young man of six and twenty, a plebeian, merely of an equestrian family, rising in opposition to Quintus Hortensius, a senator of Patrician dignity, armed with a long established reputation, and accustomed to sway, without a contest or a rival, the sceptre of eloquence in the forum. These circumstances are essential to a just estimate of the oration for Quinctius; in which there is a more than usual ostentation of oratorical talent ; a perpetual struggle against the tide of Hortensius' influence, and an anxious display of ability to grapple with him for that palm of eloquence, which he had so long enjoyed, as his exclusive property. He was in particular famed for his skill at partition; and his young competitor therefore studiously displays his proficiency in that part of his art. He not only announces the divisions of his discourse

with great solemnity, but he requests both his antagonist and his judges to take particular notice of them, and invites them to recal him within the bounds he has prescribed to himself, if he should in the progress of his discourse once step beyond them. It is obvious how important he considers this branch of his profession, and how anxious he was to convince his audience of his attainments in it.

For the discourses of the pulpit the French preachers unquestionably furnish the best models of partition, which you can consult. In this respect they must be acknowledged far superior to their British neighbours. The English indeed in their literary compositions of all kinds have been generally too inattentive to the principles of method; and hence it was said by one of the ablest and most eloquent lawyers of France, the chancellor D'Aguesseau, that the English, learned and ingenious as they were, did not know how to make a book.

A regular analysis of every sermon is generally published in the complete editions of the works of Massillon, Bourdaloue, Fléchier, and Bossuet; and those of you, who understand the language, may derive great advantage from an attentive con-

sultation of these analyses, as well as from a frequent perusal of the discourses, to which they are annexed. After making every allowance for the prejudices of their superstition and the errors of their faith, religion and virtue have no more ardent supporters and no abler advocates, than the pulpit orators of France.

LECTURE XX.

CONFIRMATION. RATIOCINATION.

THE speaker's exordium has prepared the minds of his audience for the reception of his discourse. He has disarmed their prejudices against himself and his cause, and conciliated their affections in his favor. He has related to them in clear, concise, and probable terms, the facts, which are material to the understanding of his speech. He has laid down his proposition, and unfolded its divisions, few, short, and complete. He has made the discussion easy to himself, and familiar to his hearers; and yet nothing is done. All, that we have hitherto considered, is mere preparation. As yet the orator has only told us what he proposes to do. The all-important task of

proving what he has affirmed still remains. And this, in pursuance of the method which continues to regulate our inquiries, is to be performed by the proof of confirmation, establishing the truth and correctness of the cause, considered by itself, or by the proof of confutation, the object of which is to remove and repel the objections, raised against it by the adverse speaker.

In discoursing to you upon the other parts of a formal oration, or upon the other great and primary divisions of the rhetorical science, it has been my endeavour to furnish you with the most useful materials, which contribute to the purposes of eloquence. But we have now arrived at that, to which all the rest is subservient; to the great end, of which every thing that has yet been taught, and every thing which remains to be explored, is but the means. The vital principle of every cause, I have heretofore told you, consists in the state, or proposition; and I may now add, that the whole duty of the speaker is comprised in the proof.

This proof, whether of confirmation or of confutation, is adduced in the shape and under the name of arguments. Of the various sources, from which arguments may be drawn, I have largely

treated under the article invention. My present purpose is to indicate not where these materials of persuasion are to be collected, but the various forms, in which they may be produced, and the order in which they may to the greatest advantage be marshalled.

The distinction between confirmation and confutation is not recognised by Aristotle; and, though insisted upon somewhat earnestly by Quintilian, is not of much importance. They are obviously only modifications of the proof, upon which conviction is dependent. But there is another distinction, to which I have alluded in a former lecture, and of which it may be necessary to remind you here, as it was not then exhibited in so clear a light, as it deserves. Under the general denomination of proof are included demonstrations of two different kinds; external or internal, artificial or inartificial. External proof consists of every thing, which the orator can alledge, not resulting from his own talent. Internal proof is that, which he draws from his personal resources of ingenuity. External proof is evidence; internal proof is argument. When a legislator in the senate reads a section of a statute in support of the proposition he is maintaining, when a lawyer

at the bar calls a witness upon the stand to substantiate a fact material to his cause, when a divine in the pulpit quotes a passage of sacred inspiration to confirm the doctrine he has advanced, each of them adduces a proof in confirmation of his position; and this proof is external; it exists independent of the speaker and of his art. But when the legislator infers from the statutes, which he has read, the expediency of the measure, which he proposes, when the lawyer draws his conclusions from the testimony of the witness, and when the divine applies the quotation from scripture to the improvement of his discourse, then the proofs they adduce are internal, or artificial; resulting from the operations of their own minds, and which independent of them would have no existence.

In all the other classes of oratory, excepting that of the bar, this distinction between external and internal proofs is not very important. In the pulpit or at the halls of deliberation the argument of the speaker and the authority, which he vouches, go hand in hand; nor is any very critical investigation necessary to separate them from one another. But it is not so before courts and juries. The only proofs, allowed to be conclusive with

them, are law and evidence. However clear and irresistible the logic of the party or of his council may be, it is regarded not as proof, but as mere assertion; and whether it shall have any weight at all upon their decision depends always upon the discretion, and in point of fact often upon the inclination of those, to whom it is addressed. Hence the term proof, in its common acceptance, as used at our judicial tribunals, is confined to the more narrow sense of external testimony; to the sense it bears in that hackneyed passage of Shakspeare.

“ Trifles, light as air,
Are, to the jealous, confirmation strong,
As proof of holy writ.”

Yet undoubtedly a proposition may be proved by argument, as well as by testimony; and even at the bar the power of reason, properly applied, ought always to be and often is of equal efficacy to produce conviction, as the oath of a witness.

External proofs are considered by Aristotle as applicable only to judicial causes, and they are according to him five in number; laws, witnesses, contracts, torture, and oaths of the parties. Under the general denomination of witnesses he in-

cludes authorities, the interpretation of oracles, and proverbial maxims. To these Quintilian adds previous adjudications and common fame. Of all these I have treated largely under the head of invention, where I told you that they were all included in the general name of evidence in our judicial courts.

Under the same head of evidence must also be ranged two other kinds of proof, which are classed by the ancient rhetoricians among their internal or artificial proofs, which are called by them signs, and examples.

A sign is a token, by which any thing is shown; an example is a thing, which by its resemblance may indicate another.

Signs are of two kinds, certain or uncertain. A certain or infallible sign is that, which so universally accompanies the thing it proves, that nothing can be opposed against it. An uncertain sign is only an indication of probability. When you behold a cultivated field, covered with a burden of corn ripening for the sickle, it is a certain sign of a seed time past, and an uncertain sign of a future harvest. Certain signs by the discriminating Greeks were distinguished by a peculiar name, denoting termination, *τεκμήριον*; import-

ing, says Aristotle, that they put an end to all controversy.

Uncertain signs furnish all those varieties of possibility and probability, which in the language of the common law occupy the broad range of presumptive evidence. All these, as well as examples, were included among the artificial or internal proofs; because their application to the support of any cause depended upon the ingenuity of the speaker.

They were however well aware of the difference between the sign or example itself, which perhaps they ought to have classed among their external proofs, and that operation of the orator, by which he makes them applicable to his own cause. Thus Quintilian remarks, that, although signs had often been confounded with arguments, there were two reasons for distinguishing between them. First because they might almost be reckoned among the inartificial proofs. A shriek, a wound, a garment stained with blood, are all signs; but they are as independent of the orator, as a witness or a contract. And secondly because, if the sign be a certain one, it leaves no question, to which an argument can attach; if an uncertain one, it is of itself nothing without the aid of an ar-

gument. And thus Aristotle long before had said, that signs, if certain, formed the basis of a syllogism; if uncertain, of an enthymem; and that examples laid the foundation of induction.

The application of all external proof belongs indeed to the task of the orator. This constitutes his argument, and his argument must assume one or both of the two processes, by which alone human reason can act upon human opinions, ratiocination and induction.

Here you will observe, that rhetoric resolves herself into logic. Here it behooves the orator to be a perfect master of the art of reasoning; and here it might be sufficient for me to refer you to your own studies and acquirements in that department. Your proficiency there will at least justify me in touching this part of my subject with a lighter and a more cursory hand. It may be proper however to explain in a few words the difference between ratiocination and induction.

Ratiocination is that exertion of the mind, by which a proposition is inferred by way of conclusion from certain other propositions, which are laid down as premises. Induction is the inference of a conclusion from admitted facts or examples. Ratiocination is exclusively the act of the person,

who reasons. Induction is an appeal to the consciousness, or a result from the concession of the person, with whom the argument is held. Ratiocination derives all its resources from itself. Induction carries on the war upon the enemy's territories. Ratiocination achieves all its victories by its own overpowering energy. Induction obtains many triumphs from the weakness or treachery of the enemy's troops. Ratiocination proceeds in a lineal descent from truth to truth. Induction proves one truth by collateral kindred with others.

The subject is in its nature abstruse, and I could wish by every sort of illustration to make it clear. The following passages from Dr. Johnson's preface to Shakspeare may at once give you examples of both the modes of reasoning, and point you to the sources in the human character, whence they flow. "Demonstration immediately displays its power, and has nothing to hope or fear from the flux of years; but works tentative and experimental must be estimated by their proportion to the general and collective ability of man, as it is discovered in a long succession of endeavours." Thus far we have pure ratiocination; the next paragraphs are inductive. "Of the first building

that was raised it might be with certainty determined, that it was round or square ; but whether it was spacious or lofty must have been referred to time." This is induction drawn from a fictitious example, an imaginary first building. He now proceeds to historical example. "The Pythagorean scale of numbers was at once discovered to be perfect ; but the poems of Homer we yet know not to transcend the common limits of human intelligence, but by remarking, that nation after nation and century after century have been able to do little more than transpose his incidents, new name his characters, and paraphrase his sentiments." Here you see the reasoning from speculation contrasted with the reasoning from experience, and they are both united to prove, that the first is applicable to mathematical science, and the last to polite literature and the works of taste.

This is precisely the difference between ratiocination and induction ; and the orator must occasionally use them both in the argumentative part of his discourse.

These two modes of reasoning were perfectly understood in the Grecian schools of philosophy. That of ratiocination was principally practised by

Aristotle and the Peripatetics ; that of induction by Socrates and his followers.

The forms of ratiocination are three ; the simple syllogism, the enthymem or imperfect syllogism, and the epichirema or rhetorical syllogism. The simple syllogism is of little or no use for the purpose of the orator, because the application of the syllogism is confined to objects of positive demonstration ; while all the performances of oratory are conversant only with probabilities. The conclusion of a syllogism imports absolute certainty ; and can never exist with another alternative. The conclusions of rhetoric do not pretend ever to arrive at this state of irrefragable truth. This is exclusively the pretention of logic ; and her instrument for attaining it is syllogism. I shall not here enter into that controversy, which for so many centuries has been maintained with such vehemence of zeal, and such acrimony of opposition, concerning the merits of syllogism. It is sufficient for me to believe it the most compendious and the most irresistible process of reason, that the human mind has ever discovered ; and, having the express authority of Aristotle himself, its inventor, for excluding it from the ways and means

of oratory, I need not enter into the scrutiny how far it may be of use elsewhere.

The epichirema however is the form, in which the essential parts of the syllogism may be applied with efficacy to public discourse. A syllogism, as you well know, consists of three propositions, denominated the major and minor propositions, and the conclusion. From the two former, which are the premises, the latter is a necessary inference; because in them the subject and predicate of the conclusion, called by logicians the major and minor terms, or the extremes, are distinctly compared with a middle term, or particular common to them both. These propositions in the simple syllogism are all categorical or positive affirmations. And these propositions all belong alike to the epichirema. The difference is that, as the domain of rhetorical argument is not certainty but probability, the propositions are not absolute, but always in some degree problematical. The logician lays down his propositions, as incontestable truths; and uses no words other than those, which clothe the propositions themselves, to obtain the assent of his auditor to them. And as they must either be true or false, they can be opposed only in the same categorical manner, in which they are as-

served. The opposition admits of no degrees or modifications; it must either be received with implicit acquiescence, or express denial.

But the propositions of the orator are only given as probabilities. They do not exact unhesitating belief. The major or the minor proposition, from which he purposes to draw his conclusion, or both of them may require reasons for their own support. The proof, thus adduced in aid of either proposition, is considered as a distinct part of the argument. Hence, if both require such proof, the epichirema consists of five parts. If, while one of the premises is so clear, that it may stand upon its own feet, the other requires the aid of a staff, the whole consists of four. And when the two premises are deemed so obvious, as to require no illustration, the conclusion is left to be supplied by the imagination of the hearer, and the epichirema consists but of two parts.

The enthymem also consists only of two parts; that is, of either of the premises and the conclusion. It is called an imperfect syllogism, because if the proposition, which is suppressed, were inserted, the syllogism would be complete. In the common intercourse of society, and in every species of literary composition, nothing can be more

common, than this mode of reasoning. Thus in that sermon from the mount, recorded in the gospel, as the first proclamation to mankind of the principles of the christian dispensation, the foundation is laid in a series of regular enthymems, each of which may be turned into a perfect syllogism. Take for example the first benediction.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit ; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Now supply the major proposition, which must be understood,

Blessed are all they, who shall enjoy the kingdom of heaven ;
and reverse the order of the propositions, as they stand ;

The poor in spirit shall enjoy the kingdom of heaven ;

the first position stands as the inference ;

Therefore blessed are the poor in spirit.

Blessed are all they, who shall obtain mercy ;

The merciful shall obtain mercy ;

Therefore blessed are the merciful.

And so it is of all the rest.

In all these instances the reasoning begins with the conclusion, and assigns the minor proposition alone for its reason. The major proposition is omitted, because it is so obvious to every mind, that there could be no necessity for its for-

mal enunciation. But it must be tacitly admitted, or the reasoning remains imperfect. Suppose the major proposition to be denied. Suppose it said that a man might obtain mercy and yet not be blessed ; then, even admitting the minor proposition, that the merciful shall obtain mercy, the conclusion would not necessarily follow, that the merciful are blessed for that reason.

Examine now the following passage from Addison's Cato.

If there's a power above us,
And that there is all nature cries aloud
In all her works, he must delight in virtue ;
And that, which he delights in, must be happy.

Here is a process of reasoning, which, reduced into the logical form, contains two conclusions ; first, there is a power above us ; and secondly, virtue is happy. The first part stands as an enthymem, containing the minor proposition and the conclusion, suppressing the major proposition ; and the second is an epichirema in two parts, expressing the major and minor propositions, and suppressing the conclusion. In the syllogistic form they would stand thus.

Whatever nature cries aloud in all her works, is ;
Nature cries aloud in all her works, that there is a power
above us ;
Therefore there is a power above us.

Whatever he delights in must be happy ;
He delights in virtue ;
Therefore virtue must be happy.

These examples may serve to show us not only that the enthymem and epichirema are of frequent use in all the forms of human intercourse, but also why they naturally take the place of the formal syllogism. The major proposition, which I have here supplied for one of the arguments, and the conclusion itself, which I have given for the other, will appear by their bare statement to be so perfectly obvious, that there could be no necessity of expressing them to complete the reasoning.

It is to be remembered, that uniformity is the favorite character of logic, and variety is equally essential to rhetoric. The syllogism is confined to a very few modifications, and rejects every irregularity of arrangement. It has but one process, from which it inflexibly refuses to depart. Whether proceeding in affirmation or in negation, whether evolving particular or general conclusions, the order of march is eternally the same. The

propositions are always categorical. The major advances in the van; the minor settles in the center; the middle term is common to them both; and the conclusion closes in the rear. In rhetoric syllogism, by sliding into the enthymem or spreading into the epichirema, seems to change its nature. It retains all its powers, but is emancipated from all its restrictions. It reverses at pleasure the order of its propositions. It gives alternate precedency to either of the premises, or posts the conclusion in front of both. It is not always arrayed in the dogmatism of unqualified assertion. Is it uncertain, it states its proposition in the diffidence of the potential mood. Is it emphatically certain, it bids defiance to the opponent by challenging denial in the shape of interrogation. Is it humble, it may convey its idea in the form of conjecture. Is it conscious of authority, it may assume the language of command. It adapts itself to every gradation of intellect. It suits itself to every variety of disposition. But under all its metamorphoses the primary matter of the syllogism, the major, minor, and middle terms must substantially remain, or the reasoning will be imperfect.

Do you remember the address of Sarpedon to Glaucus in the twelfth book of the Iliad? I am persuaded it is familiar to the recollection of many among you; that the thought is clear upon your minds, and the sentiment deep in your hearts. For although, as the exhortation of one warrior to another, it is limited to the recommendation of military virtue, yet its principle is applicable to every condition in life, where there is any distinction of rank between man and man. Yes, on reading it you have often glowed with congenial feelings, and after reading it your cool judgment has responded to the truth of the precept. But did it ever occur to you, that it contains in substance a perfect syllogism, which in its simplicity would import neither more nor less than this?

Whoever is first in place, ought to be first in valor;

We are the first in place;

Therefore we ought to be first in valor.

You see that by stripping it of all its splendid apparel the thought loses nothing of its dignity, the reasoning nothing of its vigor. But now behold it in its royal attire.

Why boast we, Glaucus, our extended reign,

Where Xanthus' streams enrich the Lycian plain,

Our numerous herds, that range the fruitful field,

And hills, where vines their purple harvest yield,
Our foaming bowls with purer nectar crown'd,
Our feasts enhanc'd with music's sprightly sound ;
Why on those shores are we with joy survey'd,
Admir'd as heroes, and as gods obey'd,
Unless great acts superior merit prove,
And vindicate the bounteous powers above ?
'Tis ours the dignity they give to grace ;
The first in valor, as the first in place.

The diction is on a level with the doctrine. It was thus that the son of Jupiter ought to think, to speak, and to act.

It would have been easy to select from oratorical compositions a multitude of examples of these rhetorical modes of ratiocination ; for when reasoning is employed in poetry it adopts all the forms, and is allowed all the privileges of rhetoric. In the performances of orators one of the most ordinary modes of ratiocination is to state by itself the major proposition of the syllogism, as an argument to support at once the minor proposition and the conclusion. This is the source of all those general observations on life and manners, which in the works of the most excellent orators become maxims of morality and wisdom. Observe the argument of Julius Caesar, in Sallust, on

the question concerning the punishment to be inflicted upon the accomplices of Catiline. His object is to recommend moderation. And he urges it by insisting upon its necessity in all important deliberations. "It is," says he, "the duty of all men, who are in consultation upon critical questions, to be alike free from friendship and hatred, from anger and compassion." Then from this general duty upon all men he deduces the particular duty, which he is desirous of enforcing specially upon his hearers; and from that rule of moderation he derives his vote, that the lives of the conspirators should be spared.

In my next lecture I shall call to your notice examples of this kind of reasoning, from orators greater than Sallust or Caesar. We are now engaged upon that very part of our subject, in which Quintilian tells us that the deepest and most hidden mysteries of the art lie concealed. To reveal them all at once would be putting to a trial too severe, not your capacities, but your patience. We are traveling in paths, where the rugged and the barren region must occasionally succeed to that of pleasantness, and where the prospect of the fruit must sometimes reconcile us to the absence

of the flower. Though entangled in the labyrinths of logic, we have not lost our clue. Let us here indulge ourselves with a pause of rest, with the hope that our next effort will open for us the issue to a fairer, or at least a less perplexing field.

LECTURE XXI.

RATIOCINATION. INDUCTION.



IN my last lecture I was attempting to explain to you the manner, in which the art of logic and its forms of reasoning are applied with elegance and effect to the purposes of oratory. You have all lived long enough in the world to know, that usefulness and pleasure have some natural prepossessions against each other, which are not always easily removed; but which must be removed before they can form that intimate and inseparable alliance, on which the strength and permanency of their worth alone depend. The argumentative part of a discourse is its living soul. It is to true eloquence what charity is to true christianity. Without it, though you should speak with the

tongues of men and of angels, you would become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Yet, although including in itself all the usefulness of oratory, it is very scantily gifted with its charms. The act of pure, abstract reasoning is the glory of man; but as it is that portion of the human character, in which we partake of a superior nature, it is too exalted and refined for the earthly part of our composition. The ornaments and graces, in which oratory studiously attires the muscular form of logic, are indulgences to human infirmity. They are the honey, in which the wholesome draught of instruction must be mingled to make it palatable.

Et quasi Musæo dulci contingere melle.

In the first book of his treatise upon invention, Cicero has given a very clear and minute explanation of the epichirema and enthymem, included under the general term ratiocination; and has illustrated them by various examples, the most remarkable of which is an argument to prove, that the world is governed by a superintending providence. In his works of practical oratory however, he has furnished numberless instances of this decorated reasoning. In the following passage for

instance, from the third oration of the second action against Verres, you will distinctly mark the three propositions of a syllogism to this effect.

Whoever prosecutes for high crimes another man, imposes upon himself an obligation of extraordinary virtue ;

I am prosecuting another man for high crimes ;

Therefore I impose upon myself the obligation of extraordinary virtue.

This is the logical argument. And now let us see how, under every disadvantage of translation, it is embellished by the genius of Cicero. “ Whosoever, impelled by no private resentments, stimulated by no personal injury, instigated by no expectation of reward, undertakes to impeach another as a criminal of state, before the public tribunals, ought well to weigh beforehand not only the importance of the immediate task, which he assumes, but also the rule of morality, by which he voluntarily binds himself for the conduct of his own future life. He, who calls to account another man, especially under the profession of having no motive other than the general welfare, imposes upon himself the perpetual obligation of innocence, of purity, of every social virtue. For how can the smallest departure from the paths of recti-

tude be overlooked in him, who presumes to take upon himself the office of avenging the offences and reforming the conduct of others ! Preeminent therefore is the title to the affections and applause of his fellow citizens of that man, who not only relieves the commonwealth from the burden of a worthless character, but makes by the same act the spontaneous profession of superadding to the common principles of integrity a more refined and delicate measure of obligation upon himself. The merit indeed of these self-inflicted shackles is less clear, when the charge of public accusation is assumed in early youth, than when undertaken in the deliberative maturity of age. A young man may be spurred to the office of public accusation, by the desire of fame, or the love of ostentation, without being aware how much more indulgence of life may be claimed by those, who have never invoked the rigors of the law against others. But we, whose capacities of judgment and whose powers of performance, such as they are, have long been exposed in the face of day ; we surely should never voluntarily discard and debar ourselves from the common allowances and freedoms of a very liberal morality, had we not previously

acquired the uncontrolled dominion of our own passions.

“ Still more aggravated is the burden (if burden it may be called, which is my pleasure and my pride), which in this prosecution I am taking upon me. Thus far at least I have put more than a common stake in pledge ; as the obligation is of all others the most imperious of refraining from that identical crime, of which you appear as the accuser. Is your specific charge theft or extortion ? You must with extreme caution beware of every suspicion of avarice in yourself. Do you arraign at the bar of public justice oppression or cruelty ? You must above all things avoid every semblance of harshness or inhumanity. Is seduction or adultery the crime you drag to punishment ? How careful must you be to preserve your own purity unsullied ! Whatsoever in short you denounce, as guilt in another, you must with the most sedulous diligence avoid yourself. For how can a man be tolerated, I will not say as the avenger, but even as the reprover of a vice, with which he himself is tainted ? But I am pointing the bolt of justice against every vice, that can debase the human character, in the person of one man. Yes, I repeat it ; there is not a stain of pollution, of vio-

lence, or of impudence, but it blackens the tissue of this one man's life. And thus, by undertaking his impeachment, have I prescribed for myself a rule of conduct as widely distant, as directly opposite as possible, not only to the deeds and words, but even to those proud looks and that insolent deportment, which you have all observed in him. Nor is it, judges, in the least irksome to me to assume as an absolute duty, as the necessary condition of my existence, that very principle of action, which I have always followed from choice."

Had I adduced this passage to you as an admirable exordium, I should have requested you to remark how appropriate it is to the situation, in which it stands; and how peculiarly it was calculated to accomplish all the purposes of an introduction, by conciliating the attention, the good will, and the docility of his auditory. These reflections however, together with a multitude of others, which this neglected gem of eloquence flashes upon my mind, I suppress for the purpose of pointing your attention to the peculiar characteristics, which induced me now to present it to your meditations; as a specimen of oratorical ratiocination; as a sample of the manner, in which a simple syllogism expands under the plastic hand of a pub-

lic speaker into a perfect epichirema. The major, minor, and middle terms, as well as the conclusion, are all distinctly perceptible under all the blaze of this eloquence. The major proposition and conclusion are laid down in terms precise and formal enough for a logical treatise. The minor proposition (that he was prosecuting a great criminal) was one of those things so obvious to his hearers, that it might properly have been altogether omitted; but he has inserted it, and by the form he has given to it has wound up the climax of his argument to its highest and keenest point.

But this is not all. Here is not merely a syllogism; here is a profound and incontrovertible maxim of political morality. Here is a principle, which those of us, who by our vocations in life may ever be called to the painful task of impeaching the conduct or reproving the vices of others, should lay to our hearts, as perpetually binding upon ourselves. Here is an axiom of universal application, drawn by Cicero as an inference from his meditations upon the duties, which his particular situation at that time exacted of him. I have heretofore intimated to you the necessity, that an accomplished orator should be thoroughly versed in the science of ethics, as well as in that of dia-

lectics. Here you see the result of such a combination of talents. A mind unaccustomed to inquire into and meditate upon the nature of his duties, as a social being, could never have fallen into that train of thought, which produced these remarks ; or if it had, could not have drawn its conclusions with so much correctness. It was the habitual practice of exercising his understanding upon the extent and proportions of his duties, combining with the constant custom of classing individualities and particularizing universals ; it was the logician uniting with the moralist ; it was intellect operating upon integrity, which brought forth this lesson of wisdom for the benefit of all succeeding ages.

I have dwelt with peculiar emphasis upon this topic, not surely from any distrust of your understandings, but from my sense of its extreme importance. It is this very faculty of pointing the general principles of moral and political science to the specific object in debate, and of extracting from the subject in discussion new scintillations of light to illumine the paths of civilized life, that constitutes the permanent powers and glory of the public speaker. As mere historic facts, of what consequence is it to you or me, whether Verres was

or was not a robber? Whether Milo was or was not an assassin? Whether Archias was or was not a Roman citizen? These are points as immaterial to the peace and happiness of mankind, as the fortunes of Don Belianis of Greece, or the achievements of Arthur and his round table knights. But by this art of rhetorical ratiocination the orator acquires a new and a more venerable character. He is no longer pleading the cause of an individual, but that of human improvement. It is no longer Cicero, the advocate of his friends, or the prosecutor of a thief. It is Cicero, the instructor of ages, the legislator of human kind.

This species of excellence is not confined to the orators. The philosophers, historians, and poets share it with them; but of all the public speakers ancient or modern, with whose compositions I have been conversant, the highest praise of this particular kind is unquestionably due to Cicero. The palm of superior eloquence has indeed by many able judges been awarded to Demosthenes, and a British critic of great sagacity and high reputation has pronounced, that of all human compositions his orations are the most perfect. But I apprehend this judgment has always

been founded upon that idea, which considers eloquence as merely the art of persuasion. It considers the oration merely with reference to the occasion, upon which it was delivered ; as the means to a certain end, and nothing more. In that point of view the decision was probably just. As a hearer I should perhaps have thought Demosthenes the better speaker. But as a reader I return with the most permanent and repeated delight to Cicero.

Of all the orators of modern times he, who most resembles Cicero in this, as in many other particulars, is Burke. The general course and character of his argumentation is indeed so closely modelled upon Cicero, that he must in some sort be considered as an imitator. But his imitation is like that of Raphael to Michael-Angelo ; like that of Virgil to Homer. It is the imitation of one genius kindling into radiance by the beams emitted from another.

Yet there are passages in Burke, where the closer and more compact reasoning of Demosthenes seems to be adopted ; of which you may judge from the two following passages, bearing no inconsiderable resemblance to each other, and with a few remarks upon which I shall close my

observations for the present upon oratorical ratiocination.

The passage from Demosthenes is in the oration for the state.

“When your treasury was lately robbed (I beg I may not be interrupted, hear me patiently), all your orators with one voice exclaimed, the constitution is gone ! The laws are annihilated. Athenians, I appeal to your own reason ; to rob the treasury is a crime, that deserves death ; but it does not destroy the constitution. Again, your arsenal has been robbed of some naval stores. Stripes and tortures ! The constitution is at an end ! Such is the general cry. But what is my opinion ? That the culprit deserves death ; but not that the constitution is subverted. No, Athenians ; when your constitution is really destroyed, there is not a man of them will tell you of it ; but I will. When you, men of Athens, when you sink into an impotent rabble, without discretion, without property, without arms, disorderly and dis-united ; when neither your general, nor any one else pays the least respect to your decrees ; when no mortal dares attempt to accomplish, or even to urge the necessary reformation ; no, nor so much as to inform you of this your miserable condition ;

then is your constitution destroyed. And such is at this present moment the case.”

In this quotation you will be struck with the difference of manner from that full flowing and perhaps redundant expansion of ideas, which appeared in the extract from Cicero. There you heard the thunder roll and reverberate in long, majestic succession, as if resounding from the echoes of unnumbered hills. Here you see the flash, instantaneous, unavoidable ; and the eye blanches at the sight. The syllogism, with which this argument closes, is hypothetical ; and, if the two last sentences were transposed, would be simple logic. As it stands the minor proposition forms the close, and the conclusion immediately precedes it.

The parallel passage, which I shall now give you from Burke, is taken from his letter to the sheriffs of Bristol ; which, though never spoken as an oration, was in substance a political harangue to his constituents.

“ For as the sabbath, though of divine institution, was made for man, not man for the sabbath, government, which can claim no higher origin or authority, in its exercise at least, ought to conform to the exigencies of the time, and the temper and character of the people, with whom

it is concerned ; and not always to attempt violently to bend the people to their theories of subjection. The bulk of mankind on their part are not excessively curious concerning any theories, whilst they are really happy ; and one sure symptom of an ill conducted state is the propensity of the people to resort to them.

“ But when subjects, by a long course of such ill conduct, are once thoroughly inflamed, and the state itself violently distempered, the people must have some satisfaction to their feelings more solid than a sophistical speculation on law and government. Such was our situation ; and such a satisfaction was necessary to prevent recourse to arms ; it was necessary towards laying them down ; it will be necessary to prevent the taking them up again and again.”

I need not tell you, that passages of much more splendid eloquence might be selected from any one of Burke's speeches. I have chosen this because it terminates, like that from the Grecian orator, almost in a simple syllogism. Here too the major proposition is hypothetical ; but the minor proposition and conclusion are in their regular order, and the latter is rendered emphatic by a diversity of modifications, and a threefold repetition.

Thus much of the various forms of ratiocination, which are applicable to the arguments of an orator. The other mode of reasoning, which he may employ with effect, is induction; which is either an inference of one general proposition from a multitude of particulars, or of one particular from another. It has sometimes been called a syllogism without a middle term. Its principal appeal is to experience; and it argues chiefly from admitted facts, or from positions, which the adversary cannot contest. In candid argument it may be of great use, but it is in itself an imperfect mode of reasoning, far less conclusive and far more suited to be abused for captious disputation, than the syllogism. As practised even by Socrates himself, it was rather the art of entrapping, than of convincing an opponent. It was a powerful weapon against the caviling subtleties of the sophists; but to meet the fair and formidable difficulties of an honest adversary it is a very defective instrument. The example of induction, given by Cicero as a specimen, is itself very indifferent reasoning, although the inference is excellent morality. It is taken from a dialogue of Eschines in the Socratic manner. The interlocutors are Xenophon and his wife and the celebrated Aspasia. Prithee tell me, wife of Xeno-

phon, says Aspasia, if your next neighbour's jewels were more precious than yours, which would you rather have, hers or your own? The lady answers, hers. What if she had a handsomer gown and finer clothes than yours; which would you prefer? Hers to be sure. Well, suppose she had a better husband than yours; which would you choose, hers or your own? Here the lady blushed; and well she might, for the question seems much more suitable to the character of Aspasia, than the answer would have been to that of Xenophon's wife. Aspasia was not so easily disconcerted. She turns the same battery upon Xenophon himself. Pray, Xenophon, says she, if your neighbour had a better horse than yours, which would you choose to have, his or your own? His, says Xenophon. Suppose he had a finer farm; which would you wish? The best, says he. And how, if he had a better wife? Xenophon did not blush it seems; but he did not answer. Whereupon Aspasia concludes; well, since neither of you will answer me the only question, to which an answer was necessary, I will answer for you both. You, madam, would choose the best husband; and you, sir, would prefer the best wife; and what conclusion are you

to draw from this? Why, that if you cannot bring it to pass, to be the best man and woman in the world, you ought to live together, as if you were the best husband and wife.

Now let us admit, that the turn given to the whole argument at the close is ingenious, and the advice good, we say the reasoning is captious and unsatisfactory. The first question is insidious. Separately considered, and independent of the question of property, we may prefer a richer jewel or a finer horse than our own; but we ought not to wish for that, which is our neighbour's, how much better soever than ours it may be. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house was the command of heaven to the children of Israel; and under that injunction a Hebrew woman would have snapped short the fine-spun induction of Aspasia at the distaff. She would have answered, I choose my own jewels, and not those of my neighbour, although mine be of inferior price; because they are my own, and because it is not lawful for me to covet hers. Had the same question been repeated to the last, she might have given the same answer; nor would she have needed to blush, unless at the shameless impudence of the inquiry.

If you will narrowly examine many of the dialogues of Plato, you will find that Socrates himself is sometimes chargeable with having made his inductive process the art of ensnaring an adversary in the net of his own concessions. Yet let me not be understood as wishing to pass an unqualified censure upon induction. It is not only a good offensive arm against sophistical subtleties, it is also better adapted to the nature of colloquial reasoning, than the syllogism; and by judicious application it is of infinite use in the examination of witnesses, and in all comment upon testimony at the bar. Whenever employed, it should be under the discipline of the following rules. First that the position, upon which by the concession of your adversary, or interlocutor, you propose to build the proof of that which is in dispute, must not be itself questionable. It must be such, as that you may safely calculate upon the answer. Secondly the position, which you obtain as a datum, must be of striking similarity to that, which you are desirous of proving. The prior concession is of no use, if it be dissimilar to that, for which you would have it granted. Thirdly yet your adversary must not perceive where his first admissions are to land him. For if he should

discern, that by granting your first preliminary he virtually surrenders the post itself of which he is tenacious, he will stop your inquiries by evading an answer, or by prevarication. You must lead him blindfold from his concessions to his strong hold, and eventually reduce him to silence, to full concession, or precise denial. In case of denial you must prove the controverted similitude, or commence a new train of induction. His concession is your victory, and puts an end to the argument. Should he remain silent, you must either elicit an answer, or take his silence for an acknowledgment of defeat, and drop the discussion. This form of argumentation therefore consists of three parts. The first is formed of one or more similitudes; the second of that, for which they are adduced; and the third is the conclusion, drawn from the whole series of your questions.

My last lecture contained several examples of oratorical ratiocination, quoted from the scriptures. I might extract both from the old and new testament numberless examples of induction. All the literature of Greece and Rome could not produce a more striking instance of this method, than is recorded in the parable, by which the prophet Nathan humbled David into confession and

repentance. I need not repeat the narrative. It is familiar to you all. It is rigorously conformable to all the rules, which govern this species of reasoning. The case supposed by the prophet, as a first appeal to the king's sense of justice, was so clear and unequivocal, that it could not fail to draw from him some irrevocable admission of its iniquity. Its resemblance with the crime of the king was so great, that we almost wonder it was not instantaneously perceived, and, on the points wherein there was any difference, the offence of David was still more aggravated than that, against which his anger was so justly kindled. And yet he was so far from perceiving the point of confession, into which he was drawn, that in the bitterness of his indignation he pronounced sentence of death upon the fancied culprit; nor knew that he stood self-condemned, until that blasting sentence of the prophet, "thou art the man."

The examples of inductive reasoning in the new testament swarm upon every page. It was used alike by the Founder of christianity, to confound the insidious malice of his enemies, to sanction the accuracy of his doctrines, to illustrate the excellence of his precepts, and to confirm the authenticity of his divine mission. When the Phar-

isees take counsel how they might entangle him in his talk, with fawning hypocrisy they inquire, "is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" He perceives at a glance their wickedness. He spurns their adulation. "Shew me the tribute money. Whose is this image and superscription?" "Caesar's." "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

Would he manifest the tenderness and care of an overruling Providence, the perfect goodness and wisdom of the Creator, he appeals to the kindness and affection of an imperfect earthly parent; to the natural sympathies of his hearers towards their own offspring. "What man is there of you, whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?"

Would he dissuade from an anxious, over-weening solicitude for the necessities of life, he points to the fowls of the air; to the lilies of the field; they neither sow nor reap; they neither toil nor spin; yet are they fed and arrayed in glory

by the hand of their Creator. And how much more shall he clothe you, O ye of little faith !

In fine, would he display the divinity of his mission by the exercise of miraculous powers, he relies upon its efficacy of operation by the means of inductive reasoning. He says to the man sick of the palsy, "son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." The scribes internally charge him with blasphemy. And what is his reply? As a proof of his power to forgive sins, he tells the palsied man to take up his bed and go to his house. But where is the connexion between the power of healing a palsy and the power of pardoning sins? Logically there is none. The power of forgiving sins was susceptible of no proof, either by ocular demonstration or by abstract reasoning. The palsy of the soul, occasioned by the sins of the object, upon whom this miracle was wrought, presented no effects manifest to the senses of other men. The disease and its remedy, the sins and their forgiveness could neither be made perceptible to the eye, nor sensible to the touch. Of that specific power to forgive sins no proof could be given by any modification of material substance, or any variation from its customary laws. The proof then, which

Christ condescended to give, was adapted with the most exquisite discernment to the case. The reasoning is from the greater to the less. The argument is inductive. The same power, which by a word can heal a confirmed palsy, a disease incurable by human art, must be alike efficacious to forgive sins. The same energy, which, by a suspension of all the laws which govern the material world, can give instantaneous vigor to impotence, can animate the torpid fibre and quicken the stagnant circulations of life, must also possess a like control over the moral world ; must be able to renovate the decays of spiritual nature, to rekindle the extinguished spark of virtue, to purge the pollutions of a guilty life, and restore to vice itself the spotless purity of innocence.

To one of these two processes then, ratiocination and induction, all arguments may be reduced ; and the same argument may be presented in either of the forms, or in both. And here I shall close my remarks on the subject of proof, as it is applied in confirmation. The part, which I am next to treat, is however so intimately connected with it, that my subsequent lecture will be little more than a further pursuit of the considerations, presented to you in this and the last.

LECTURE XXII.

CONFUTATION.

THERE are two very distinct senses, applied by Quintilian to the term confutation. In one of which it has reference only to judicial trials, and in the other it is adapted to every form of public speaking. By confutation it appears, that in the Roman courts of his age was understood what in ours we call the defence of a cause. And in this sense the confutation was exclusively confined to one of the parties, the defendant. The other signification was that, which the word now bears; and generally meant the answer to an adversary's allegations. There is indeed a natural coincidence between the two meanings of the word, since the whole task of a defendant before the tribunals of

justice must be to resist some charge brought against him, and since the altercation of contested points in every other mode of oratory must in its principles be managed, as in the conflicts of jurisprudence. All the topics of argument, which may be used for the purpose of confirmation, are equally suited to confutation; and here lies the most difficult part of every cause. So long as your antagonist is out of sight and out of hearing, the field of controversy must be your own. But here is the "tug of war." Here is the touchstone of your powers. Here it is that you have only the alternative of victory or defeat. And there are some particulars, in which a defendant cannot enjoy advantages equal to those of the plaintiff. He is more restricted in his resources, and requires a greater versatility of talents. Accusation is simple; the mode of advancing the charge is uniform, and its truth alone is to be established. But the defendant, as occasion offers, may deny, or justify, or excuse, or extenuate. He may sometimes assume the defiance of scorn, and sometimes humble himself to intreaty. The plaintiff has the time for premeditation at his own command. The defendant must often meet and repel the charge without any indulgence of preparation. The plaintiff knows the

extent of what he is to prove, and may know how far his witnesses will support him. The defendant must always adapt his refutation to the case, often without knowing what the testimony will be, until the moment, when it is brought to bear against him. It has therefore been remarked, that very moderate abilities are sufficient to qualify an accuser, but that eminence in defensive practice could be obtained only by the brightest endowments of eloquence; and Quintilian gives it as his deliberate opinion, that accusation is as much easier than defence, as it is easier to inflict, than to heal a wound.

Let us then consider confutation successively under both its meanings; first as applicable to the practice of the bar alone; and secondly as the function of repelling arguments.

It is impossible to prescribe any useful rules of eloquence for an orator at the bar in our country, without directing his first attention to that system of pleadings, which I have so often mentioned in these lectures. You remember I have heretofore told you, that every judicial cause with us undergoes in substance a double trial; the one in writing by the means of pleading, the other oral by testimony and argument. That the forms of plead-

ing are constructed upon the principles of the profoundest logic, and are intended to bring the controversy between the parties into the narrowest possible compass. Now that part of these pleadings, by means of which the plaintiff or accuser is authorised to summon the defendant before the judge, is called the declaration; which, as I have told you, contains the plaintiff's narration of his case, and his charge against the defendant. And when he, in obedience to the summons, comes into court, he may place his confutation or defence upon one of four distinct grounds. First he may take exception to the forms of the plaintiff's proceeding, or to the jurisdiction of the court, by a plea in abatement. Secondly he may dispute the right of the plaintiff to prosecute his action at all, by a plea in bar. Thirdly he may take issue upon the facts, and put them upon trial by jury. And fourthly he may admit the facts, the jurisdiction of the court, and the plaintiff's right to sue; but deny that he has shown by his own story any breach of the law, for which the defendant ought to answer. This is done by a demurrer to the declaration. In all these cases, excepting that of the issue upon the facts, the pleadings being closed,

the argument of the cause is held before the judges and decided by them.

When the defendant has chosen his ground of defence, the other party must reply. If the issue is joined upon the facts, the argument to the jury commences immediately. The plaintiff is bound first to make good his charge, for which he produces his testimony and his reasoning. The defence must be adapted to the form of proceeding. The plaintiff often produces evidence, against which the other party objects as not legally admissible. There are a great variety of causes, which disqualify a witness from being received to testify in particular cases; and there are many others, which are considered as weakening the force of testimony, without altogether destroying it. Hence the distinction between the competency and the credibility of a witness. A husband and wife for example are not competent witnesses either for or against each other. Their testimony cannot be received. But a father and child are competent witnesses. Their evidence when offered cannot be rejected; but it is in the sober and honest discretion of the jury to determine how far they will give credit to testimony, which in the ordinary course of nature is so likely to be under a bias of partiality.

The objections against testimony, with the variety of forms under which those objections may be urged, to the judges upon questions of competency, and to the jury upon points of credibility, together with the art of examining and cross-questioning witnesses to elicit from them every truth favorable to his cause, constitute unquestionably the most arduous task, and the most difficult duty of a practical lawyer. But I can here only signify its importance to you. To pursue the subject into that detail, which is indispensable to the professional advocate, would be to anticipate your future studies.

If the issue of the cause be taken upon a point of law, the defence must be conducted upon principles entirely different. In such cases there is no examination of witnesses. The controversy turns upon the law and its construction; and the reasoning is restricted to inquiries, what the law is, and what is its application to the cause upon trial. The determination is variously governed by those principles of natural justice and those immemorial usages, which constitute the body of the common law, by the statutes of the legislative authority, or by the precedents of previous adjudications. If neither of these should bear with direct and literal

proof upon the cause (for when they do the scales of justice are immediately turned, and the suit is decided), the reasoning must be from analogy ; and the defendant, as well as the plaintiff, must recur to all those resources of ratiocination and of induction, upon which I so largely dwelt in my two preceding lectures.

Here we return again to the second and more generally received sense of the term confutation ; the sense in which it is understood, when arranged as the fourth in order of the parts, composing a regular discourse, the reply to an adversary's arguments. In this sense it is equally used by both the parties to a suit at law ; by all, who take a part in public deliberations ; and even by the demonstrative and pulpit orators, although they have no antagonist immediately before them. Some of the ancient rhetoricians indeed excluded this part from their model of demonstrative orations on that account. But, if it is to be distinguished from the confirmation in any case, it may be as necessary to a panegyric, as to an issue at the bar. Confutation is not limited to what the antagonist has actually said. It must often be extended to what he will and even to what he may say. Argument is not always necessary in a laudatory discourse ;

but wherever it can be required at all, it unavoidably supposes an obstacle express or implied to be overcome. Panegyric, wherever it is deserved, will certainly require vindication, as well as celebration. The great and heroic characters of every age and nation have generally lived in a continual struggle with a great proportion of mankind. Their principal merit often consists in the firmness, perseverance, and fortitude, with which they bear up against the torrent of opposition from their fellow mortals. The tempest of obloquy rages against them not only throughout their lives, but often redoubles its fury for centuries after their earthly career is closed.

Sure fate of all, beneath whose rising ray

Each star of meaner merit fades away !

Oppress'd we feel the beam directly beat ;

Those suns of glory please not till they set.

POPE, EP. TO AUG.

Nor are the malignant passions of mankind, which are always arrayed in such formidable strength against talents and virtue, more destitute of cunning than of violence. They have plausible pretexts, as well as deadly weapons. The most dangerous of all errors are those, which are clothed in reason's garb. The best of men are not only often

exposed to the worst of imputations, but, from the artifices with which they are propagated, to be robbed of that greatest of all earthly blessings, the good opinion of the virtuous and the wise. A panegyric orator may often be called, in the discharge of his duty, to defend the character of his hero against prevailing prejudices ; and may sometimes find it necessary to palliate and concede. Argument then will find its place in the course even of a demonstrative oration, and that argument will most commonly be of confutation.

The modes of confutation should be adapted to those of the reasoning, against which they are opposed. In the syllogistic form the confutation consists in the direct denial either of the major or minor propositions, or of the accuracy of the conclusion, drawn from them. If either of the propositions be denied, it must be disproved also by a syllogism ; but if the conclusion do not follow from the premises, it is sufficient barely to state the deficiency by a denial. An error in the premises does not necessarily prove bad reasoning. There may be a mistake in either of them, without any fault of the speaker. But whether the premises be true or false, an erroneous conclusion must arise from a fault in the process. It must

be the fault of the speaker. From a major and minor proposition, correctly stated, only one conclusion can be drawn; and every other must be defective. This principle extends also to every species of oratorical ratiocination. But whether the validity of the foundation or the firmness of the superstructure be questioned, the orator must confute by reasoning. The epichirema may be attacked in either of its propositions, or in the reasons by which either of them is supported, or in the conclusion inferred from them. And the conclusion may be shown either to be not accurately drawn, or not to bear upon the real question in debate. The same latitude must be allowed to the refutation of the enthymem. Enumeration is refuted by pointing out the part, which is necessary to make it complete; a sign, by contesting its connexion with the thing, alledged to be signified. And as all inductive reasoning proceeds on the basis of similitude, the most effectual mean of opposition against it is the exposure of unlikeness. In all oratorical controversy, reason is the common auxiliary to both parties; and the general direction to him, whose cause is defensive, must be to turn to his own advantage every defect, that he can discover in the argument of his adversary.

To qualify him for this purpose, one of his most indispensable faculties must be a readiness to perceive by a rapid glance the strength and the weakness of his opponent's ground. I have repeatedly urged upon you the importance of this to every public speaker, as well as to the hearers of public discourses. But to no one is it so directly and vitally necessary, as to him, who is charged with the task of confutation; since this can never be accomplished until he has distinctly ascertained what he is to confute.

The poet, Juvenal, who was himself a teacher of rhetoric, seems, in a passage of his seventh satire, where he speaks of his profession, to consider the whole science as included in this.

*Quis color, et quod sit causae genus, atque ubi summa
Quaestio, quae veniant diversâ parte sagittae,
Nosse velint omnes.*

VII. 155.

No dunce of all his pupils but would learn
The various forms of causes to discern,
The issue's point with piercing ken to pry,
— And whence th' opponent's keenest shafts will fly.

The difficulties, which in all controversy beset this inquiry, are aggravated at the bar by the suddenness, in which the question often presents itself,

and the rapidity, with which the judgment must be formed. To acquire this talent in its highest perfection the most laborious industry of the student must be aided by the experience of long practice in the profession. There are however three very common errors in the management of controversy, against which I think it proper here to guard you, and from which I hope you will hereafter very sedulously guard yourselves. The first may be termed answering too much; the second answering too little; and the third answering yourself, and not your opponent. You answer too much, when you make it an invariable principle to reply to every thing, which has been or could be said by your antagonist on the other side. This is as if at the eve of a battle a general should send for a re-enforcement of women and children, to increase his numbers. If you contend against a diffuse speaker, who has wasted hour after hour in a lingering lapse of words, which had little or no bearing upon the proper question between you, it is incumbent upon you to discriminate between that part of his discourse which was pertinent, and that which was superfluous. Nor is it less necessary to detect the artifice of an adversary, who purposely mingles a flood of

extraneous matter with the controversy, for the sake of disguising the weakness of his cause. In the former of these two cases, if you undertake to answer every thing that has been said, you charge yourself with all the tediousness of your adversary, and double the measure by an equal burden of your own. In the latter you promote the cause of your antagonist, by making yourself the dupe of his stratagem. If then you have an opponent, whose redundancies arise only from his weakness, whose standard of oratory is time, and whose measure of eloquence is in arithmetical proportion to the multitude of his words, your general rule should be to pass over all his general, unappropriated declamation in silence; to take no more notice of it, than if it had never been spoken. But if you see that the external matter is obtruded upon the subject with design, to mislead your attention, and fix it upon objects different from that, which is really at issue, you should so far take notice of it, as to point out the artifice, and derive from it an argument of the most powerful efficacy to your own side. This species of management is not always easily discovered, though it is one of the most ordinary resources of sophistry. One of the surest tests, by which you can distinguish it

from the dropsical expansions of debility, is by its livid spots of malignity. It flies from the thing to the person. It applies rather to your passions, than to those of your audience. Knowing that anger is rash and undiscerning, it stings you, that it may take off your feelings, your reason, and your active powers from the post you are defending to your own person. To a speaker, who has not acquired a perfect control over himself, it is a dangerous snare; but it is almost infallibly the characteristic of a bad cause. The defence against it is to make its design manifest, and expose it as a deception, practised upon the judgment of the audience; which, when performed with coolness and address, powerfully conciliates their favor to you, and instigates their resentment against your opponent. In accomplishing this you may at your option reply to such adventitious matter, or dismiss it with contempt or disdain.

In the letters of Junius there are two remarkable examples of this disingenuous artifice, which were not both attended with the same success. They are apparent in the controversies with Sir William Draper, and with Mr. Horne. In his first letter, among the public characters, whom Junius attacked, was that of the Marquis of Gran-

by. Sir William Draper undertook the defence of that nobleman by a letter, which he published in the newspapers, and signed with his name. The defence was not so good in execution, as in design. The Marquis of Granby was a character generally respected and beloved. The extreme violence, with which he was attacked for some abuses in the army, not fairly imputable to him, had disgusted many of those, who most admired every other part of Junius' first letter. But Sir William Draper defended him upon questionable grounds. Junius in his reply takes every possible advantage of his adversary's weakness; but conscious that after all he was wrong on the contested point, he turns with his own inimitable fury of invective upon Sir William Draper himself. Draper, with all the ardent feeling and all the unwary simplicity of a soldier, fell into the snare; thus cunningly laid to entrap him; abandoned in a great measure the post, in support of which he had first taken arms, and wasted all the remnant of his strength in an equally fruitless defence of himself.

The same system of assault was pursued against Horne; but Horne was more upon his guard, and had higher controversial powers at command. The attack of Junius was against Horne

himself. It was a feeble ebullition of passion; charging Horne with having sold himself to the ministry, without the shadow of a proof to support the charge. Horne immediately came out with a precise and flat denial, put the question at issue, and called upon Junius for his proof or his apology. Junius, well knowing that he had no proof to produce, and deterred either by a false shame or by the same passion, which had first instigated the charge, from making the apology, endeavours to intimidate Horne by an insulting and abusive private letter, which he tells him is not intended for the public, but which he at the same time defies him to publish. Here we see an awkward attempt by the same act to cover a retreat and to claim the victory. In this letter the charge of corruption was renewed; but it was coupled with a wavering hesitation, an anxious and elaborate attempt to substitute another charge in its stead, and a real reluctance at continuing the controversy before the public, disguised under an affected contempt for Horne's situation and abilities.

Horne published the letter and his reply to it at the same time. He exposed its inconsistencies and absurdities. His defence of himself was complete. But he made his letter too long. He

entered too much into the discussion of points, which Junius had endeavoured to crowd into the dispute for the very purpose of drowning the only real issue. Junius rejoined in one of his most highly polished productions ; exhausted all the powers of his mind upon the extrinsic matter alone, and said not one word about his charge of corruption, upon which alone the whole controversy had arisen. Horne's concluding letter triumphantly remarks this, and exults rather more than was wise, though not more than was natural, at the event of the trial.

In both these cases I refer you to Junius for examples of the artifice, which flies from the point in controversy to external or collateral matter ; and to his two antagonists for instances of disputants, who answer too much ; on the part of Sir William Draper to the utter ruin of his cause ; on that of Horne to the loss of some foliage in his laurels. If you would judge for yourselves of the accuracy of my remarks, you must attentively peruse the whole of the two correspondences, without reference to the style, or to any beauties or deformities of detail. In these respects unquestionably neither Horne nor Sir William Draper can bear a comparison with Junius.

The second error in controversy, against which I am anxious of warning you, is that of answering too little. It is not unfrequently found united with that, against which I have last admonished you. When too much of our strength is lavished upon the outworks, the citadel is left proportionally defenceless. If we say too much upon points extrinsic to the cause, we shall seldom say enough upon those, on which it hinges. To avoid this fault therefore it is as essential to ascertain which are the strong parts of your adversary's argument, as it is to escape the opposite error of excess. To this effect it is also a duty of the first impression to obtain a control over your own prejudices and feelings. Nothing is so sure to blind us to the real validity of the reasons alledged against us, as our passions. It is so much easier to despise, than to answer an opponent's argument, that wherever we can indulge our contempt, we are apt to forget that it is not refutation. There is little danger of this at the bar, because, having there seldom any security other than the strength of our cause, we can never mistake the power of a reason, adduced against us, but at our own peril. If we substitute petulance or scorn for logic, the verdict of the jury or the sentence of the court

will soon correct our misapprehensions. It is in deliberative assemblies, when party spirit has acquired an overruling ascendancy, that this species of perverseness most frequently makes its appearance. When operating in its utmost extent upon majorities, it ends in what are termed silent votes; when upon minorities, it produces secessions; both of which destroy the deliberative character of the assembly. It has sometimes happened in the parliamentary history of other nations, and is not unexampled in our own, that majorities, in the exultation and abuse of their power, have affected to carry their measures in defiance of all discussion; and, without attempting to refute any objection, reply to their antagonists only by a vote. On the other hand minorities have sometimes been so certain that they could not prevent the adoption of a measure, by any reasoning or eloquence, that they have withdrawn in bodies from the assembly, and renounced all pretence to discussion. In the expedients of party management these extremes may possibly sometimes be justifiable; but they are much more symptomatic of violent faction, than of prevailing reason. But the same disposition, which leads to these extremes, perpetually urges deliberative orators to underrate the power

of their opponents ; and misguides the judgment in the estimate of their arguments. A speaker, sure of being in the majority when the vote comes to be taken, has a constant stimulus to subdue argument by arrogance, and to shield his inability to answer with disdain. An orator, certain of appearing in the minority upon the question, is discouraged from exerting that energy, which he knows must be ineffectual ; and leaves the apparent triumph of reason, to follow the real victory of suffrage. In both these cases they answer too little ; a fault, into which I hope none of you will ever suffer yourselves to be betrayed by the insolence of conscious strength, or the despair of conscious weakness. But the most inexcusable of all the errors in confutation is that of answering yourself, instead of your adversary ; which is done whenever you suppress, or mutilate, or obscure, or misstate, his reasoning, and then reply not to his positions, but to those, which you have substituted in their stead. This practice is often the result of misapprehension, when a disputant mistakes the point of the argument, urged by his adversary ; but it often arises also from design ; in which case it should be clearly detected and indignantly exposed. The duty of a disputant is fairly to take

and fully to repel the idea of his opponent, and not his own. To misrepresent the meaning of your antagonist evinces a want of candor, which the auditory seldom fail to perceive, and which engages their feelings in his favor. When involved in controversy then, never start against yourself frivolous objections for the sake of showing how easily you can answer them. Quintilian relates an anecdote of the poet Accius, which every controversial writer or speaker will do well to remember. Accius was a writer of tragedies, and being once asked why he, whose dialogue was celebrated for its energy, did not engage in the practice at the bar; answered, because in his tragedies he could make his characters say what he pleased; but that at the bar he should have to contend with persons, who would say any thing but what he pleased. There can be no possible advantage in supposing our antagonist a fool. The most probable effect of such an imagination is to prove ourselves so.

We have now gone through the consideration of that most important of all the parts of a discourse, the proof. We have investigated its nature in both its branches; of confirmation and of confutation. With respect to the order, in

which they are to be adduced, the ancient precepts and the modern practice make it follow the natural order of accusation and defence. The plaintiff first brings forth his confirmation, and canvasses objections afterwards. The defendant pursues an inverted order. In the arrangement of our proofs we are directed to imitate the principles, upon which armies are arrayed for battle; to place our strongest arguments in the front and the rear, and inclose those of untested courage and doubtful fidelity in the centre. But for the purposes of conviction the station, in which your arguments are posted, is far less important, than their quality. They are to be estimated by their weight, and not by their numbers. Their efficacy may depend upon the manner, in which they are presented. They are never averse, and seldom inaccessible to ornament. But strength is the touchstone of their existence; and there is perhaps no question so intricate, but that for its decision we may say in the familiar language of the poet, that

Where one's proofs are aptly chosen,

Four are as valid, as four dozen.

LECTURE XXIII.

DIGRESSION AND TRANSITION.



IT is perhaps impossible to form a systematic classification of any great and complicated object in nature, art, or science, which shall include, within a formal distribution of parts, every particular incidental to its composition. There are certain anomalies belonging to the system, as fully as any of its regular parts, which yet resist every attempt to bring them under the discipline of a general arrangement. The framers of systems are commonly driven to the expedient of assigning them a separate and miscellaneous apartment by themselves; and, however different their characters may be from each other, to assemble them under the single standard of their common insubordination.

Of this description are those accidents of discourse, concerning which I am now to speak, digression and transition. They are thrown together, not from any natural similitude between them, but merely because they are not reducible to any of the heads of a general division, and yet are among the most common ingredients of every public discourse.

I have thought them entitled to a particular lecture by themselves, under this general department of disposition. From their very miscellaneous nature, it was not very material where in the order of arrangement this lecture should be assigned. The practice of preceding writers has so much varied, as to leave the choice of position quite arbitrary; but I have concluded, that the most suitable place for a lecture, itself digressional from our regular subject, would be immediately before that, which will treat of the conclusion; and after those, which have explained all the other essential parts of a public oration.

The terms of art, originally used by the Greek writers, are almost universally significant. The digression was by them termed *παρεκβασις*, meaning literally something outside of the foundation; and it is defined by Quintilian an extraordinary

excursion of speech, treating of some object foreign to the cause, but having some useful connexion with its purpose.

In the ancient schools of declamation, where they professed to reduce every thing to rule, and where oratory was solved into a species of clock-work, the digression was considered as one of the regular parts of an oration. It was limited with industrious idleness to a certain class of topics; and it was stationed at one permanent post between the narration and the proof. It was a sort of moral lecture served up, by way of refreshment to the auditory, at the principal resting place on their journey. From the declamatory floor the practice was carried to the public tribunals, and became there one of the instruments, by which eloquence was corrupted. It has an easy and plausible succedaneum for argument, and from being first admitted as its precursor soon encroached, so as often to occupy all its place.

This abuse was emphatically censured and rigorously excluded from the system of Quintilian, who justly remarks, that digressions may contribute essentially to the fartherance of the argument, and are still more adapted to the ornament of an oration; but that they ought never to be confined to

any one place, or to any list of enumerated topics. They may be scattered over every part of a speech, and they may range over the whole extent of the orator's conceptions. But they should arise naturally from the subject, and not be crowded upon it by intrusion. Instead of breaking the chain, they ought rather to form the connecting link between two successive parts ; and their highest perfection consists in their appearing without incongruity, as the natural conclusion of the one and commencement of the other.

In practice it is not always easy to point out all the parts of a discourse, which might be embraced under the general name of a digression. Strictly speaking every thing, not included of necessity within the six regular parts, is digression. Descriptions, personal panegyric or invective, exclamations of passion, excuses, palliation, reproach and conciliation, amplification and diminution, all addresses to the feelings, and all the common place remarks upon human nature, the moral and political reflections, the brightest gems, and the most attractive charms of eloquence, partake of the digressive nature. They are indeed often so closely allied to the question or proposition, that they appear indissolubly incorporated with it.

But whether premeditated or occasional, they are often interwoven with grace and elegance in the texture of the discourse, when it might still subsist in all its strength without them.

And hence it is, that the most important precept, which a rhetorical teacher can inculcate respecting this part of a discourse, is negative. The rules for the management of digressions are obvious and simple; but the caution the most necessary to an orator is to beware of admitting them with too much indulgence. They are like foreigners in the bosom of a national society. Received under just and prudent restrictions they may contribute to the honor and prosperity of the commonwealth; but they should never be admitted in such numbers, or with such a latitude of powers, as to give them the control of the political body.

A digression is a stranger; and as such let your general rule, as a public speaker, be to exclude it from your discourse. To this general rule, as to all others, exceptions must be allowed; and the condition for such exception should be, that when admitted it shall contribute to the common interest, and not usurp an undue proportion of space in the fabric. This caution is peculiarly

necessary to all extemporaneous speakers. For written and even for unwritten, but premeditated discourse, the judgment has time to select and discriminate between the first thoughts, which the fertility of invention produces to the mind. But it requires a very rigorous and habitual restraint upon the operations of your own understanding to speak on the spur of the occasion without curvetting beyond the boundaries of the road. There was therefore nothing absurd, however seemingly paradoxical, in the apology, which we are told was once made by Phocion, the most nervous and concise of all the Athenian orators. As an excuse for having spoken, one day, longer than was his usual custom, he said he had not time to make his speech short.

But of all the forms of public oratory that, which is the most liable to the excesses of digression, and which requires the severest curb to repress them, is that of the bar. To caution those of you, who have it in contemplation to devote yourselves in future life to that profession, against this fault, in more general terms, would not be to discharge the duties of this place. In order effectually to guard yourselves from that tendency to impertinent digression, which has been the common

disgrace of lawyers wherever and whenever there has existed law to disgrace, I would entreat you to trace the sources, whence this propensity to wordy flatulence most commonly proceeds, and to remark the forms, in which it most frequently appears.

The first of the causes, which has made the sounding emptiness of the bar so proverbial throughout the world, is indolence; the want of that industry, which is necessary for a lawyer to probe to the bottom the cause, upon which he is to speak. When he is not thoroughly acquainted with the real strength and weakness of his cause, he knows not where to choose the most impressive argument. When the mark is shrouded in obscurity, the only substitute for accuracy in the aim is in the multitude of the shafts. You have not weighed in impartial scales the arguments, which offer themselves to your own mind. Your natural resort is to take them all; and to scatter the two bushels of chaff for fear of losing the two grains of wheat. You content yourself with the reflection, that different minds see the same object with different views; that the judge might think important that, which you might reject as weak; that an omission may always be fatal; that redun-

dancy, though tedious, is safe; and, instead of selecting with discernment, your only care is to accumulate with profusion.

This disposition is further promoted by an inconsiderate deference to the prejudices and passions of the client. The cause of every suitor is important to himself; and, when he pays a man for becoming his speaker, he does not readily bestow his money without an equivalent. The substantial justice of most causes lies within a narrow compass; but the anxiety of a litigant might be added to Agur's list of things, which say not "it is enough." Ready as the generality of mankind are to deride the loquaciousness of lawyers, individually they are the first to instigate the vice, which they are most prone in common to censure; and many a client fancies his counsel has not said enough in his behalf, when, in the opinion of every other human being, he would only be chargeable with having said too much. Still stronger is the temptation to this unmeaning exuberance of words from the professional success and reputation, which it is often found to acquire. It is not every judicial auditory, that can distinguish with unerring taste between speaking well and speaking long. They who measure eloquence by the hour

have a standard much more easy and more common, than they who poise it by the scales of intellect. The art of speaking for hours together without intermission is itself no common endowment, and it will ensure a certain grade of professional profit and reputation ; as where there is no stamp of sovereign authority upon the coin, a gilt medallion may obtain a circulation equal to that of sterling gold.

Add to this the rivalship of professional competition, and the contagion of mutual example. When the advocate on one side has spent three hours in darkening a cause, which ten minutes might have unfolded in all its light, his opponent feels as if his reputation were at stake. In the lowest deep, his ingenuity must find a deep still lower. He must not only refute his adversary's arguments, but he must provide for an equal consumption of time. The emulation of verbosity seldom can be satisfied even with equal returns ; the palm of multiloquence must be earned by a preponderance in the quantity of sound ; and the ardor of victory urges a double and treble retaliation for every idle sentence, uttered by the adverse party. Last of all among the causes, which stimulate to vain discourse, is the vanity of the

speaker. However tiresome to others, the most indefatigable orator is never tedious to himself. The sound of his own voice never loses its harmony to his own ear ; and among the delusions, which self-love is ever assiduous in attempting to pass upon virtue, he fancies himself to be sounding the sweetest tones of justice, when he is only listening to the music of his own vain tongue.

Thus stimulated at once by so many of the motives, which operate upon the conduct of men ; by the sense of duty, by the sting of ambition, by the spur of reputation, by the feather of vanity, and even by the charm of indolence, it is not surprising that superfluity of speech has been the most universal imputation upon the general character of lawyers under every form of government, and in every age, where such a profession has existed. And as the fault has thus arisen uniformly from the same causes, it has presented a similar uniformity of effects. The redundancies of judicial oratory are seldom argumentative ; for argument, however incorrect, requires a certain labor of the mind. But where the substantial purpose is only to apply a certain distention of lungs for a given length of time, the toil of meditation is altogether discarded, and the speaker resorts to

his memory alone for his materials. Among the compilations of his memory he recurs to those, which are the most familiar from having longest been lodged there ; which are most easily retained from their character of generality ; and which are most easily adapted to every subject from the very frequency of their application to all. That, which answers most completely to all these characteristics, is general history. Among the ancient writers there are two, who have severely satirised this propensity of lawyers to overflowing digression ; one of them a Greek, and the other a Roman ; Lucian and Martial. “ If,” says the former in those ironical directions to orators, which I mentioned in one of my earliest lectures, “ if,” says he, “ you have to argue an action for slander or adultery at Athens, launch at once into the transactions of India or of Ecbatana ; mingle with every thing a little of Marathon, a little of Cynae-gyus ; you can say or do nothing without it. Plough the perpetual wave of mount Athos ; trample the soil of the Hellespont ; darken the sun with clouds of Persian arrows ; vanquish over again Xerxes ; and be sure to share in the glories of Leonidas ; echo and re-echo the names of Salamis, Artemisium, and Plataea. Would you reach

the very summit of vulgar admiration, begin with the siege of Troy ; or rather go back to the wedding of Deucalion and Pyrrha, carefully bringing down your history from that period to the present." This picture no doubt was taken from the life. It is a satire upon the diffuse wanderings of the Athenian lawyers in the days of Lucian. That of Martial is in the form of an epigram upon the judicial orators of Rome in his age.

Non de vi, neque caede, nec veneno ;
 Sed lis est mihi de tribus capellis.
 Vicini queror has abesse furto ;
 Hoc judex sibi postulat probari.
 Tu Cannas, Mithridaticumque bellum,
 Et perjuria Punici furoris,
 Et Sullas, Mariosque, Muciosque,
 Magna voce sonas, manuque totâ.
 Jam dic, Posthume, de tribus capellis.

VI. 19.

In English it might read thus.

No dagger keen, no poison'd bowl
 Forms, of my suit, the constitution ;
 'Tis of three kids my neighbour stole
 I come to court for restitution.
 With thundering voice, and outstretch'd arms
 My lawyer fights o'er all our battles ;

Now thrills with Cannae's dire alarms,

And now of Mithridates prattles.

Oh ! let thy tongue, Verboso, cease,

Which trust in Punic faith forbids ;

Let Sylla, Marius, sleep in peace ;

And say—one word about my kids.

In both these instances you will observe, that the fault specifically ridiculed is that of bursting through the bounds of the question into the boundless field of general history ; and the incidents alledged by Lucian are those, which were most familiar to the recollection of the Greeks, as those selected by Martial are allusions to the most memorable periods in the history of Rome. I could easily refer you to similar sallies against the lawyers of modern times, and in divers nations and tongues ; but it is unnecessary to multiply examples. Thus much I hope may suffice to warn you against the abuses of digression ; and to enable you, with the aid of your own reflections, to prescribe for yourselves the rules for its management when admissible.

Transition, as you will understand by the natural force of the term itself, means a passage ; a going across from one part of the subject to another. It is not an essential part of a discourse, for

it is often silently made, without any formal notice. But if the speech be long and complex it is an useful assistant to the divisions, into which it is carved; and serves the same purpose as division itself. It is merely a short notification to the audience, that the orator has done with one part of his discourse, and is about commencing upon another. The same natural aversion of mankind to abruptness at the commencement or close of an oration, which has established the custom of opening with an exordium and of ending with a peroration, has erected these bridges over the various inlets, which intersect the different regions of the province.

The object of transition is then always the same; and one of the principal difficulties of its use is the diversification of its forms. To this end it is sometimes made complete, referring both to the part concluded and the part commenced; and sometimes imperfect, an index only to one of the parts. Sometimes it is announced with studious formality, and sometimes it involves itself in the shell of indirect allusion. It does not appear much to have engaged the attention of the ancient rhetoricians. I find no precept in any of them concerning it. Among some of the modern writ-

ers, particularly the French, it has been refined with an affectation, which often reduces it to quaintness. But, as it was not included in the ancient theories of composition, it was often neglected in their practice. The transitions of the ancient classics have often been complained of, as too abrupt; though Dr. Johnson ingeniously conjectures, that they are only so in appearance. He thinks they were usually performed by indirect allusion; and that the reason why they appear to us so disjointed is only because we have lost the intermediate idea, which was understood without being expressed, and which connected the various parts together in community.

Transitions, fully displayed, contribute to perspicuity; and Cicero employs them the most formally upon those orations, where he was most solicitous to make his meaning clear and his discourse memorable to all his hearers; in his first oration at the bar, that for Quinctius, and his first oration to the people, for the Manilian law. In the oratorical discourses of modern times sermons are the compositions, in which variety and elegance of transition are most important, and most studied.

There are in the *Paradise Lost* two examples of transition, which may indicate the uses and pro-

priety of this form of speech more effectually, than any to be found in the volumes of oratory. That incomparable poem was first published in ten books. But the author, afterwards considering that the seventh book, which contained the celestial colloquy sublime between Adam and the angel Gabriel, and the tenth, which embraced the whole of his interview with the archangel Michael, were of a length disproportionate to the rest, and exceeding that measure, which from the days of Homer has been found most suitable to the relish of readers, divided each of these books into two. The treatment of the subject was such, that this new division could be made with ease. But to avoid the appearance of an abrupt separation the addition of a few lines became necessary, by way of transition between the two parts of the divided books. Thus the seventh book, in all the editions subsequent to the first, closes with the narrative of Gabriel to Adam. The eighth begins with Adam's thanks for his condescension. And the transition is formed by the addition of three lines, and a slight alteration in that, which began with the reply of Adam at first. Thus instead of this line,

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied,

the introduction to the eighth book now gives us the following beautiful picture.

The angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear ;
Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied.

The division between the eleventh and twelfth books was made at the point, where Michael, after discovering to Adam the fortunes of his posterity until the flood in a vision, continues in the form of a narrative the history of mankind, until their restoration to the divine favor by the death of Christ. The following are the lines, which were added at the new arrangement of the books. And here the employment of the very word itself sufficiently manifests their purpose. They stand at the entrance of the twelfth book.

As one, who in his journey bates at noon,
Though bent on speed, so here th' archangel paus'd
Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,
If Adam ought perhaps might interpose ;
Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes.

In extemporaneous oratory (by which I mean every species of public speaking, not previously written) the most pleasing and impressive species

of transition is made by seizing upon some occasional incident or circumstance, furnished to the orator while he is speaking; or to some event so recent, that it cannot be supposed to have entered into the orator's premeditations. The interest, the animation, the liveliness, which this infuses into a discourse, must be obvious upon a moment's reflection. The faculty of seizing upon such circumstances and improving them to the purpose of his cause is one of those excellencies, which no precepts can teach, and which you can acquire only from the liberality of your own genius, and improve by observation of examples from the princes of eloquence.

Such for example is that bold and hazardous appeal to his audience, by which Demosthenes, in his oration for the crown, made his transition from the exordium to the argument in defence of himself. The whole oration you know is defensive against the accusation, which Eschines had just pronounced. Eschines had there intimated, that Demosthenes had often charged him with being the friend and intimate of Philip and Alexander. Mark his reply. "Citizens, you well knew this man's venal prostitution before I opened my lips. He calls it forsooth friendship and intimacy. You

heard him just now say, in speaking of me, ‘the man who upbraids me with the intimacy of Alexander.’ I upbraid thee with the intimacy of Alexander! How couldst thou obtain it? How couldst thou pretend to it? I never called thee the friend of Philip, nor the intimate of Alexander. I am not so mad; unless we are to call menial servants the friends and intimates of those, who hire them upon daily wages. But how is this? Impossible! No! I formerly called you the hireling of Philip. I now call you the hireling of Alexander; and so does this whole assembly. If you doubt it, ask them; or I will ask them for you. Citizens of Athens, do you believe Eschines to be the intimate of Alexander, or his hireling? You hear their answer.”

It is evident that, on his putting the question, a general cry of hireling resounded from the audience. And now consider what an immense advantage Demosthenes had gained over his adversary, when he had thus at the very threshold a sort of verdict from the judges themselves, pronouncing his accuser the hireling of Alexander.

In the fourth of Cicero’s orations against Verres the orator, after relating several instances of robbery, committed by that culprit, makes a pause

to exclaim against the general degeneracy of the age. To contrast the scandalous vices of the times with the manners of an earlier period, he gives an anecdote of Lucius Piso, a man who had lived within the memory of many among his auditors. That honorable Roman, when holding in Spain the same office, which Verres had so infamously abused in Sicily, had accidentally lost his gold ring. And so scrupulous had he been to guard against every suspicion of malversation, that he sent for a goldsmith to come to him, while sitting on his judicial bench at Cordova; had the gold weighed out to him, and directed him to make the ring there, in the face of the public. He then adds, "to compare Verres with Piso would indeed be ridiculous; to embrace in the memory at one time, or include in one discourse the catalogue of his crimes would be impossible; I can only touch upon them in a cursory manner, and by whole classes at once. This anecdote of Piso's ring now reminds me of one, which I had utterly forgotton. How many honorable men think you there are, from whom he has plucked the gold rings on their fingers? Just so many as ever met his eye, and happened, by the value either of the stone or its enchasing, to suit his taste. He

never hesitated an instant. The following fact is incredible, but so well known, that I think he will not deny it himself." The orator then proceeds to detail a new order of the criminal's depredations. It will be needless to lengthen the quotation, which I adduced only for the purpose of holding up to your notice the elegance of the transition.

In the short speech of Burke at Bristol, declining the election in 1780, there is an example of transition not inferior in elegance to those, which you have just seen drawn from the richest fountains of Greece and Rome. His canvassing speech, delivered two days before, stands perhaps unrivalled among the productions of his eloquence. But Bristol was not Athens nor Rome. The people of Bristol on that occasion deserved the character, which the resentments of the poet Savage had imputed to them before.

Thee, thee, what senatorial souls adorn !

Thy natives sure would prove a senate's scorn ;

Do strangers deign to serve thee ; what their praise ?

Their generous services thy murmurs raise.

SAVAGE, LOND. AND BRIST. DELIN.

A Burke was no fit representative for them. He found they had fixed, in preference to him, upon

some of those senatorial souls, best calculated to prove a senate's scorn. He renounced the contest; and, taking leave of them, made this admirable and pathetic allusion to an event, which had occurred the day before, the sudden death of another candidate. "Gentlemen, the melancholy event of yesterday reads to us an awful lesson against being too much troubled about any of the objects of ordinary ambition. The worthy gentleman, who has been snatched from us at the moment of the election, and in the middle of the contest, whilst his desires were as warm and his hopes as eager as ours, has feelingly told us what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue."

In strict conformity to the rules and regulations of this institution, I should now say something to you on the subject of amplification. But the length of this lecture has exceeded already the measure of time, upon which I can reasonably expect that attention, which can alone make it in any degree profitable to you. Amplification is an article, which deserves more than a momentary regard from the rhetorical student; and perhaps it belongs more properly to the next subdivision of the science, upon which we are to treat, than to those, which form the basis of our present inqui-

ries. To that future investigation then it may now suffice to refer you; and in my next lecture I hope, by treating of the conclusion of a discourse, to bring our disquisitions upon this second department of rhetoric to a conclusion.

LECTURE XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

THE peroration or conclusion of a discourse is one of those distinct parts, recognised under every system of rhetoric, Greek or Roman, ancient or modern. But in observing upon its proper character and the objects, which it is intended to embrace, we cannot forbear to remark an important difference, not only between the rhetorical writers of Greece and Rome, but between the general character and political institutions of their respective nations. The Areopagus at Athens was a judicial court, the functions of which were regulated by principles of such refinement and delicacy, that they deserve the highest admiration even of our age; and would be worthy of the

most exemplary christian morality. Not only a profound knowledge of the laws, but a heart open to all the tender sympathies of our nature was held an incumbent duty upon the judges. But in the argument of causes before them, no appeal to their passions was ever allowed. A member of their body was once expelled from office, for strangling a bird, that had sought a refuge in his bosom. And yet every lawyer, who presumed in speaking before them to attempt an exordium or a peroration, a digression or an amplification, was immediately stopped by a ministerial officer of the court, and reminded, that his discourse must consist only of his proposition and his proof.

How different and how much more imperfect were the principles of the Roman courts of justice! Even Cicero himself, in the early and comparatively virtuous ages of their judicial institutions, represents the highest triumph of oratory, as consisting in the power of subduing the feelings of the judges. And the artifices, which are related by Quintilian as having been practised within his own observation for the purpose of moving compassion, can be paralleled in modern times only by those impostures of beggary, which in the streets and on the bridges of populous cities in modern Europe levy

contributions upon the credulity and folly of the public.

To judge of the excessive absurdities, into which these theatrical exhibitions of misery necessarily led, let us only consider what an effect some of their pathetic scenes produced, where they were acted. I shall refer you only to those, which Quintilian mentions as of his personal knowledge.

A large estate was claimed in behalf of a young girl, who pretended to be the sister of the man in actual possession. He contested her consanguinity with him; and that fact was the only point in issue of the cause. Her advocate brought her in to court; and at the stage of the cause when he expected to be most profoundly pathetic, he directed her to go over to the benches, where the adverse party were seated, to fall upon the neck of her supposed brother, and, as if overpowered by the impulse of sisterly affection, embrace him in full view of the whole auditory. But the counsel of the other party, one of whom was Quintilian himself, anticipated what was coming; and, just before the girl came over, gave their client a hint to withdraw. This simple step so utterly disconcerted the girl's lawyer, that, although a man of celebrat-

ed eloquence, he was unable to say a word more, and was obliged to carry back his client to her place, overwhelmed with mortification and confusion.

It was sometimes customary, when the scene was very tragical, to have a painting of it suspended immediately over the statue of Jupiter. A very beautiful young woman was accused of being an accomplice to the murder of her husband. Her lawyer had prepared a moving discourse in her defence, and had provided a wax figure, representing the husband himself, with directions to have it brought forward in the height of his peroration. But the men, who had charge of it, not exactly knowing what a peroration was, kept thrusting forward their waxen image every time the lawyer looked towards them. This, as you may well imagine, rather stimulated the ridicule of the audience, than their compassion. And when at last, on having the figure fully displayed before them, they found it was the resemblance of a decrepit old man, the orator's wise device operated against his client, more than all his eloquence had accomplished in her favor. He had moved the audience to tears, but they were tears of laughter.

This introduction of theatrical action into the courts of justice appeared in all its absurdity, when as it often happened the performers were not perfect in their parts. Thus a child, who had been brought in by his preceptor to stir compassion by his cries, on being asked why he uttered such shrieks, disconcerted the whole preparation by telling the real cause, "because he pinches me."

It was always intended, that the action of the suppliant should suit the words of the orator ; but sometimes an accident would happen to disarrange their coincidence, and the speaker would be saying, "see how he stretches forth towards you his supplicating hands !" "Behold him clinging for the last time to the fond embraces of his miserable children ;" when the client would be not even in court. As it was almost always the interest or the policy of the adverse party to turn these dramatic distresses into ridicule, they were often degraded into the lowest degrees of buffoonery. At one time a lawyer would say, "give that boy a piece of bread, the poor child is hungry." At another he would roll a handfull of marbles upon the table, and make a scramble, instead of a lamentation. They often carried children round in

arms before the judges. A lawyer, whose client was a large, heavy man, to counteract the effect of this artifice, turned to the client himself; "what can I do for you? I cannot take you in my arms, and carry you round in the face of this honorable court." Another affected to be frightened at the sight of a sword, produced by his adverse party, ran out of court with every appearance of terror, and then came creeping back, to inquire whether the sword was gone. Such was the grotesque mixture of tragedy and farce, exhibited in the Roman tribunals; and in perusing these and many other occurrences of a similar character, which are related by Quintilian, the Roman courts seem, in comparison with the admirable purity of the Athenian Areopagus, to have been a burlesque upon the administration of justice. That extraordinary purity however was even in Grecian states confined to Athens; and in Athens to that particular court. Other states and other courts allowed the same practices for working on the passions of the judges, as were customary at Rome; and Aristophanes in one of his plays ridicules them by introducing the mock trial of a dog, for stealing a cheese. He brings in a litter of puppies, whose yelping is urged by the coun-

sel, as the wailing of helpless orphans over the fate, which is to befall their parent.

This important difference in the principles, upon which judicial processes were conducted, affects the theory of rhetoric most materially in that part, which we now have under consideration, the conclusion of the discourse. A conclusion may be proper, even when every address to the feelings is exploded. But in that case it consists only of a summary, to remind the hearer of the principal points in the discourse. Some of the Greek rhetoricians accordingly termed it the recapitulation. The observations of Aristotle on this subject are marked with all the acuteness and correctness of his mind. "Crimination," says he, "and compassion, and anger, and the like perturbations of the soul, are topics not of the subject, but to the judge. On these, if the principles of all judicial tribunals were such, as are established in some of the best constituted republics, there would be nothing to say. In some cases it is so expressly prescribed by law, and in others, as for instance the Areopagus, it is forbidden by the rules of the court to digress from the subject. For they justly consider, that to pervert a judge by stimulating his anger, his compassion, or his mercy, is like warping the very rule,

by which you would measure. It is manifest, that the sole object of a suitor at law is to prove, that a thing is or is not ; has or has not happened. But whether great or small, just or unjust, when the legislator has not discriminated, it is the duty of the judge himself to ascertain, and not to learn from the litigants."

In treating however of the epilogue or conclusion, in a subsequent part of his work, Aristotle himself states its object to be fourfold. First to conciliate the audience in favor of the speaker, and to excite them against his adversary ; secondly to amplify and diminish ; thirdly to rouse the passions ; and fourthly to recapitulate.

The first of these purposes you will remember was heretofore stated to be the principal aim of the exordium ; and the means for accomplishing this end were opened to you somewhat largely, when that part of discourse was under our examination. We return here to the same theme, and may recommend the employment of the same means. Here however they may be employed with stronger effect. Here it is that you are to reap the harvest of the seed, sown in the introduction. The weeds of prejudice against you have been rooted out from the soil. The streams of argument have

watered; the sunshine of sentiment and expression has ripened the grain; and the hand of industry is now called again to gather the fruits.

The object of amplification, as its name imports, is to magnify, as that of diminution is to lessen the appearance of things. It is the moral and intellectual lens, which, without altering the nature of the things themselves, swells and contracts their dimensions by the medium, through which it presents them to the eye.

Amplification is one of those ornaments, which rhetoric borrows from poetry. It consists sometimes in a single word; in the word chosen to designate the thing; it then delights in metaphorical expression, and is often identified with the hyperbole.

Thus, when Shakspeare intends to give an idea of extraordinary chastity in one of his female characters, Valeria, he makes Coriolanus call her the "moon of Rome;" and thus Pope, endeavouring to prove that heroes are always disordered in their senses, designates Alexander by the denomination of "Macedonia's madman."

To this enlargement of the object, effected by the choice of its name, a further addition is made when the lighter shade is contrasted by immediate

connexion with the darker; as in the following passage of Cicero's charge against Verres. "We have brought before you for judgment, not a thief, but a robber; not an adulterer, but a ravisher; not an infidel, but a blasphemer of all religion; not an assassin, but an universal butcher of your allies and your citizens."

A similar example may be found in the first letter of Junius. "It is not the disorder, but the physician; it is not a casual concurrence of calamitous circumstances, it is the pernicious hand of government, which alone can make a whole people desperate." But the ordinary means of amplification are reduced by Quintilian to four kinds, which are climax, comparison, inference, and accumulation.

Climax is the universal key to all oratorical composition. It applies to the discourse as a whole; it applies to every sentence as a part. The ideas of the audience should be kept in a continually ascending state; though it is not always necessary that the ascent should be made by regular and artificial steps. Climax is never more impressive, than when carried professedly beyond the powers of expression; as in that far-famed passage in which Cicero aggravates the horror of putting to

death a Roman citizen by crucifixion. Such too is the following passage in Burke's speech upon American taxation. "If this be the case, ask yourselves this question; will they be content in such a state of slavery? If not, look to the consequences. Reflect how you are to govern a people, who think they ought to be free, and think they are not. Your scheme yields no revenue; it yields nothing but discontent, disorder, disobedience; and such is the state of America, that, after wading up to your eyes in blood, you could only end just where you begun; that is, to tax where no revenue is to be found, to—my voice fails me; my inclination indeed carries me no further; all is confusion beyond it."

The powers of language in all the tongues, with which we are acquainted, recognize only three degrees of comparison; a positive, a comparative, and a superlative. But climax is ever seeking for a fourth; and one of the images, in which it most indulges, is that of finding such fourth degree of comparison. Of this grandeur of imagination, which stretches beyond the bounds of ordinary possibility, the most frequent examples are to be found in the daring and sublime genius of Milton. Thus in the character of Moloch;

Moloch, scepter'd king,
 Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit,
 That fought in heaven, now fiercer by despair ;
 His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
 Equal in strength ; and, rather than be less,
 Car'd not to be at all ; with that care lost
 Went all his fear ; of God, or hell, or worse
 He reck'd not.

The strongest and the fiercest spirit that fought in heaven ; now fiercer by despair ; a spirit who recks not God, nor hell ! Can any thing be uttered stronger than this ? No, language cannot express it. But imagination can conceive in the indistinctness of generalities something worse ; and the poet has supposed it, to complete the character of Moloch.

So too after that tremendous personification of death, which the critics have censured as episodic, but which in point of sublimity nothing short of inspiration ever surpassed ; when satan first meets him at the gates of hell, he sees him with surprize, but not with fear.

Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd ;
 Admir'd, not fear'd ; God and his Son except,
 Created thing nought valued he nor shunn'd.

What an idea does it convey of the Godhead, to

find it excepted as an object of fear to a spirit, unappalled at such a sight as Milton's death; and what an idea of Moloch, that even this omnipotence was no object of fear to him! Amplification by comparison proceeds upon a different principle. It resembles reasoning from the less to the greater. It begins by raising to importance an object of inferior dignity, as a point of comparison to display the superiority of that, which is intended to be amplified. So in one of Pope's imitations of Horace, to magnify his own merit as a satirist, he says

Could pensioned Boileau lash in honest strain
 Flatterers and bigots even in Louis' reign?
 Could laureate Dryden pimp and friar engage,
 Yet neither Charles nor James be in a rage?
 And I not strip the gilding off a knave,
 Unplac'd, unpension'd, no man's heir or slave?
 I will, or perish in the generous cause;
 Hear this and tremble! you, who 'scape the laws.
 Yes, while I live, no rich or noble knave
 Shall walk the world in credit to his grave.

II. 1.

Amplification by inference is the enlargement of some object entirely different from that, intended to be magnified; but which produces its effect by a process in the mind of the hearer or reader. As

examples of this species of amplification, Quintilian quotes with high applause those passages of Virgil, where, to show the immense bulk of the cyclop Polypheme, he is said to have used the trunk of a pine tree for a staff; and where, to manifest the prodigious strength of Demoleos, he is said to have pursued the flying Trojans under a coat of mail, which two men could scarcely have lifted upon their shoulders. But into what pigmies the heroes of Virgil, and even his giant Polypheme shrink, when compared with Milton's satan.

His ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views,
At evening from the top of Fesolé,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, on her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine,
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great admiral, were but a wand
He walk'd with.

Observe now that the object, first so circumstantial-ly magnified, is the moon. The object, intended to be amplified, by the poet is the person of satan.

When we are told, that his shield hung upon his shoulders like the moon, the image presented to our fancy is already great. The moon, as apparent to the naked eye, is of itself a magnificent object. But it is not large enough for Milton. It is the moon, as magnified by observation through a telescope; it is the moon, on whose globe lands, rivers, mountains, are discernible, that forms the orb, to which the shield of satan bears a resemblance. The inference must be made by the reader. What an idea is conveyed to us of a personage in human shape, who slings behind him a shield of such dimensions, as a soldier would his knapsack! The description of the spear is in just proportion with that of the shield. The object magnified is a pine tree. It is the tallest pine, hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast of some great admiral; and this object, thus extended to the utmost bounds of nature, is instantly contracted to nothing; a mere wand, in comparison with satan's spear.

The last of the forms of amplification is that of accumulating a number of incidents to produce the same effect. They exalt the object not by a scale of steady, graduated ascent, but by a collection of particles singly trifling, and gathered into a

mighty mass. But I shall give you an example of this in diminution, for it has already been remarked, that the steps are the same precisely for going down, as for going up; and the same glass is used for reducing, as for enlarging the dimensions of the object.

The most striking instance of this diminution in the thing, by accumulation of the images attending it, that I ever met with, is in Shakspeare's description of queen Mab.

She comes,

In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman;
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses, as they lie asleep;
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moon-shine's watery beams;
Her whip of cricket's bones; the lash of film;
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm,
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid.
Her chariot is an empty hazelnut,
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies coachmakers.

When, in the study of natural and experimental philosophy, we are entertained and instructed with

her demonstrations of the infinite divisibility of matter, the minuteness of its particles evades our powers of conception. Yet if it were possible to form a distinct idea of that very boundary; which parts infinitely small from nothing, I ask you whether the idea of littleness would be half so clear, so deep, so full, upon the imagination, as it is stamped by this accumulation of ideas representing objects, each of which, individually though small, is far from being among the minimis of nature?

And thus much for amplification, upon which it were easy to amplify much further. Its principal employment is in the conclusion of a discourse; but it is not confined exclusively to that part.

The same remark will apply to the excitement of the passions; upon which the less is necessary to be said here, as they have heretofore formed the subject of an entire lecture. In some modern systems of rhetoric, the very divisions of discourse are founded upon a supposed arrangement of matter, adapted successively to the understanding and to the feelings of the hearer. By this disposition the argumentative and the pathetic parts of an oration are separated from each other, as if they formed distinct divisions of the subject. I may per-

haps have repeated it too often, but you cannot have it too deeply impressed upon your minds, that classifications are merely instruments for methodising science; but are no part of the science itself. What necessity there ever was of departing from the distinct and simple divisions of Aristotle, which composed a discourse of the introduction, proposition, proof, and conclusion, I am unable to see. The line of separation between these parts is discernible to the dullest eye. They cannot be blended together without producing confusion. But sit down to write an oration with the determination to put your argument into one apartment, and your pathetic into another; and depend upon it, in the execution you will come halting off with both. Take your divisions from your subject; and you will have a torch to illumine your way. Now, as Aristotle most acutely remarks, argument is of the subject; but pathos is to the judge. They are made to be blended, and not to be separated; let feeling sharpen argument, and argument temper feeling. Their strength is in union, not in division. They are made for marriage, not for divorce.

It is not every subject, that requires or admits in its treatment the use of the pathetic. But,

when proper at all, nothing can be more obvious, than that the conclusion of the discourse is the place, where it should be applied with the most pointed energy. In judicial trials the passions, which we are directed principally here to stimulate, are indignation and compassion; the former against our adversary, the latter in favor of our party. There is in Cicero's books upon invention a long catalogue of the various sources, from which topics may be derived to touch these two springs of action in the heart of man. They may be studied to good effect; but my limits here will allow only a general reference to them.

But whether pathos be or be not admissible into the conclusion of a discourse, recapitulation can never be there out of its place. The use of this is, at the moment of parting from your hearer, to furnish him with an index or table of contents to your whole argument; to revive the colors, which you are most anxious to imprint upon his vision; but which in the process of a long speech may have faded upon his sight; and to give him a map of the regions, over which you have travelled together. Recapitulation should therefore always be short; and may be varied in its forms, by all the changes of conjecture and hypothesis. Ex-

amples of recapitulation may be found in almost all the best orations of ancient and modern times.

And here, gentlemen, we shall close our disquisitions upon the second great division of the rhetorical science; that which teaches the disposition, in which the various parts of an oration may be most conveniently arranged. To each of those regular parts, as they are enumerated by Cicero, the introduction, narration, proposition, confirmation, confutation, and conclusion, we have allotted at least one lecture; we have given one supernumerary hour to the peculiar importance of the confirmation, and one digressive excursion to the accidents of digression and transition. At this stage of our inquiries, a portion of our fellow laborers is about to leave us. While I am treating of the conclusion of a discourse, one half of the audience, to whose instruction my services are devoted, is brought to a conclusion of their academical career. Accept my thanks, gentlemen, for the attention, with which you have uniformly favored me, and for the punctuality, with which you have performed the duties, of which the superintendence has been allotted to me. As you pass from this to a theatre of higher elevation for the pursuits of science, I cannot but feel a

sentiment of regret at your departure, though mingled with that of cordial felicitation upon your advancement. Henceforth you are to unite the study of living man with that of ages expired; the observation of the present with the meditation upon the past. And so rapid is the succession of years, that you will soon find the balance of your feelings and of your duties pointing with an irresistible magnet to futurity, and the growing burthen of your hopes and wishes concentrated in the welfare of your successors upon this earthly stage; of yourselves upon that, which must succeed. Go forth then with the blessing of this your affectionate intellectual parent. Go forth, according to the common condition of your nature, to act and to suffer; and may he, in whose hands are the hearts, as well as the destinies of men, be your staff for the one, and your guide for the other. May he inspire you at every needed hour with that fortitude, which smiles at calamity; may he at every fortunate occasion fire you with that active energy, which makes opportunity success, and that purity of principle, which makes success a public or a private blessing.

As for those students, who still remain to pursue with me this extensive circumnavigation,

upon which we have embarked, how can I conclude in terms more proper, than in those lines of antiquated expression, but of cheering imagery, from the faery queene ?

Now strike your sailes, yee jolly mariners ;
For wee be come into a quiet rode,
Where wee must land some of our passengers,
And light this weary vessell of her lode.
Here she a while may make her safe abode,
Till she repaired have her tackles spent,
And want supplide ; and then again abroad
On the long voiage whereto she is bent ;
Well may she speede, and fairely finish her intent,

☞ THE above lecture was first delivered July 31, 1807. The concluding address has reference to the senior class, whose attendance on collegiate exercises terminated at that time. On the repetition of the same lecture, July 28, 1809, when another class had arrived to a similar standing, the professor's connexion also with the university was soon to be dissolved, he being then on the point of departure for Russia. In accommodation to this interesting coincidence, his concluding address was varied. From indications in the manuscript copy it may be inferred, that it was the author's intention to have omitted the original conclusion of the lecture in this publication ; but his friends, to whom the care of the work was committed, in his absence, have ventured to deviate from those indications, and have chosen to publish the lecture in its original form. The concluding address, as last delivered, will be found at the end of this volume.

LECTURE XXV.

ELOCUTION. PURITY.

WE are about to enter upon the third great division of the science of rhetoric, termed elocution. But, as well for the recollection of those, who have attended this course of lectures from its commencement, as for the information of their juniors, who are now for the first time required to give their attendance upon them, it may be necessary, before I begin upon the immediate subject, which next offers itself to our investigation, briefly to recapitulate the substance of my preceding lectures.

By the regulations of this institution, the professor was required to deliver, in a course of lectures, a system of rhetoric and oratory, founded

upon the classical theories of antiquity. The outline of this system was prescribed with a minuteness, which I have in general closely observed; and from which I should not readily have swerved, had it even differed in many particulars from my own views of the subject. The distinction between rhetoric and oratory had not indeed been formally marked by any of the ancient writers; but it had manifestly been taken by the founder of this establishment; and it appeared well calculated to illuminate the career, which we were to traverse. I considered rhetoric as significant of the theory, and oratory of the practice; rhetoric as the science, oratory as the art. Although the consideration of these must necessarily to a certain extent be blended together, and they must reciprocally reflect light upon each other, I thought it most expedient to treat them successively and distinctly. Departing from this great original principle, my subject opened itself in two great divisions; under the first of which I have endeavoured to give you as correct a general idea of the ancient theories of public speaking, as I have been able to collect from their profoundest and most ingenious writers. But as knowledge is principally valuable for the uses, to which it can be applied, I have been anxious, in

making you acquainted with the rhetorical principles of antiquity, to explain and point out how far they may be still adapted to the purposes of real life among ourselves, and to the occasions, which may arise in the course of your own future progress in the world. My plan therefore has necessarily been different from that of all the modern writers upon rhetoric and belles-lettres. It has been partly didactic, and partly historical. Partly to unfold to you, as matter of fact, the precepts of Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Longinus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and the rest; and partly to show how much of that doctrine may still be suited to us, amid the changes of language, of manners, of religion, and of government, which in the lapse of ages have been effected by the ever-revolving hand of time. In pursuance of this plan, after an historical and critical review of the principal ancient rhetoricians, I adopted, as the basis of our inquiries relative to the science, the primary divisions, into which it had been distributed by them. These are known by the denominations of invention, disposition, elocution, memory, and action or pronunciation.

The first two of these heads, invention and disposition, have been largely discussed in the com-

pass of eighteen lectures. Under that of invention were considered the topics, internal and external ; the state of a controversy ; the arguments proper to demonstrative, deliberative, judicial, and pulpit discourses, respectively ; the character and address of a finished orator ; and the use and excitation of the passions ; objects, which had all been specially recommended in the regulations, and upon which I have enlarged in proportion to the importance, which had been bestowed upon them, or which they appeared to deserve.

In like obedience to the same injunctions, we have treated, under the head of disposition, of the properties and uses of each part of a regular discourse, moulded on the forms of antiquity. The introduction, narration, proposition, confirmation, confutation, and conclusion, have been in due succession submitted to our scrutiny ; nor have the occasional incidents of digression, transition, and amplification, been neglected, or failed to receive their proper notice.

Thus far we have been implicitly governed by the regulations. The principle of consistency now furnishes an additional motive for continuing in faithful servitude to them. They have directed, that under the head of elocution we should “ first

treat generally and largely of elegance, composition, and dignity, and of their respective requisites; and then particularly of the several species of style, as the low, middle, sublime, &c. and of their distinguishing qualities with respect both to the thoughts and the words, illustrating the same by proper examples; and likewise of the various style of epistles, dialogues, history, poetry, and orations.”

Such is the copious table of contents, given us to be filled up, while descanting upon the general department of rhetoric, termed elocution.

A moment's attention to these particulars, thus included under that general term, might supersede the necessity of repeating what I have heretofore very explicitly stated, that by elocution is here understood an idea quite different from that, in which the same word is now commonly used, and which is affixed to it by the modern English rhetoricians. Sheridan, Walker, and others, who have published professed treatises upon elocution, mean by that word the mode of speaking, or delivery; the same thing, which by the ancients was understood under the name of action. But in the language of Cicero and Quintilian elocution refers to the writer, and not to the speaker; to the diction, and

not to the delivery. To this meaning of the term I shall uniformly adhere, and would wish you to bear it in mind through the progress of our inquiries.

By the definitions of Cicero, which we adopted at the commencement of our course,

Invention was described as the discovery by meditation of those things, which by their truth or verisimilitude gave probability to the cause.

Disposition, as the orderly arrangement of the things invented. And

Elocution, as the application of proper words and sentences to the materials of invention.

In terms still more concise invention may be said to furnish the matter, disposition the order, and elocution the manner, for the composition of a public discourse. For the composition, and not for the delivery; to that we have not yet arrived. Of that we shall hereafter speak under the head of action.

Under this head of elocution then I am to begin by treating generally and largely of elegance, composition, and dignity, and of their respective requisites. And here again the first thing indispensable to be done is, by an explanation of the meaning affixed to these words, to guard you

against misconceptions, into which you would inevitably fall by receiving them in their common acceptations.

Should you be told, without further explanation of the terms, that elocution consists of elegance, composition, and dignity, would not your first sentiment be, that here was an association of words, which in their aggregate conveyed no distinct meaning? And after pausing to disentangle the confusion, in which they would involve the mind, would you not next remark the incongruity of their combination? Elegance and dignity may be conceived, as qualities of composition. They are merely the properties of the work. Composition is the act of the workman. The three specific constituent expressions do not belong to the same general term. It is as if you should say of a portrait, that it consisted of beauty, coloring, and the painter's brush; or as if, in speaking of the *Æneid*, you should say its poetry consisted of harmony, fiction, and Virgil's hand-writing.

This combination of elegance, composition, and dignity, as forming the constituent parts of elocution, appears to have been first made by the author of the rhetorics to Herennius, attributed commonly to Cicero. From him they have been

adopted by succeeding rhetoricians; and some modern translators, commentators, and rhetorical writers, have perplexed themselves, and drawn very absurd deductions from inattention to the peculiar meaning, which that writer annexed to these expressions.

The peculiar subject, which we consider under the head of elocution, is words. It is the wording of the discourse. And in the employment of the words, with which our thoughts must be embodied, our attention must naturally be directed to three things; their choice, their arrangement, and their decoration. You are to consider what words you shall select, how they shall be arranged, and how they shall be adorned. This is the exact meaning of elegance, composition, and dignity. They have all reference to the labor of the artist, and not to the character of the performance. Elegance signifies precisely the same thing with choice. We have been so long and so constantly habituated to receive these words, as the signs of ideas widely remote from each other, that you may perhaps find some difficulty to reconcile them in your minds, as synonymous. A retrospect however upon their etymology will immediately show, that they are descended from one common

stock, and are of close affinity. The derivation of elegance, *elegantia*, is direct from *eligo*, to choose; and in Latin the noun had probably not deviated from the primitive idea, as it has done in our language.

Nor is this meaning altogether unexampled, as applied even to the modern English. There is in the *Paradise Lost* a passage, where the word *elegant* is obviously employed in this sense. After tasting of the forbidden fruit, and while laboring under the intoxication of its first effects, Adam says to his partner in guilt,

Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And *elegant*, of sapience no small part;
Since to each meaning, savor we apply,
And palate call judicious.

ix. 1017.

But I believe this passage stands alone in English literature, as respects that meaning of the word; and we see that Milton himself thought an explanation necessary, in the very midst of an epic poem, for so using it.

As elegance means here no more than choice, so composition, adhering equally to its primitive derivation, signifies only putting together. When the words are chosen they must be put together;

and the object of composition, in this subordinate division, is to furnish rules and principles, directing how they are to be put together.

Both these particulars belong strictly to the department of grammar; and Cornificius expressly refers the student to the grammarian for the details of their use. But dignity, or, as I have supposed it would more properly be called, decoration, embraces the whole theory of figurative language. Tropes and figures unquestionably constitute all the ornaments of discourse; and in the estimation of the writer, from whom this classification is borrowed, they also constituted its dignity. The word elegance, as commonly understood by us, might perhaps be applied to this part of the subject, since nothing serves to give so much an appearance of elegance to an oratorical performance, as a lively and judicious application of figures. But in the rhetorics to Herennius elegance has nothing to do with the metaphorical part of a discourse. His elegance is exclusively limited to the choice of words; and his principles of selection he very explicitly lays down under the appellations of purity and perspicuity.

Having thus ascertained with precision the force of the terms elegance, composition, and dig-

nity, the incongruity of their association immediately vanishes. The choice, the collocation, and the embellishment of the words, in which the performances of an orator may be clothed, are not only proper subjects of consideration to the student of rhetorical elocution, but they are naturally viewed in connexion with each other. They exhibit no heterogeneous mixture of dissimilar elements, no unnatural concatenation of materials from earth, air, fire, and flood, to compose one and the same body. They no longer mingle into inextricable confusion the cause, the means, and effect; the toil of the laborer, and the properties of his work. They are the several distinct, but not disconnected parts of one consistent whole, and comprise within their just extent every particular of inquiry respecting the language, which it is the purpose of a public orator to wing with persuasion.

Elegance then, thus explained, consists of purity and perspicuity. Or the rules, by which a speaker should choose his words, are first, that they be pure English; and secondly, that they clearly indicate his meaning.

The character of these subdivisions would of itself be sufficient to prove what was meant by that

elegance, which they are said to constitute. If by elegance were meant that sort of beauty, which the term in its common acceptation imports, neither purity nor perspicuity would suffice, singly or combined, for its production. The object in review is naked words; single words in their plainest literal sense; without reference to their arrangement in sentences, for that follows under the article of composition; without respect to the graces they may derive from metaphorical ornament, for that is included in the discussion of dignity. To these solitary elements of thought elegance, in its ordinary sense, never can be attributed; but choice may, and must. To speak of a word as elegant were absurd, did we not mean by that epithet only to characterize the word as eligible.

To put these principles in a preceptive form then, we must say to the oratorical student, in the selection of your words, you must take care that they be pure and perspicuous.

Still these are terms too general in their nature, too vague in their signification, to answer the purposes of real instruction. It will be necessary to enter further into detail, in order to explain fully to your satisfaction, first the full import of the words; secondly the reason of the laws, which prescribe

them, as the tests of preference in the choice of words ; and thirdly the means of complying with their requisites. And to preserve that purity and perspicuity, so peculiarly necessary when treating of these qualities themselves, it will be most advisable to take them into consideration distinctly and in succession. Purity, as applied to words, in its most extensive sense, includes two very different objects, having relation one to morality, the other to grammar. It is however only of grammatical purity, that the rhetoricians treat ; and the author of the rhetorics to Herennius considers purity as consisting of latinity and propriety.

With regard to the first of these properties, it is almost superfluous to remark, the latinity can be pure only for the use of those, who are to speak in Latin. The principles however are alike applicable to all other languages. The Roman writers make latinity the principal standard of their purity ; as Aristotle and the other Greek rhetoricians, in delivering the same rules, call it hellenism. On the same principle our oratorical purity must consist in the choice of words purely English.

The rigor of this rule was originally meant only to operate in exclusion of words from foreign languages ; and it was adhered to with so much

fastidiousness by the ancient Greeks, that they denominated every departure from it a barbarism. This term in itself did not perhaps carry so much harshness with it in their estimation, as it now conveys. It meant no more than that the word was foreign or of foreign extraction; but it partook of that angry temper, which in those early ages of the world made every nation, of whose history we have any records extant, behold an enemy in every stranger. To the Greeks every nation, other than themselves, were barbarians; and every word, which came from any other fountain than the native Greek, was a barbarism. Thus the barbarism was always a relative term, used in contradistinction to the hellenism. By the former was understood a term of foreign, by the latter a word of indigenous growth.

From the Greeks the Romans borrowed all their knowledge of the liberal arts; from them they learned even the cultivation of their own language. Until after they had made the conquest of Greece, they were in every sense of the word barbarians, although Pyrrus confessed, what he had found to his cost, that they had nothing barbarous in their discipline.

They adopted all the principles of the fine arts

from the Grecian theories; and in their turn passed the proscription of barbarism upon every nation, other than their own. From this sentence they had however the justice or the modesty to except the Greeks, whom they always acknowledged as their superiors and masters in every art and science, save only that of war.

One of the necessary consequences of this course of events was, that, in borrowing all these graces and embellishments of the human character, they were compelled to adopt with them the vocabularies appropriated to them. Thus almost every expression, having reference to the liberal arts in the Latin language, is of Greek origin. When they came to apply therefore that rule of Grecian philology, which denominates every word of foreign extraction a barbarism, they were obliged to make an express exception in favor of words derived from the Greek. To the hellenism of the Greeks they found a corresponding term in their own latinity. But when they made the application of its correlative term, the barbarism, they limited its rigor to the words of all other languages besides the Greek, which, by a sort of general indulgence, they admitted to the freedom of the city. This indulgence is ex-

plicitly recognised by Horace in his art of poetry. A barbarism therefore among the Romans was not precisely a counterpart to latinity ; but to a community of latinity and hellenism. Every word, not derived from one of the two languages, was a barbarism.

The term barbarism has also been adopted by the nations of modern Europe ; though in its application to their languages it cannot with propriety bear the same meaning, which it held either in Greece or at Rome. It were for example absurd to extend the Grecian doctrine of universal exclusion against foreign words to a language like the English, constituted as it is of twenty different dialects. The English language, like some celebrated rivers, flows from so many different fountains, that it is almost impossible to determine which of the springs is entitled to the privilege of being styled its source. The ancient Celtic, the Teutonic, the Greek, the Hebrew, the Latin, the Arabic, and the modern French, have all contributed plentiful streams to this deep and rapid flood. Conquest, commerce, religion, and science, have all concurred to enrich, as well as to complicate the modes of British articulation. The Saxon, the Dane, and the Norman, successively engraved

their forms of speech on the cliffs of Albion with the point of the sword. With the fragrance of Arabian aromatics the breeze of commerce has wafted the echoes of Arabian speech. The hallowed secrets of Indostan have ceased to be silent. The impenetrable walls of China have fallen before the magic of the human voice. The savage and silent deserts of the western hemisphere have resounded to accumulate the treasures of English utterance. Its liberality of admission has been almost unbounded ; and if an individual from every distinct tribe of human beings, scattered over the face of the globe, were to assemble in some city, where the English is the predominating language, there would not be one, but would hear in the discourse of its inhabitants some sounds familiar to his ear.

Of such a language it would be ridiculous to prescribe, as a rule of its grammar or its rhetoric, that every word of foreign origin should be accounted a barbarism. The principle of exclusion can neither be universal, as among the Greeks, nor with a single exception, as among the Romans. To say simply of a word, that it is not English, is by no means to declare it a barbarism ; and other rules of purity must be prescribed, if purity be a character at all attributable to the language.

To settle that standard of purity has been an object of much perplexity, and of laborious investigation to many of the modern British grammarians. But their success has not always been equal to their industry. The subject is handled very largely and systematically by Dr. Campbell in his philosophy of rhetoric, a work of great learning and ingenuity; but to whose doctrine of purity, for the choice of words in English writing, I cannot altogether subscribe. He resolves all language into fashion, and finds no other standard of purity, than use or custom.

But in adopting use, under a variety of modifications, which he finds it necessary to direct, as the sole and universal standard of purity, we are in danger of cramping too much the liberties of language and the powers of oratory. This principle, if carried through in its rigor, would be destructive to all improvement in language. If no word can properly be used, which has not been used before, long used by the generality of the nation, and the majority of eminent writers, language would be in a state of perpetual and irreparable decay. There seems a fundamental inconsistency in the principle itself. It supposes a long, settled, universal practice of usages, which never could commence. It

holds up a purity to be compounded of impurities multiplied. The first time a word is used, by this rule, it must be impure. The second, third, and fourth time, it still remains impure, though still in a lessening degree. In proportion to the number of its repetitions it grows continually cleaner, until by obtruding its pollution upon the whole nation and their best writers for a series of years, it clarifies at length into crystal. It reverses all our ideas of moral and physical purity. Its virtue consists in the aggravation of its offences. It swells transgression into rectitude ; bleaches as it stales ; and can lay claim to the honors of spotless innocence only from the moment, when it has become common as the air.

I believe the simplest and best rule of oratorical purity may be derived from the purpose of the speaker. That choice of words must be the best, which most effectually conveys his idea to the mind of his hearer. The most indispensable of all requisites for him is to be understood ; for which purpose he must use those words, which to the understandings of his auditory will be the signs of the same ideas, which they represent in his own. All the rules of exclusion, recommended by the grammarians, may be deduced from this principle.

It repels the introduction of new words, because their meaning cannot be understood without an explanation. It discards old words, because their signification has escaped from the memory of men. It bars the door against foreign words, because the generality of mankind speak but one language ; and it rejects those expressions of limited circulation, which blossom and decay with the lapse of a season ; which range only within a narrow compass of place, or which belong to the glossaries of particular trades and professions. But the exceptions, when every one of these squeamish scruples may be set aside, are so numerous, that they out-number the rule. The speaker in popular assemblies must often relax the muscles of his grammatical prudery, and liberally lacerate his discourse with phraseology familiar to his audience, though restricted within a narrow channel of circulation. The orator in the pulpit, in the legislature, and at the bar, must employ in each of those scenes a multitude of expressions, appropriated to the spot ; there absolutely necessary ; unsuitable every where else. New ideas may claim of right the vehicle of new words. Obsolete expressions may without offence be roused from a slumber, which has been mistaken for death. Naturaliza-

tion may be made easy to foreign terms, upon the fair condition of useful service; and the only sentence of eternal banishment from his lips, to which a speaker should doom any word significant of thought, is that which moral purity requires.

Immodest words admit of no defence,

For want of decency is want of sense.

Obtain then a command over the language, in which you are to speak, as extensive as possible. When discoursing in public, let your choice of words be neither tainted with indelicacy, nor tarnished with affectation. Let your word bear the express image of your thought, and transmit it complete to your hearer's mind. You need then give yourself very little concern to inquire for the parish register of its nativity. Whether new or old, whether of Saxon or of Grecian parentage, it will perform its duties to your satisfaction, without at all impairing your reputation for purity of speech.

LECTURE XXVI.

PERSPICUITY.

IN the last lecture, delivered by me from this place, I gave you a general idea of what is understood by elocution, when considered as the third of the primary divisions of the rhetorical science. I explained to you the meaning of the terms elegance, composition, and dignity, when associated as the constituent parts of elocution ; and made it manifest, I hope to your satisfaction, that by these words no more was intended, than the collection of rules for the choice, the array, and the embellishment of the orator's words.

The laws of rhetorical elegance, or the characters, which ought to govern in the choice of words, from the universal concurrence of the writers, an-

cient and modern, were stated to be purity and perspicuity ; the former of which, standing upon grounds somewhat different in the modern languages, and especially our own, from those, which formed its ancient foundations, I traced through its variations and modifications from the inflexible rigor of Greek exclusion, down to the almost indiscriminate license of English facility. The consideration of perspicuity comes next before us ; which I propose to treat in the same order, which was pursued with regard to its cooperating attribute, purity, by explaining, first what is intended by the term ; secondly the reasons, upon which its influence is founded ; and thirdly the means, by which it is to be obtained.

1. By analyzing the word itself we shall immediately discover, that it is itself figurative ; and borrowed from the operations of the sight. The combination is Latin ; *per aspicio*, to look through. Perspicuity then is the quality of being easily seen through. It is according to Quintilian the first virtue of eloquence. For every species of written composition it is doubtless a virtue of the highest order ; but of public speaking it is the vital spark. It is the property, by means of which the orator makes himself understood by his

audience ; and a discourse, deficient in perspicuity, is just so far as that defect extends like an harangue to a multitude of one nation in the language of another.

In the communication of ideas from mind to mind, by the means of writing or of speech, there is necessarily implied a double operation ; the operation of the speaker or writer, and that of the hearer or reader. The object of the former is to impart, and that of the latter to receive the idea. The act of receiving is an operation less laborious, than that of imparting thought ; yet is it such an act, as can by no means be performed in a passive state of mind. The communication of ideas in a continued discourse must always be imperfect ; but of that which is written the reader may take his own time to search out the meaning. He can review, compare, and combine, at his leisure ; giving time for the memory and the judgment to come in aid of perception. But oratory, considered as such, as independent of the pen and of the press, has no such resources. A long and complicated succession of ideas must be imparted, for the reception and arrangement of which the hearer has only the time necessary for the speaker to deliver them in speech. He must catch the thought,

as it flies on the wings of its words. He has not a moment for deliberation ; not an opportunity for revision. The sound of the words, in which one thought is invested, still vibrates in his ear, and he must be prepared for the reception of its successor. However acute his perception, however retentive his memory, however capacious his intelligence, it is impossible, with the ordinary faculties allotted to human nature, that every idea of a long discourse should be completely received in so short a space of time. If some few extraordinary examples might be adduced as exceptions, I think they would appear rather as memory of sounds, than as reception of ideas.

There is indeed a material distinction between the imperfect reception and the imperfect retention of ideas. Every sentence of an oration may be well understood at the time of its utterance, and yet none of its hearers will be able to repeat any considerable portion of it afterwards. This defect being inherent not in the discourse of the speaker, but in the memory of the auditor, cannot be remedied by any perspicuity ; the disorders of vision cannot be healed by any lucidness in the object. We are not to inquire, because we cannot provide for those imperfections of communication,

which are imputable only to the receiver. It is the interest and the duty of the speaker to facilitate, by every possible assistance that he can afford, the task of the hearer ; and to this nothing can contribute aid more effectual, than perspicuity.

The term is equivalent to transparency ; and means that we should present our ideas in so clear a light, that they may be completely received by the minds of the auditory, as natural objects are perceived, with all the advantages of daylight, through the medium of a cloudless atmosphere. To the clear perception of any material object three things are indispensable ; first the object itself ; secondly light, as the medium of vision ; and thirdly unobstructed space between the eye and the object. Apply these principles by analogy to the public discourse ; the object itself is the idea in the speaker's mind ; the light is the words and sentences, by means of which he attempts its transmission to the minds of his auditors ; and the unobstructed space is the absence of every other object or idea, which by intervention might intercept the communication of his thought. If the speaker has in his own mind no distinct idea, there can be no perspicuity ; because there will be no object to be seen. The discourse

will be sound without sense ; vox et præterea nihil. The language will be unintelligible.

2. If the words are not chosen with such judgment, as to bear in the hearer's mind the same meaning, which they have in his own, there will be a failure of light. The object is there ; but it cannot be clearly discerned, because the medium of vision is imperfect. The discourse will be obscure.

3. If the words selected should be ill chosen, and present another idea besides that, which he means to convey, the sight of the object is intercepted by a foreign substance, or doubled by an opaque vapor, exhibiting the object as double. It produces an optical illusion. The discourse is ambiguous. And hence arise all the offences against perspicuity ; the unintelligible, the obscure, and the ambiguous ; or in other words the no-meaning, the half-meaning, and the double meaning. The causes of these defects may be traced either to the imperfections of the speaker, or to those, which are inherent in human language.

Articulate speech eventually terminates in a language altogether of convention. But words are the representatives immediately of ideas, and

mediately of things. If you name a horse or a tree, the sound of the words can never convey to my mind the ideas represented by them in yours, unless, by some previous reference to the things, I have been made to understand the connexion between them, existing in your mind. If then you have a new idea, which you are desirous of communicating to me, you must not only use a new word, or an old word with a new meaning, for the purpose of transferring it to my mind, but you must give me, by some reference to the thing, the connecting link between your articulate sound and the object you intend by it to express. If the thing, represented by the word, be susceptible of immediate exhibition to the senses, the natural and ordinary way of transmitting the idea is to expose the object to the sense, and to articulate the word at the same time. This is the manner, in which children and foreigners learn the first rudiments of a language ; and it may be remarked, that the coincidence of speech and gesture to exhibit ideas remains an universal custom among the nations, which speak the primitive languages. Very small however is the portion of language, which can be thus made manifest to the senses. The original stock of words, which could thus have been fur-

nished to any language, must have been very small. It has been attempted, and perhaps in some degree successfully, to trace all the modern languages of Europe to a very small number of such radical terms, and to account even for them ; that is, to show that they were not arbitrary, but were dictated by the natural impression of the object upon the physical organs of the first speaker. However this may be, we must suppose a certain number of these articulate sounds to have been uttered and understood, until by common consent the sound was agreed upon, as the common representative of the thing, before we can have the basis of a language, after the confusion of Babel. When once the practice had made the meaning of words conventional, two new and copious sources arose for the multiplication of words ; imitation and association. Instead of fixing the sense of the sound by a reference to the object itself, its meaning was indicated by the resemblance of the object to some other substance, already familiarized to the hearer's mind. If the resemblance were of one physical object to another, the new word was formed by the process of imitation ; if the resemblance were only of attributes, it was produced by means of the association of ideas. But from these two

sources flowed at the same time the greatest imperfections of speech, and the most dangerous shades to perspicuity. From imperfect imitation came that multiplicity of senses, in which the same word is so frequently and often so improperly applied; and from imperfect association most of the obscurities, which are so apt to darken all figurative language. To illustrate this observation, let us take for example the words gun-powder and printing.

Gun-powder is a substance perhaps as universally known, as any thing that could be mentioned. It has been in use (in too common use) among men throughout the world, between four and five centuries; yet I know not any one language, in which it claims an appropriate name. In all the languages of Europe it goes by the name of powder; which it shares with a thousand other substances, all so different from it, that when designated by that word alone, without some accessory term to note its destination, the chances are an hundred to one, that it would be misunderstood, and taken for something else. In order to distinguish it from all other powders, the word is usually combined with some accessory term, which limits the boundaries of its meaning. But in different

languages this accessory is drawn from different attributes. The English call it gun-powder ; and the French cannon-powder ; which points it out by association with the instruments, from which it is most commonly projected. The Germans shoot-powder, by connecting it, not with the instruments, but with the action, by which its chief operation is produced. In Latin it has been termed nitrous-powder, by combination with one of the ingredients, of which it is composed. Yet not one of these terms conveys a complete idea of the thing. Neither guns nor cannon are the sole depositaries of its fury ; nor is it even exclusively destined to the act of shooting. Still less significant is the Latin term, since the powder of nitre is no more gun-powder, than the powder of sulphur, or the powder of charcoal.

A similar observation may be applied to the art of printing ; which was invented somewhat more than three hundred years ago. Who its inventor was is a subject of warm and doubtful controversy. Of its importance to the world there is no question. But it has no name. To print is a term of great generality ; meaning the effect of an application of one physical substance to another. To print a book was a common form of expression

long before Dr. Faustus was suspected of an illicit commerce with the prince of darkness for having discovered this perpetual fountain of light. Three thousand years before that time one of the most venerable personages of antiquity, a character never suspected of any collusive intercourse with the spirit reprobate, the pious and faithful patriarch Job, in the midst of his trials and distresses exclaimed, " Oh, that my words were now written ! Oh, that they were printed in a book ! " * From which it is apparent, that the name, always applied to one of the mechanical modes of book-making, was adapted to the process of Koster's invention without the slightest intimation of any thing like a new discovery. Perhaps if a reflecting man were required to point out the two incidents, which have had the most extensive influence upon the history of nations and the happiness of private life, since the foundation of christianity, he would name gun-powder and printing. Their invention was nearly cotemporaneous. They effected a total revolution in the management of the two great engines, which operate upon human action, force and reason. To the application of physical force gun-powder gave a concentration of activity and

* Job, xix. 23.

of energy, which had never before been known. To the operation of intellectual power printing added the advantages of multiplicity and dissemination. By the composition of gun-powder matter seemed sublimated into soul. By the process of printing soul derived new vigor by the vesture of matter. Gun-powder and printing, if they have not added to the laws of nature, have at least operated as a revisal of her code. Archimedes could not move the world, because he wanted a place to stand on. Gun-powder and printing have accomplished the task, by a more compendious process, without needing the stand, which he required, and without using the fulcrum or the lever, which he had. Yet these two things, thus wonderful in themselves, thus unbounded in their influence and consequences, have never received from mankind the common compliment of a name.

When ideas originate among a people speaking one language, and are afterwards transmitted to a nation, using another, it is natural that they should carry with them the words, in which they are clothed. Thus the study of natural and moral philosophy, as well as the theory and practice of all the fine arts, having been borrowed by the Romans from Greece, poured upon the Latin lan-

guage such a flood of Greek words, that from the time of the Ciceronian age the Latin seems to be little more than a dialect of the Greek. The same influence has pervaded all the languages of modern Europe. To the Greeks we are obliged to resort for the first fountains of all profound science, and all liberal art; and from their language we are compelled to borrow all the words relating to such subjects. A striking proof of this may be furnished from the very science, upon which I am discoursing, and from the multitude of words, which I have been called to explain in the course of these lectures, derived either directly or mediately from the Greek. But it is still more remarkable that modern philosophy, even when exploring regions of science never accessible to the Greeks, still has recourse to them for the names of all her new discoveries. We may instance especially chemistry and botany; sciences, with regard to which the researches of modern times have much increased the fund of human knowledge.

The number of different plants, growing upon the surface of the earth, amounts to about ten thousand. Of these a very inadequate proportion were specifically known and distinguished by name among the ancients. The principal object and

merit of the Linnean system, now so fashionable in the world, is that of having discovered marks of discrimination and of coincidence, by which this multitude of vegetable productions could be so methodised, that every species and variety of plants should have its appropriate name. To this end a multitude of new words became necessary, equal to that of the things, thus designated. It was the creation of almost an entire language. But Linneus could devise no better expedient, than to adopt the Greek language as the basis of his new dialect ; and his whole nomenclature consists of Greek words in combination ; each part of which had an original signification of its own, far remote from the new idea, with which it was to be associated, but leading to it by some fanciful analogy, traced by the fertile imagination of the author.

Precisely the same course was pursued by Lavoisier, the founder of the modern system of chemistry. He carried the analysis of matter to a degree of refinement so much more minute, than natural philosophy had ever before found practicable, that he discovered a multitude of substances, which all previous investigation had found too subtle for the detection of the senses. He decompos-

ed substances, which under the ancient doctrines of philosophy had passed for elements, not susceptible of decomposition. His new materials however wanted names ; and like Linneus he drew for them upon the common stock of the Greek language. Thus the sexual combinations of Linneus and the chemical separation of Lavoisier are alike exhibited in Grecian attire. The loves of the plants must murmur in the same dialect, which alone can sound the dirge over the dissolution of water. Neither the nuptials of the blossom nor the generations of the gas can be accomplished, but under Grecian names. The pistilla and the antheræ are metamorphosed into Athenian men and women ; the vital and mephitic ingredients of the atmosphere become generators of acid, and destroyers of life ; but the marriage and the divorce, the generation and destruction, though never until within half a century known to man, have found no name, by which they could walk the world, without having recourse to the language of Demosthenes and of Homer.

To these causes, upon which the scantiness of time rather than of matter forbids me from farther enlarging, must be ascribed many of the imperfections of communication, inherent in the nature of

human speech. The deficiencies imputable to the speaker are generally still greater, and may arise either from ignorance or inaptitude; from perturbation of intellect or stagnation of utterance; from depravity of taste or from darkness of design. As a general result it may be stated, that the no-meaning or unintelligible is always imputable to the speaker; the double-meaning or ambiguous, commonly to the language; and the half-meaning or obscure occasionally to either, and sometimes to both.

A speaker may be unintelligible either for want of distinct ideas, or of proper expressions. No man can give what he has not. Indistinct conception never can possess distinct communication. This is indeed generally considered as the sole cause of deficient perspicuity. When the idea in the mind is clear and definite, the words for conveying it commonly present themselves, without any toilsome search. But this is not universally the case. A free command of language is not invariably the attendant upon accuracy of intellect. And there are even examples of shrewd and active minds, united with facility of speech in persons, whose discourses have been remarkably unintelligible. This was particularly the character

of Oliver Cromwell, of whom the historian Hume observes, that the sagacity of his actions and the absurdity of his discourse form the most prodigious contrast, that ever was known.

The unintelligible sometimes results from affectation of sublimity, and excessive attention to the sound. There is something so pleasing in the mere music of harmonious articulation, that combinations of words are employed, which have no substantial meaning, but with which the speaker and hearer both rest contented, because they enjoy the gratification of the ear, and never take the trouble of scrutinizing the thought. This species of nonsense is more frequent in poetry than in public speaking.

Of the double-meaning, or ambiguity, the most frequent cause is equivocation, or the use of a word, which with propriety may bear two different senses. I said it was most commonly imputable to the defects inherent in the language; and have endeavoured to point out its origin, the practice of applying old words to the conveyance of new ideas, and the consequent multiplicity of meanings elicited from the same sounds. There are however two very different kinds of equivocation, which are used with design. The first is the em-

ployment of a word in one sense, with the intention that the hearer shall receive it in another.

This is one of the vilest modifications of falsehood; but it was taught among the doctrines of the Jesuits; was found among the answers of ancient oracles, among the heathens; and was sometimes practised most disingenuously by the Romans in the interpretation of their treaties. The other is a lighter and more trivial form, not used for any purpose of deception, but to amuse and surprise, by connecting the word in one sense with an idea, formed by its combination in another. These are merely the subsidies, which wit borrows from buffoonery. They terminate in quibbles, conundrums, and puns; cross-readings, ship-news, and mistakes of the press. It has long been decided by the grave tribunals of criticism, that in all this there is no genuine wit; but they are the spoilt children of genius. They are ranked by Quintilian among the figures of speech; nor is it easy to see why they have been degraded from that rank, any more than other tropes or figures, acknowledged to exist alone in the words. To exclude them systematically from the discourses of an orator is a severity, to which I am not inclined; but to seek them with much assiduity were an idle

waste of industry. But the ambiguities, against which rhetoric raises her voice, are different from either of these. They are the fruits of ignorance or inattention, and not of design. Her precepts against them are meant to guard not against intended deceit, but against possible misconceptions.

The half-meaning or obscure was the third of the offences against perspicuity, which I have noticed ; and this may arise from a great variety of causes. Sometimes from the defect of the language, when it does not furnish the words precisely adapted to the speaker's ideas ; and sometimes from the design of the speaker not to disclose his whole idea, but to leave part of it to be formed by the imagination of the hearer.

There have been periods in the literary history of most cultivated languages, when obscurity has been estimated an accomplishment ; when a writer has been admired in proportion to the quantity of his meaning, which he did not express ; and when style was little more than a trial of skill between the writer and his reader. The earliest examples of this fashion of composition are found among the Latin classics of the silver age, who wrote under the harrow of the early Roman em-

perors. They have been imitated by many of the most eminent modern writers, both French and English. But Seneca, Martial, Juvenal, Persius, and Tacitus, had an apology for their obscurities, which the modern writers of dark sayings and sententious riddles cannot plead for themselves. In the times when they lived, a man, who ventured to open all his thoughts, the next day might receive an intimation to open all his veins. Distinction of every kind was an irredeemable crime. Treachery crept into intimacies of friendship; into the bosom of domestic life. The confidence in the ties of kindred and of personal attachment, which constitutes the charm or the consolation of human existence, was dissolved. Every man of note was watched by a spy, in the guest at his table; in the partner of his bed. Every step was tracked; every word was registered. In such a state of things the mind was compelled to seek a sepulchre in concealment, or a varnish of disguise. Dissimulation became the prevailing characteristic of manners, and obscurity the excellence of style. Between that natural tendency to expansion, which is at all times the property of thought, and that effort of suppression, dictated by the instinct of self-preservation, was generated this dark, enig-

metrical fashion of speech, which unveils itself by halves, and makes the hearer of the discourse perform half the labor of its composition. Once introduced, it soon fascinates by its very obliquity. It flatters alike the vanity both of the orator and of his hearer. The one exults in the consciousness of a cunning mind, from the construction of a stratagem. He prides himself in the darkness of his conceptions, and glories in the mysteries of his meaning. The hearer assumes insensibly the practice of delving for precious ores of meditation, and gratulates his own sagacity for the depth of his detections. The taste for the beautiful simplicity of nature becomes vitiated. The attention of the hearer deserts the sentiment, to fasten upon the expression ; and as we are told was actually the case in the days of Quintilian, no public discourse can aspire to success, unless it stand in need of a translation.

These are perhaps the principal causes of those imitations, which in the literature of modern times have occasionally appeared of this species of style. It is a fashion, which for a time gives a false glare of reputation to those, who carry it to the utmost excess ; but, as instability is the essential character of all corruption, the public taste is

never steady to any particular stage of decay. The fashion therefore never lasts long; and the riddle-writers, after glittering for a day in the sunshine of favor, pass from the library to the lumber-room, and thenceforth delight only the moths and the mice.

Obscurity often proceeds from want of attention in the speaker; and not unfrequently from a want of patience to assign to every idea its rightful word. So much more rapid is the action of thought than that of utterance, that a careless speaker will not allow himself time to articulate his whole idea. From every sentence, which they pronounce, some material word will be omitted; their opinions are all emitted in fragments; and as this over-haste commonly induces some confusion of mind, as well as of elocution, it is not easy for the hearer to supply the words, which have been left out.

The violations of perspicuity are as great, and perhaps more frequent, from defective arrangement, than from ill selected words. But this will more properly form the subject of our future consideration. To sum up all that has been said, in this and my last lecture, on that purity and perspicuity, which constitute oratorical elegance, I

can only say, that if in public discourse you can always make choice of such words, as will convey effectually to the minds of your audience your meaning, your whole meaning, and nothing but your meaning, you will fairly be entitled to the character, and unquestionably obtain the reputation of an elegant speaker.

LECTURE XXVII.

COMPOSITION. ORDER.

IN returning to the pursuit of our inquiries concerning the science of rhetoric, after so long an interval as that, which has elapsed since I had last the pleasure of addressing you from this place, it may be necessary to remind you at what stage of our investigation we were arrested; as that must naturally be the goal, from which we are now to start anew.

The branch of the science, upon which we had just engaged, was elocution; involving all the principles, which should govern the choice, the arrangement, and the decoration of the words, in which a public discourse must be clothed.

Elocution, you will recollect, in the language of the ancient rhetoricians consists of elegance, composition, and dignity. My two last lectures were devoted to the purpose of explaining to you what was intended by the elegance of rhetorical elocution, and in pointing out the means, by which it may most effectually be attained.

Having examined the general rules, upon which words are to be selected, the next object, which solicits our attention, is to ascertain how they are to be put together. The word composition is in Johnson's dictionary explained by twelve different significations, neither of which is equivalent precisely to the sense, in which we are here to receive it. But we shall find its meaning determined with sufficient accuracy in its etymology. Composition is merely the act of putting together; and when words are the subject matter, in reference to which the term is applied, we readily perceive why the consideration of composition immediately succeeds that of elegance. When the words are chosen, they must be put together.

The collocation of words was deemed by the Greek and Roman rhetoricians among the most important parts of the science. One of the most accomplished critics of antiquity, Dionysius of

Halicarnassus, has left a treatise upon the subject, equal in length to the whole three books of Aristotle's rhetoric. Cicero has been equally minute in his attention to it, in respect to his own language; nor has it been disregarded by Quintilian. In the rhetorical writings of modern times, it has also been so largely discussed, that I may be excused from dilating upon it so extensively, as might otherwise have been expected. It will be difficult to descend from the broad outline of general principles to any particulars of detail, without repetitions of rules and examples already familiar to your minds. But as we are now embracing the nicest and most volatile particles of discourse, I must refer you, for a full mastery of all their refinements and delicacies, to the precepts of grammar and philology, which you have been taught ever since language has been a part of your studies; and, for your improvement, to that practice and experience, by which alone the highest perfection of all arts can be acquired.

In the composition or putting together of words to constitute discourse of any kind, there are three things inviting attention, by the ancient rhetoricians denominated order, juncture, and number. To which must be added, in treating

of oratorical discourse, that peculiar composition, and construction of sentences, which is known by the name of period. Of each of these I shall speak in turn; endeavouring as much as may be practicable to avoid encroachment upon the province of grammar, to which a great part of the observations I am to make must however necessarily belong.

We are first to consider the order, in which words are to be placed upon the principles of oratorical composition.

We can suppose a given number of ideas, however complex, to exist in the mind of a speaker at one and the same instant; but they can be communicated only by a series of words; and if these words should all be collected and equally ready to issue from his lips, still they cannot come out simultaneously, but must be uttered in succession. The question then occurs, upon what principle shall the rank of precedence be settled between them? In some systematic order they must be pronounced; for if they were spoken at random, without regard to their arrangement, they would constitute mere nonsense, and convey no idea whatsoever. Imagine the ideas and the articulate sounds, by which they are to be repre-

sented, to exist independent of the grammatical rules, introduced in the course of time among the people speaking any particular language, and the order of utterance would follow the gradation of excitement in the speaker's mind ; that is to say, he would pronounce first that word, which should constitute the most important part of his idea ; and would proceed with the accessaries and collateral incidents according to their relative pressure upon his own imagination. This may be termed the natural order of speech. But as languages are formed, and the various relations and connexions, existing between the words essential to an idea, are perceived and reduced to permanent regulation, the words are distributed into general classes, the parts of speech are invented ; the concords are settled into syntax ; and an order of composition arises, founded upon grammar.

When the necessities of articulate speech are provided for, the progress of civilization and refinement fixes the attention of mankind upon objects of speculation and of luxury. By the first they are led to form a comparative scale of importance between the several parts of speech, as forming the materials of the language ; and in the construction of sentences to arrange the words, not

according to their relative weight in reference to the idea, but according to the importance of that class, to which every word respectively belongs. This may be termed the metaphysical order. By the second they become solicitous of combining gratification of the ear with the conveyance of thought; and harmony assumes a powerful authority to prescribe the collocation of words. There are thus four different foundations, upon which the order of composition rests in all the languages, with which we are acquainted. The natural, the grammatical, the metaphysical, and the musical order. These are variously combined in different languages. The natural order presents words in a succession, corresponding with the feelings of the speaker. The grammatical order exhibits them according to their bearing upon one another. The metaphysical order forms them by the file of abstract ideas. The musical order marshals them in the manner most agreeable to the hearer's ear. In the Greek and Latin languages the construction is generally governed by the order of nature, with a constant and almost unlimited deference to the harmony of the sounds. While in all the speeches of modern Europe the metaphysical and the gram-

metrical order steadily predominate; and every departure from them is called an inversion.

To explain objects so abstruse it is necessary to embody them into some example. Take the simplest possible combination of two Latin words to express the love of our country. According to the grammatical order their collocation must be *amor patriae*; because the first word is in the nominative case, and the other, being in the genitive case, is by a rule of syntax the second of two substantives. By the musical order their places must be still the same; because, by their transposition into *patriae amor*, the concurrence of the vowels, at the close of the first and at the commencement of the second, occasions a gasping hiatus extremely painful to a delicate ear. This however would be the arrangement required by the metaphysical order; the country being the cause, and the passion devoted to it the effect. But in the natural order, the words would be placed in either position, according as the passion or its object should be the emphatic word in the idea meant to be conveyed.

In every description of language, written or spoken, the order of the words is determined by one or more of these four principles. In every

species of composition they must all have a certain portion of relative influence. But their proportions, as I have already remarked, are very different in the idioms of different languages; and I may now add, that they are also very different in the various modes of composition with materials of the same language. Their relative proportions constitute the most essential distinction in the discrimination of styles.

There are in the languages of all civilized nations three kinds of discourse, distinguished from each other by boundaries very clear, although, like all other boundaries, they are not always secure from reciprocal encroachment upon each other. The first is the discourse of ordinary conversation and business in common use and daily practice. The second is a formal and stately kind of discourse, employed on occasions of solemnity, and in the discussion of important objects. The third is the discourse of poetry. The stock of words, belonging to any particular language, is alike open to the use of all discourse in either of these forms; the same ideas may be communicated by them all; but that, which forms the greatest diversity between them, is the arrangement of the words. The predominating principle of collocation differs in each

of them. In the discourse of conversation or business the grammatical order is that, to which all the others are subordinate. In the discourse of form, if the subject be speculative, the metaphysical order will be first observed. But in all the walks of oratory the natural order will stand preeminent; while in the discourse of poetry the paramount principle of arrangement is harmony. These differences it would not be difficult to trace to the nature of the human character and of human society; a discussion, which the limits of my time, rather than of my subject, now forbid.

The division of language into what are called the parts of speech, and the rules of grammar resulting from it, like all other classifications, are in a great measure arbitrary. Aristotle reckoned only three parts of speech in the Greek language; nouns, verbs, and conjunctions. The modern Greek grammarians tell us there are nine. A mind, habituated to the practice of combination and abstraction, might find twenty parts of speech in the Greek or any other language. But wherever ideas are communicated by means of speech, the verb and the noun, the action and the agent, must be the great and central parts, around which all the rest must revolve, and to which all others are

subservient. In the metaphysical order then the noun is entitled to the first place in discourse, and the verb to the second. With this arrangement the grammatical construction of all languages substantially coincides. But in the formation of a sentence, more than one verb or noun may be necessary ; and there are a great variety of relations, in which they may stand with regard to each other. These relations may be indicated either by inflections of the principal word itself, which gave rise to the declension of nouns, and the conjugation of verbs, or by subsidiary words, which originate the cumbrous tribe of articles, pronouns, adverbs, and prepositions. And here we remark a primary difference between the classical languages of Greece and Rome, and all the modern languages of Gothic descent. The relations, of which I am speaking, were by the former very generally expressed by the first of these two methods, the inflection of the principal word. By the latter they are almost universally signified in the second mode, by additional words. Hence that innumerable multitude of monosyllables, which in the shape of articles, pronouns, and prepositions, encumber the progress of thought in the modern tongues, destroy their harmony, and disqualify

them for the utterance of deep sentiment or energetic feeling.

Take for an example the verb used in most of the Latin grammars, as the model of the first conjugation. The infinitive mood present tense is *amare*, a single word. How is it in English? To love; two words; and without that little insignificant particle *to*, not a transitive verb can be denoted in this mood and tense; nor indeed any tense of the infinitive mood, active or passive. Pass from the present to the past tense. In Latin you have *amavisse*, still a single word. In English you must use three, *to have loved*; and now you have, besides that eternal intruder *to*, a word, styling itself an auxiliary verb, by the name of *have*, which will also insist upon burdening you with its assistance through almost all the moods and tenses of the verb. Try the first person of the indicative mood, *amo*; it includes the noun and the verb in a single word. But in English you cannot do without the pronoun, and must say *I love*. In the passive verb *amari*, you have another auxiliary in English, *to be loved*; which has at least the advantage of being irregular, and therefore does not, like most of the other subsidiary words, torture the ear and understanding with a never

ending repetition of the same dull sound in its continual attendance upon the verb.

Apply the same comparative analysis to the other important part of speech, the noun. The substantive in English must almost always be preceded by one of the articles, *a* or *the*. In Latin there is no article. If the relation, in which you employ the word, be any of the cases excepting that, which we call the nominative, it is denoted in Latin by a mere alteration of the word. In English you must call in the aid of prepositions, *of*, *to*, *by*, *with*, *from*, &c. which, added to the article, give to the noun in most of its relations the same attendance, as that of the verb, two paltry monosyllables to intercept its appearance.

Observe now the necessary consequence of these differences in the construction of the two languages upon the order of the words, when a sentence is to be formed. In the Latin language the noun or the verb may be placed in the front of the sentence, whenever that station may be proper for it. In English they can scarcely ever take that place, however essential they may be to it.

To see how these different idioms operate upon the phraseology of the finest writers, compare the introductory words of the epic poets. The

subject of Homer's Iliad is the wrath of Achilles ; and in announcing it his first word is *μηνιν*, wrath. That of his Odyssey is to celebrate the character and relate the adventures of Ulysses. His first word is *ανδρα*, the man. Virgil's Aeneid, as has often been remarked, comprises subjects analogous to both those of Homer ; warlike action, and personal celebration. His first words are, *arma virumque* ; arms and the man. Milton's subject was the disobedience and fall of man. But he could not, like Homer and Virgil, announce it in the first word of his poem. His language stopped him at the threshold. His words are of man's first disobedience. And thus a genius, at least equal to those boasts of Greece and Rome, was compelled by the clumsy fabric of his language to commence his imperishable work by a miserable monosyllable, a preposition.

I do not mean to say, that the noun or the verb must necessarily be the most emphatic word in every sentence. But, as the one or the other must contain the most important part of the idea in the great majority of cases, it is clear that a language, the idiom of which scarcely ever allows either of them to appear at the head of a sentence, must be infinitely inferior, in so far as regards the

expression of sentiment or passion, to a language, which leaves every word unshackled, and free to assert the rank, which by its weight in the composition of the thought it is entitled to claim.

The different degrees of flexibility belonging to the two languages, with regard to the arrangement of words, may receive illustration by a parallel between two passages, the one from Livy, and the other from Cicero; where the words used are precisely the same; but their order is varied, manifestly because the emphatic word is in both cases placed in front, though not in both cases the same.

The first is in the account, which Mutius Scevola gives of himself upon being detected in the attempt to assassinate Porsenna, the ally of Tarquin; *Romanus sum civis*. The idea, which Scevola, or rather the historian, who puts the words into his mouth, wishes most deeply to impress, is his character not as a citizen, but as a Roman.

The second is the exclamation of Gavius, when crucified by the orders of Verres in Sicily; *civis Romanus sum*. It was his privilege not as a Roman, but as a citizen, that was violated by the infamous execution, which he was suffering. In

either of these passages, if the arrangement of the words were altered to that of the other, it would injure very materially the force of the expressions. Yet in an English translation there could be only one form of words for both, and Gavius, as well as Scevola, must say, I am a Roman citizen.

In one of these passages we see that the substantive, and in the other the adjective is the introductory word. In the ordinary construction of Latin sentences the verb is reserved to the close ; but in the following citation from Cicero's oration for Roscius Amerinus the verb is the first, because it is the emphatic word. To estimate its importance in Cicero's idea, we must recollect the circumstances of that cause. The prosecutors of Roscius had murdered his father. They had attempted to murder him. They had robbed him of his whole fortune ; and, to crown the catalogue of infamy, they appeared in court to accuse him of parricide ; of the very murder, which they had perpetrated themselves. The accusation was the extreme of atrocity, which Cicero wished to hold up to the execration of the judges ; and it is the word, with which the sentence commences.

Accusant ii, quibus occidi patrem Sexti Roscii bono fuit ; causam dicit is, cui non modo luc-

tum mors patris attulit, verum etiam egestatem. Accusant ii, qui hunc ipsum jugulare summè cupierunt; causam dicit is, qui etiam ad hoc ipsum judicium cum praesidio venit, ne hic ibidem ante oculos vestros trucidetur. The accusation and defence, with their respective circumstances, are contrasted with each other; and the keenness of this contrast arises in a great degree from this arrangement of the words.

There is no form of English translation, in which you can preserve in this sentence the energy, derived from the position of the verb. If you retain the verb and say, they accuse, who profited by the death of Roscius' father, the pronoun *they* usurps the place in front, and you are even compelled to make it the emphatic word; for it is not only essential, as a part of the Latin verb *accusant*, but it is also the only representative you have for the Latin pronoun *ii*. If you change the verb into a substantive, and say the accusers are they, who profited by the murder of the father, the article still veils that all-important idea of accusation, and the whole construction of the sentence must be changed.

It is unnecessary to pursue this argument any further. Let it furnish us with an important prin-

ciple, which shall illuminate the progress of our inquiry concerning the order of English oratorical composition. The maxim that the word, which bears the most important portion of the idea contained in the sentence, should be stationed at its head, so easily practised in Latin, is subject in English to such numerous and insuperable obstacles, that it cannot even be prescribed as a general rule. But so great is its efficacy in imparting animation and energy to the thought, that, whenever ardent sentiment is to be uttered, the speaker will find nothing more instrumental to the purpose, than its employment.

Several of the most eminent English writers at the close of the seventeenth century attempted to approximate the construction of their language to the idiom of the Greek and Latin; and the same attempt, though under different shapes, has been renewed by later writers within our own memory. But in language, as in all other things the use of which is universal, reason seldom controls, and must generally submit to the authority of usage. Languages are formed by a succession of casualties, rather than by any system of philosophical arrangement. Each of them is remarkable for some traits of character peculiar to itself; and no

human genius or exertion can entirely transmit to one the features of another. The same experiment, at a still earlier period, was made upon the French language; and as the violence was greater for assimilating that to the Greek and Latin, than in reducing the English to the same standard, so the failure was more complete; and Ronsard, the writer of France, who in French spoke Greek and Latin, is now scarcely remembered but by the ridicule of Boileau; while Milton, who strained the English tongue to the same bent, still continues the delight and glory of his nation.

From his familiarity with the classic languages, Milton discovered the power of this principle to govern the composition of sentences; and there is no other writer in the language, from whom so many examples may be drawn of forceful expression, effected by the appearance of the most emphatic word in the front. Hence it is, that the style of his prose has so generally been noted, and sometimes so ignorantly censured, for the frequency of its inversions. But in his poetry, and especially that poem which warrants his proudest pretensions to immortal fame, he has enjoyed and exercised a much freer latitude in the application of the principle, than he could venture to assume

in prose. Not only because the latitude of inversion in all languages is much greater for poetry than for prose, but because by the introduction of blank verse, as the measure of his poem, he acquired a new instrument for the position of emphatic words in front. He not only was enabled to invigorate his thoughts by exhibiting occasionally the strong word at the head of the sentence; but he multiplied the use of this artifice, by presenting it in the front of the line, where its effect is equally striking, and where he could more frequently and more easily sweep away from before his frontispiece the rubbish of articles, auxiliaries, pronouns, and prepositions.

Thus then, by combining¹ in your consideration the genius of your language with the natural order of utterance for the expression of feeling, and with the particular thought you are desirous of expressing, you may form an excellent general rule, which will direct you how to settle the arrangement of every sentence. If you address only the understanding of your hearer, if the process you are performing be directed only to his judgment, if the recipient mind be cool, and unwilling to be roused from its tranquillity, the regular, grammatical arrangement of the words should be steadily

observed. Inversions to express ideas of this character would be as incongruous, as it would be to use apostrophe, interrogation, or any other figure of ardent passion, to demonstrate a proposition in Euclid. But are you speaking to the heart? Are you grappling with the feelings of your auditor? Would you seize the strongest holds of his affections, and with the hand of a master guide him by the uncontrollable impulsion of his own will? Invert the order of your sentences. Give to your phrase the arrangement of nature. First utter that, which you first feel; and the conspicuous word will derive energy from its location, in proportion to the wideness of its departure from that usual order, which you have habituated your hearer to expect in the coolness of your discourses to his reason.

The genius of the English language itself appears not altogether insensible to the principles, which I have here explained. For although its construction, as I have shown, generally precludes the possibility of placing the noun or the verb in the front of the sentence; yet for the special purposes of command, of interrogation, and of exclamation, it has discarded from both those trifling and burdensome precursors, to which in other

respects they are subjected. The imperative mood of the verb, and the vocative case of the noun substantive, are alone exempted from those diminutive attendants, and may be placed without obstacle at the head of a sentence. A question relating either to present or past time may also advance the verb to the first post. These are all forms of discourse, which generally imply a degree of excitement in the feelings of the speaker; and in these the modifications of our language afford him great facilities for communicating that excitement to his hearers.

Thus much has been said upon the grounds of election for the first word in the sentence. The next word in point of importance, as respects the effect of arrangement, is the last. The same analogies apply to the practice of all the arts. The arguments of an oration, the words of a sentence, and the force of an army, should all be marshalled on one and the same principle. The stations of honor and distinction are the first and the last.

The whole structure of the sentence must in a considerable degree be regulated with reference to these two words. The inversion sometimes reverses the whole order of the sentence, and sometimes occasions a necessary change of only two or three words. The Latin construction, as I have

before observed, delights in closing the sentence with the verb ; a modification well adapted to engage the attention of the hearer, by suspending to the last moment the action, generally the essence of the thought.

The internal arrangement of words, between the commencement and the close, must be governed by the rules of grammar, by the principles of perspicuity, and by the instinct of the ear. The concords of the substantive and adjective, not being marked, as in the classic languages, by similar terminations, must generally be denoted by the juxtaposition of the words. The minor parts of speech must discover by their proximity the noun or verb, to which they belong ; and the varieties of their position may be selected for the purpose of giving either precision to the sense or harmony to the sound.

To the harmony of sound we must also recur for the directions necessary or proper concerning those parts of composition, termed juncture and number ; the consideration of which will be resumed at a future day.

LECTURE XXVIII.

JUNCTURE. NUMBER.

IN all our inquiries concerning the formation and progress of languages among mankind, the spirit of true philosophy, no less than the doctrines of our religion, requires, that we should resort to the facts recorded in the sacred scriptures, in order to account for many of the phenomena, which we all witness. Whenever we attempt to trace the origin of speech, we shall find it utterly impossible to account in any rational manner for the system of articulation, by which human beings convey their thoughts to one another, and for the varieties in the modification of that system, displayed by the various original diversities of the families of men, without reference to the power of speech, first imparted by the Creator

to our original ancestor, and to that miraculous confusion of speech, which scattered abroad upon the earth the builders of Babel.

After that period we are expressly told,* that the islands of the gentiles were divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations, by the descendants from Japhet, the third son of Noah.

From that time we are to consider the formation of the languages spoken in modern Europe to have commenced; and one of the most remarkable circumstances, which here commands our attention, is the difference in the facility of articulation between the primitive languages, which were formed in the southern, and those which arose in the northern regions of Europe. It has been sufficiently ascertained, that in both cases the primitive words are very few in number, and are all monosyllables. The difference between them seems to have arisen chiefly from the different proportions of consonants and of vowels, which they employed in this first stage of formation of the respective languages. The roots, or primitive words, are almost universally nouns; and generally substantives, in the northern tongues; but in the Greek language

* Gen. x. 5.

there appear to have been a small number of primitive verbs. They were formed altogether by a combination of vowels. The termination was uniformly settled upon the same vowel, ω . The commencement was varied through all the other vowels, α , ϵ , ι , \omicron , and υ ; and by the introduction of one of the eleven consonants, originally used by the Greeks, between the variable vowel at the beginning and the permanent vowel at the end, a number of primitive words was provided, which was again increased by prefixing the consonant before the two vowels, and still further enlarged by the use of two consonants, the one prefixed, and the other between the vowels. From the first of these combinations was formed the words $\alpha\omega$, $\epsilon\omega$, $\iota\omega$, $\omicron\omega$, and $\upsilon\omega$. From the second came $\alpha\gamma\omega$, $\alpha\delta\omega$, $\alpha\kappa\omega$, $\alpha\lambda\omega$, $\alpha\mu\omega$; and the others formed by placing the consonant between the two vowels. The prefixing of the consonant gave another series of words; and when the letters were increased to four by the addition of the second consonant, as in $\gamma\alpha\upsilon\omega$, $\delta\epsilon\kappa\omega$, $\kappa\alpha\lambda\omega$, $\lambda\alpha\beta\omega$, $\pi\epsilon\rho\omega$, and the like, they furnished a fund sufficiently copious for a foundation, upon which the whole superstructure of the Greek verb, with all its appendages, was erected.

This alternation of consonants and of vowels must also be considered as the principle, from which the superior harmony of the Greek language to the dialects of the northern nations naturally flowed. The first sixteen letters, used by the Greeks, were the five vowels and eleven consonants, which are most easily uttered, and consequently the most pleasant in sound. The double letters, ξ, ψ, φ, χ, the aspirate which heaves from the lungs, and the guttural which rattles from the throat, were all of subsequent invention. So that the elements of their language and their first principles in the combination of their words concurred in rendering their speech harmonious. Nothing of this kind is discernible in the primitive languages of the north. They too spoke at the first in monosyllables; but their primitive words were only nouns. Their articulation consisted of many of the harshest sounds, which the human organs of speech are capable of uttering; and their intermixture of vowels was barely sufficient to make expression practicable, without ever consulting the pleasures of the ear. The consequences of this original difference have been, that in proportion as the Greeks cultivated their language, they became more solicitous of its harmony; and that

their orators descended to a minuteness in their precepts of instruction, which we, who are accustomed to the roughness of the modern languages, can scarcely conceive, and which we are accustomed to confine exclusively to the composition of poetry. It was this which made the juncture of letters, syllables, and words, an object of great attention to the ancient rhetoricians; and led them to give it a formal and distinct consideration among the objects, into which they distributed their principles of composition.

By juncture therefore nothing more is meant, than that part of composition, which consists in the putting together of its primary elements. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his treatise upon the collocation of words, observes, that the beauty and the grace of composition depend upon the nature of the letters and upon the quality of the syllables, which are combined in the formation of the words. He therefore analyzes with great accuracy the twenty four letters of the Greek alphabet; describes the process of their pronunciation, and distributes them into their various classes of vowels and semivowels, single and double letters, mutes and aspirates. And he points out those, which are remarkable for softness, and those

which repel by their harsh and rugged sounds. In regard to syllables, besides that part of their character, which they must derive from the letters of which they are formed, they are also distinguished by their quantity; that is by the length of time, employed in pronouncing them.

But in applying to our own language the rules for the juncture of letters and syllables, prescribed by the Greeks and Romans to theirs, we must remember, that the very foundations of their harmony are denied us. We must take the words of the language, as we find them. The Teutonic language, the original substratum of that which we speak, was formed by a race of men, who had little sensibility to the delicacies of sound. They were famous in ancient times for the athletic structure of their bodies. Their organs of speech were capable of stronger articulation, than those of the southern tribes. Their organs of hearing probably required the use of tones rather strongly marked, than nicely graduated. The force of habit reconciled them to the harshness of the sounds they were wont to hear; and from the disposition so common to human nature, in every situation, of accommodating its affections to that, to which it is used, they deemed their roughness an evidence of

manly virtue ; and disdained, as nerveless and effeminate, the softer enunciation of the south. These prejudices and opinions still prevail ; and the people of the nations speaking the German, Dutch, and English languages, which are only different dialects of the same mother tongue, can scarcely be made to believe, that their utterance is offensive to a discriminating ear. I have already shown you, that in the composition of their primitive words they never conceived the necessity of introducing a sufficient proportion of vowels. A great proportion of their words are therefore rough and untuneable ; and, to complete the destruction of their harmony, their syllables have no distinction of quantity, like the Greek and Latin. The only distinction between them, recognised by the grammarians, is of syllables accented and unaccented ; and Dr. Johnson tells us, that in English poetry the accent and the quantity of syllables is the same thing. So that, while in Greek and Latin the difference between the syllables is noted by the time taken to pronounce them, in English they are distinguished only by the different degrees of force or of weakness, which they derive from the pressure or the absence of the accent. An English speaker then is, both as respects the distribution of let-

ters and of syllables, much more restricted and confined, than he whose instrument is one of the learned languages. He cannot intermix his consonants and vowels in the proportions most grateful to the ear, because that proportion does not exist in the very words, of which the language is composed. He cannot intermix the long and short syllables in harmonious concert, because his syllables are long or short, only as they have or have not the accent. To this must be added, that the multiplicity of monosyllables crowded upon the language, as auxiliaries to the noun and verb, with the inflexibility of those important parts of speech themselves, contribute still further to restrain the speaker's powers of election.

Still however, under all these restrictions, the rules of juncture are not entirely without their use in the composition of English discourse. This language, originally so rugged, has been in a succession of many ages gradually softening down into comparative smoothness ; first by the adoption of innumerable words from languages more harmonious than itself ; secondly by the omission in many instances of some superfluous consonants from its words ; and thirdly by sinking a much greater number of them in the pronunciation. As the

people have advanced in the progress of refinement, they have become sensible to the delight of musical articulation. Their improvements, as might be expected, have been most conspicuous in their poetry; and the changes in the structure of English versification have, from the days of Chaucer to those of Pope, constantly tended to harmonize the language, and to wear away its most unpleasant asperities. This increasing attention to the music of poetry has to a certain degree produced a corresponding influence upon the composition of prose. It is yet indeed impossible to apply the prescriptions of Dionysius Halicarnassus, of Cicero, and of Quintilian, in their rigor, to words overstocked with consonants, inflexible in their terminations, and for the most part immovable by transposition; or to syllables, which have no specific quantity distinct from their accent. Yet a due regard to the principles, upon which those rules are founded, will introduce into the composition of English prose all the harmony, of which it is susceptible.

The most important of these rules requires the juncture of a syllable terminating in a vowel, with a syllable commencing by a consonant; the purpose of which is to avoid the collision of two vow-

els. The converse of this rule directs you, when the syllable closes with a consonant, to begin the next with a vowel. But as the juncture of two consonants is less perceptibly painful, than that of vowels, the propriety of avoiding it is also less urgent. The alternation of vowel and consonant is then the general principle ; and in the versification of the most melodious Latin poets it is observed sometimes for whole lines together ; as for example in the first verse of the Aeneid,

Arma, virumque cano, Trojae qui primus ab oris ;

where every word ending in a vowel is followed by a word beginning with a consonant ; and every word ending with a consonant, by a word beginning with a vowel. In the English language the first part of this rule is much more easily observed, than the last ; because almost all English words terminate in consonants. In the rare cases therefore, when a word closing with a vowel is used, there can seldom be any difficulty to select for its successor a word beginning with a consonant. But as in all cases this is rather a monition to bear in mind, than a precept exacting observance ; it is further to be remarked, that some of the vowels more readily associate with each other, than the

rest. The same may be said of the consonants. The collision of a vowel with itself is the most ungracious of all combinations, and has been doomed to peculiar reprobation under the name of an hiatus. This is so generally disagreeable, that even in common discourse the custom of the language often contrives means for avoiding it; of which you have a remarkable instance in the variation of the indefinite article *a* or *an*; the first of which is used whenever the word, to which it is prefixed, begins with a consonant; and the second, when it commences with a vowel. The sweetest of the English poets had as great a horror of the hiatus, as the old philosophers used to say nature had of a vacuum. In the following lines of his essay on criticism he has exhibited, by an example in the verses themselves, the fault, against which he would guard the writer of English verse, arising from the collision of vowels, the intrusion of expletives, and the use of continued monosyllables.

These equal syllables alone require,
Though oft the ear the open vowels tire;
While expletives their feeble aid do join,
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line.

In the second of these lines there are three in-

stances of juncture by the meeting of two vowels; and this accumulation was necessary, because each of the combinations is by itself so common, and the effect of its use upon the harmony so slight, that, standing by itself, it would scarcely have been perceptible.

A second caution with regard to juncture is to avoid the repetition of the same syllable, or of the same sound at the close and commencement of two successive words. To judge of the ill effect of this concurrence, as of the last, it may be necessary to accumulate in a single sentence several examples of it. When Dryden in one of his odes says,

An angel heard, and straight appear'd,
Mistaking earth for heaven,

it must be a fastidious ear, which would notice the duplication of the syllable at the commencement of the lines. But when Pope says,

The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,

the sound of the last four syllables is so nearly the same, that the most unpractised ear can hardly forbear to perceive the dissonance of their repetition, and to remark it as a rare instance of careless versification in the poet.

The only additional rule respecting the juncture of syllables, which remains to be noticed, is that of avoiding such a concurrence between the closing and commencing syllables of neighbouring words, as might of themselves form an improper word, or convey an equivocal sense. This danger will seldom occur in written composition ; but, unless some care be taken to guard against it, may occasionally happen in the hurry of unpremeditated discourse.

But the order of the words and the juncture of their letters and syllables are not sufficient to constitute the beauty of oratorical composition, without some knowledge and attention to its numbers.

And what are oratorical numbers? The readiest answer to this question might perhaps be, that there is now among us no such thing. That they are strangers to the English language. That among the moderns the numbers, admitted in the constitution of their poetry, signify something very different from what they meant among the ancients ; but that none of the most accomplished speakers of England, or of our own country, have ever attempted to express themselves in numerous prose. Admitting this to be the fact, we are still to inquire what was meant by oratorical numbers

among the ancients ; and we are still to account for the existence, and to seek the sources of that harmony, which in modern discourse may be, and often has been substituted in their stead. There is no part of the science, which has been treated with more industrious investigation by Aristotle and by Cicero. Its importance was equally felt by all the other eminent rhetoricians both of Greece and Rome ; and Longinus, who has assigned a chapter to it in his treatise on the sublime, there mentions, that he had written two distinct treatises upon the subject, which have unfortunately been lost.

The use of the term numbers has been adopted by the English writers from the critics of Greece and Rome ; and formal dissertations have been written, attempting to prove, that their principles are applicable to English composition. None of them however are perfectly satisfactory ; and none appear to have marked the material differences, which must arise from the different sources of harmony, predominating in different languages.

All harmony consists of a succession of varied sounds. And of this variety there are three distinct sources. The first is measured by time ;

and in consequence of this each particular sound is denominated quick or slow. The second is measured by the tones, which constitute the difference between high and low notes. The third is a difference of strength and weakness, by which a difference of force may be given to the same note. In musical composition this difference is denoted by the terms forte and piano.

Now in all the ancient doctrines concerning poetical and oratorical harmony, they considered only the first of these varieties. In the modification of sounds by articulation, it must have been perceived at a very early period, that some syllables necessarily required for distinct utterance more time than others; and upon this variety of time the whole system of ancient versification was founded. Assuming, as the common primary standard, the time necessary for the utterance of the shortest syllables, they assigned a double portion of that time for that of the longest; and thus every syllable in the language became short or long. The next step was, by the several combinations of two short syllables, of two long ones, of a short before a long, and of a long before a short, to constitute what have been denominated poetical

feet; the numbers of which discriminated the different metre or measure of their verse.

The power of these numbers in their combination with metre had long been felt, and understood, and practised in all the varieties of epic and lyric poetry, before it was suspected, that they could be productive of any pleasing effect in the composition of prose. This discovery, according to Cicero, was first made by Thrasyllus or by Gorgias; and was improved and moderated to the highest perfection by Isocrates. It was never known among the Romans until a short time before the age of Cicero; and was by him both in practice and theory exhibited in the utmost extent, of which his language was capable.

Thus the harmony of poetry among the Greeks and Romans consisted in number and metre; that is, in a number of syllables variously combined into feet, made up of two, three, or four points of time; a given number of which feet formed the metre. Thus the hexameter verse is invariably composed of six feet of two kinds; the dactyl, a foot of one long and two short syllables; and the spondee, a foot of two long ones. Their oratorical harmony consisted of numbers without metre. And hence it is, that Aristotle declares

oratorical discourse to be terminated not by measure, but by numbers ; that it ought to have rythm, but not metre.

To their various kinds of verse they appropriated different kinds of feet. The feet, which contained the longest portion of time, as the dactyl, the spondee, and the anapest, were found best adapted to the expression of grave and dignified sentiment. Those, which consisted only of the alternating short and long syllables, were applied to light and trivial subjects, and nearly approached the level of common discourse. Between these a sort of middle term was discovered or invented ; a foot, consisting either of one long syllable before three short ones, or of three short syllables before one long one. These were called by the names of the first and second pæan. The first was deemed most suitable for the beginning, and the second for the close of a sentence ; and both are declared by Aristotle and Cicero to be the genuine oratorical feet, and to contain a fascination of harmony, to which I will freely confess the dulness of my ear is in a great measure insensible.

In the English language, as I have heretofore observed, there is no regular distinction of quantity between syllables. Their differences arise al-

most entirely from the accent. The harmony of English versification has therefore a different standard from that of the Greek and Latin. It is not a variety of quick and slow, but a variety of strong and weak utterance. Its measure is not time, but tone. From this it follows, that the numbers of English verse are numbers of syllables, and not numbers of feet; that they are counted, and not measured.

But the accent, and the emphasis, which is an occasional accent, placed at the will of the speaker upon words which have none, fixed and permanent, is an additional stress, laid by the voice upon the syllable that bears it; and as this effort of the voice commonly requires a greater portion of time, than is necessary to utter the unaccented syllables, most of the English prosodists have confounded them together; and, in speaking of English poetry, have talked of feet, consisting of long and short syllables, as if the same rules of harmony could be applied to the heroic verse of Homer, and of Milton; and the same measures to an ode of Horace, and an ode of Collins.

But to show how absurd it is to apply the principles of Greek and Latin scansion to a language so differently constructed, we need only to remark,

that the Iambic foot, consisting of a short syllable before a long one, which was excluded from all grave and dignified subjects, as proper only for topics of levity, is the species of foot most peculiarly appropriated in our time to heroic verse; and that the anapestic foot, in which the ancients discovered so much grandeur and dignity, forms the versification of our most simple ballads, and enliven's the gaiety of our most sportive, convivial songs.

If the numbers of ancient versification, thus measured by mere varieties of time, cannot be applied to the construction of our verse in such a manner as to produce poetic harmony, still less can they be made subservient to the music of English oratory. That mysterious marriage between the unison of the dactyl and the octave of the iambus, issuing in the first and second pæan, certainly produces in our language no such wonders of harmony, as are celebrated in the pages of Aristotle and Cicero.

I never should advise any English speaker to waste his time in attempts to arrange his sentences according to the rules of Greek or Latin prosody. Yet I would not have him altogether inattentive to the location and distribution of his accented syllable.

bles ; for I have no doubt but that upon this the harmony of a sentence may often depend. The first pæan has a recommendation for commencing a sentence, because the accent, being on the first syllable, arrests immediately the attention. The second pæan, having the accent on the closing syllable, may for a similar reason be proper at the end. If the accented syllables be crowded too closely together, they will encumber and clog in a painful manner the speaker's utterance ; if too thinly scattered, his discourse will be flattened by multiplied monosyllables. As far as I can trust the judgment of my own ear, I should say, that a predominant proportion of dactyls, or of syllables, every third of which is accented, interspersed for the purpose of variety with occasional iambics, anapests, and spondees, would form the most effectual combination for the production of numerous prose. But it is vain to attempt

Untwisting all the chains that tie

The hidden soul of harmony.

It is idle to compute the charms of oratorical numbers by the multiplication table of arithmetic ; nor is it conceivable to me, that the lightning of a Demosthenes could need to be sped upon the wings of a semi-quaver. These are subjects of

curious inquiry to the student, but should never for a moment arrest the precious moments of the practical speaker. Even Cicero himself, after all the pains he has taken to elucidate the doctrine of oratorical numbers, acknowledges, that the only final guide must be the instinct of a delicate ear.

I shall here conclude my observations upon those elements of oratorical composition, denominated order, juncture, and number. The putting together of letters, syllables, and words, has perhaps already detained us too long. We have still however to consider them, as compounded in the form of sentences and periods.

LECTURE XXIX.

SENTENCES.

HAVING considered the principles of oratorical composition in respect to the construction of sentences, by analyzing the nature and character of their constituent parts, it will now be proper to close this part of my subject with remarks relative to the character of those sentences themselves, as entire bodies. The order, the juncture, and the number, of which I have treated in my last lectures, all refer to the position of letters, syllables, and words, in the body of a sentence. We have been inquiring how words should be put together for the formation of sentences. We are now to analyze the sentences into their component parts; not of words and syllables, but of members and divisions of thought.

The purpose of language is the conveyance of thought ; and thought can be conveyed from one mind to another, through the medium of speech, only by means of propositions. These propositions must of necessity be compounded of two things, a subject and a predicate. In the simplest possible form there must be the agent and the action ; which, as I have before remarked to you, are the noun and the verb. The noun and the verb are sometimes included in a single word ; but this is among the conventional arrangements of language, and differs essentially in different tongues. The inflections of the verb in Greek and Latin were applied partly to this purpose. Thus in Latin *lego*, I read, includes a complete proposition in a single word ; because by the terminating letter *o* the custom of the language designates myself, as the agent, concerning whom the action is predicated ; change the termination to *is*, and the second person is indicated ; to *it*, and the third person is implied. But if you say in English *read*, omitting the pronoun, which indicates the person, you likewise express a complete proposition, but of a different character. By the custom of our language, the person understood when the verb stands alone is the second ; and the mood imperative. The

pronoun understood without being expressed is indefinitely thou or ye. In the Latin language the impersonal verbs have also a noun understood. But in English it is exclusively confined to the imperative mood and the second person, or person spoken to. This indeed is of all others the case when it can be least necessary for the conveyance of thought to name distinctly the agent; he is sufficiently marked by the very act of speaking to him.

Every proposition, thus containing a subject and a predicate, constitutes, when communicated by the process of speech, what is called a sentence. A sentence may thus consist of a single word. And every proposition, consisting only of one subject and one predicate, is called a simple sentence. The attributes of the noun and the circumstances attending the verb may be added, and the sentence still remain simple. "Jehovah reigns" is a simple sentence, consisting only of the noun and the verb. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" is still a simple sentence, consisting only of one nominative noun and one verb. But whenever a thought is compounded of more than one subject, concerning which the proposition is made, or of more than one verb predicated

of it, the sentence in which it is worded becomes complex, and consists of two or more clauses, or members. The degrees and the modes of complexity, of which a portion of thought may be susceptible, and yet be included within the compass of a sentence, are various ; and the principles of subdivision, adopted by the grammarians, are different from those of the rhetoricians.

The terms sentence and period are generally used as synonymous ; and Dr. Johnson in his dictionary, after defining a period to be “ a complete sentence from one full stop to another,” defines a sentence to be “ a short paragraph ; a period in writing.”

There is however another and a more limited sense, in which the word period is understood, when applied to oratorical composition. And it is the sense most appropriate to its meaning, as collected from its original derivation. The Greek word *περίοδος* means a circle or circumference ; and the same sense appears in the corresponding Latin terms *circuitus* and *ambitus*. It is defined by Aristotle “ a portion of speech, having within itself a beginning and an end ; and of a length to be at once easily comprehended.” This definition will apply exactly to all simple sentences ; but not to

all those that are complex. A complex sentence may consist of several members, each of which contains within itself a distinct and complete sense. A rhetorical period, however complicated, keeps the meaning suspended until the whole sentence is completed. A complex, loose sentence may be compared to a mathematical triangle or square, enclosing a given space within three or four distinct lines, connected together by junction at particular points. A period is a like space, enclosed within one circumscribing line, which begins and ends within itself.

To illustrate this distinction by an example, let us take the first paragraph of Johnson's preface to Shakspeare.

"That praises are without reason lavished on the dead, | and that the honors due only to excellence are paid to antiquity, | is a complaint likely to be always continued by those, | who, being able to add nothing to truth, | hope for eminence from the heresies of paradox ;"—

This is a complete period, consisting of five clauses, nearly equal in length, and accurately balanced ; the subject being contained in the central clause, and the predicate divided in regular symmetry between the preceding and following mem.

bers, and the meaning of the whole being suspended until the close. But the sentence does not close here. The stop is only a semi-colon, after which it proceeds—"or those, who, being forced by disappointment upon consolatory expedients, are willing to hope from posterity what the present age refuses, | and flatter themselves that the regard, which is yet denied by envy, will be at last bestowed by time." This last member is not strictly periodical, as it consists of three clauses, the last of which is distinct from the preceding parts, and in a great measure superfluous to the sense. The meaning would have been completed, had it stopped at the word refuses. The last clause is but a slight variation of the thought, and only serves to enliven the expression by the pointed antithesis between envy and time, which just before had been drawn between the present age and posterity. Considered merely upon the principles of grammatical construction, the whole sentence is a period; divided by one semi-colon, and eight commas. But it does not answer to Aristotle's definition of a period; for it has not a beginning and an end within itself. It has a beginning, and three different points, which might equally serve as an end. And it is too long to be comprehended

at a single glance. Rhetorically considered, it is a complex loose sentence, consisting of three members, the first of which only constitutes a period in itself.

The parts, of which a complex sentence or a period is composed, are of the same kind; and are denominated members or clauses. By the Greek writers they are called colons, and commas. The colon is a member, and the comma is a clause. In modern grammar these terms have been retained; but they are applied to punctuation, and not to composition. They designate the stops, within which the several parcels of a sentence are included, and not the parcels themselves. The milestone has usurped the name of the mile.

I have thought it necessary to point out with precision the difference between the complex loose sentence and the period, because they are often confounded together, although the principles of their composition materially vary from each other. They formed among the ancient writers two different kinds of style, which are formally discriminated by Aristotle, and which are still recognised by all the French critics. The style in loose sentences belongs to every species of prose composition. The periodical style is appropriated pecu-

liarly to oratorical works ; and is there adapted only to certain parts of discourse. The period may be compared to a consolidated union ; the complex loose sentence to a confederation. The latter consists of several propositions, concurring to the composition of one principal thought ; perhaps with no other cement, than contiguity of place, or a connecting particle. The former has all its members grappled together, so that they cannot suffer avulsion without ruin. In the loose sentence the several propositions concur only by community of effort, In the period there is not only community, but unity of effort to the same effect. It will hence appear why the construction of the period is so much more elaborate, than that of loose sentences. For the formation of these the mind is occupied only with one operation. It produces separately every proposition ; and proceeds in succession from one to another. But to constitute the period the mind is at once busied with various materials, and with the mechanism of their adjustment. There is a double labor of intellect ; and the adaptation of the materials to each other requires time, perhaps more than the selection of the materials themselves.

The period is peculiarly adapted to the concen-

tration of thought. And as it is the only species of complex sentence, which can possess the merit of absolute unity, it has all the energy, which naturally belongs to that quality. It was much better adapted to the construction of the ancient languages, than to ours; because the inflexions of their words permitted a much greater latitude of arrangement, and habituated them to the practice of closing the sentence with the verb, and thus of reserving the essential part of the meaning to the last. The extent of the period was regulated by the time, usually required for respiration. This was estimated at a number of words equivalent to four hexameter verses. The period might consist of two, three, or four members; and each member of two or more clauses. The length of a clause, or comma, was forbidden to exceed eight syllables; and that of a member, or colon, was to be confined within the bounds of one hexameter verse, which might be of seventeen. The perfect period could regularly consist only of four members. But a sentence, containing a greater number, and formed by the same rules in other respects, was still called periodical.

As the composition of the period implies coolness and deliberation, it was held to be better

adapted to demonstrative discourses, than to those of the deliberative and judicial classes. Its characteristics were gravity and solemnity. But from every part, which required vehemence or ardor of passion, it was rigorously excluded.

The period, says Quintilian, is very graceful in the exordium of a great cause, to indicate fear and anxiety; to give an advantageous idea of the person, or of the subject in question; or to incline the judges to sentiments of compassion. It is also very proper for the common places, and for amplification. It is proper for commendation, but not for invective. It is also very suitable for the conclusion. But the true time for giving it in all its splendor and harmony is when the judge, fully informed of the facts, and already persuaded, begins to be delighted with the beauty of the discourse, and, in admiration of the speaker, yields, as to a sort of self-indulgence, to the pleasure of hearing him.

The perfect period, as I have shown, is more difficult in the construction of our language, than in those of Greece and Rome. So far is it indeed from being congenial to our habits of extemporaneous discourses at the bar, or in any popular assembly, that the mere appearance of it has a ten-

dency to counteract the purpose of a speaker, and never fails to be considered, as a proof of previous study and affectation. It is however in the highest degree adapted to that species of composition, which is so much more common since the invention of printing, than it could be in ancient times, which partakes of the character of deliberative oratory ; but is written for the purpose not of being spoken, but of being read. Such are all those discourses upon political, moral, and religious topics, which appear in the periodical newspapers and pamphlets of modern times. Hence it is, that the periodical style has been successfully used in such cases even for invective ; from which, as I have mentioned to you, among the ancients the period was expressly excluded.

Thus Cicero for example begins almost all his orations with one or more periods. But the first oration against Catiline begins with a sentence in the simplest possible form. Why ? Because the occasion, upon which it was spoken, was sudden and unexpected. Because it was a moment of great excitement, when it was impossible for the orator to be cool for a moment. It was the unparalleled impudence of Catiline's appearance to take his seat in the senate at the very time, when

he knew that his treasonable conspiracy had been fully detected by the consul. It was a time for the instantaneous flash of feeling, and not for the regular rotation of a period. But in the subsequent oration, the second against Catiline, delivered to the people immediately after the traitor had been driven by the first to leave the city, Cicero observes his ordinary practice, and begins with a formal period.

By the rule of eloquence, which is furnished by these two striking examples, examine the following introduction to a letter of Junius, addressed to the Duke of Grafton.

“ If nature had given you an understanding, qualified to keep pace with the wishes and principles of your heart, she would have made you perhaps the most formidable minister, that ever was employed under a limited monarch, to accomplish the ruin of a free people. When neither the feelings of shame, the reproaches of conscience, nor the dread of punishment, form any bar to the designs of a minister, the people would have too much reason to lament their condition, if they did not find some resource in the weakness of his understanding. We owe it to the bounty of Providence, that the completest depravity of the heart

is sometimes strangely united with a confusion of the mind, which counteracts the most favorite principles, and makes the same man treacherous without art, and a hypocrite without deceiving."

Here are three periods in immediate succession; all constructed with great apparent labor, and with unquestionable skill. The material thought is the same, three times repeated, with slight varieties of modification, and with studied adjustment of expression. It is, like the rest of the letter, a bitter personal invective without any specific charge. In the first sentence there is a distinction suggested between the understanding and the heart, which very often recurs in Junius, but which even here does not appear to have been very accurately settled in his mind. He speaks of an understanding, qualified to keep pace with the wishes and principles of a heart. Now the heart, when thus placed in opposition to the understanding, has wishes, but no principles. The heart is the seat of the affections; as the mind is that of the understanding. Principles are deductions of the rational faculty, and not impulses of animal nature. Human conduct is generally the result of motives, proceeding from both these sources of action blended together; and hence in

popular language it might not be incorrect, to speak of the wishes of the mind, or of the principles of the heart. But where the essence of the thought consists in the discrimination between the understanding and the heart, principles should be reserved, as appertaining exclusively to the reasoning, and not to the sensitive part of the composition.

The second sentence however indicates the distinction between the powers, which concur to operate upon the heart, and which in the mind of the writer might perhaps have dictated the previous distinction between wishes and principles, as applied to the heart. The feelings of shame, the reproaches of conscience, and the dread of punishment, are brought together, so as to form an ascending progression of thought, and a climax of expression. The respective influence of shame, of conscience, and of fear, as means of deterring a man from the execution of his designs, is obviously considered as holding a proportional weight, corresponding with the order, in which they are here ranged. *Cavendum est ut crescat oratio*, says Quintilian; a rule observed in the sentence, I am now examining, with a degree of art, carried perhaps to excess. For the regular increase of

the words keeps exact pace with that of the thought. The Greek and Roman poets and orators were used to these arts, and practised them in forming verses or sentences, which they termed *ropalic*, or club-formed. They consisted of words, beginning with a monosyllable, and then adding a syllable to every successive word, until the close of the line. Such is this verse of Homer.

Ω μάκαρ Ἀτρεΐδῃ, μοιρηγενὲς ὀλοιοδαίμωνι.

In prose composition the increment was applied to the last word in each clause of the sentence, as it is here in the climax of shame, conscience, and punishment. And this corresponding progression in the spirit of the sentiment, and in the mechanism of the period, serves to harmonize the whole at once to the ear and to the mind of the reader, even when he is not perhaps aware of the cause, from which his pleasure is derived.

The third of these periods generalises the observation, which in the first had been applied to the individual. It spreads into a philosophical reflection upon human nature; and to make this reflection interesting it is sharpened with two or three pointed antitheses. The depravity of the heart is contrasted with the confusion of the mind;

a man is said to be treacherous without art; and a hypocrite without deceiving. There seems at the first glance a contradiction in the terms. It excites the reader's curiosity; and he finds they were expressly chosen to illustrate the character, by which that contradiction is reconciled.

All this is no doubt very well written, and very elegant. But it is not the language of persuasion. It is not the style suitable for extemporaneous deliberation or judicial oratory. It would not procure a vote in a town-meeting. It would not convince the mind of a single juryman. In substance all these decorations of speech only deck out a meaning of the commonest and most vulgar ribaldry. A man, who should rise in a popular assembly and say to his opponent, sir, you are at once a villain and a fool, would express all that Junius has dilated into three periods; but he would not be likely to conciliate the good-will, or the docility of his audience. These periods would perhaps be heard with more complacency, but not with more effect. The hearer would say, this man, from what he says, appears to be in a towering passion; but he says it in such a quaint and conceited manner, that he must have been conning

it all over before he came here. He has been counting syllables; he has been weighing words; he has been solving paradoxes; he has been finding out riddles; his indignation was all studied at home, and he comes here now to put it off upon us. I cannot believe him, for he does not believe himself.

I have made these remarks, and adduced these examples, to show the reason why among the ancient rhetoricians the period was interdicted to the eloquence of invective, though it has been successfully applied to that purpose in modern times.

As the period has a beginning and end within itself it implies an inflexion, or an ascending and a descending progress; a rise and a fall. When these are equally divided, consisting of two rising and two falling clauses, placed in alternate opposition to each other, the period is in its highest perfection. The ancients called this a decussated period. Such for instance is the following, which has often been quoted from Cicero.

“ If impudence could effect as much in courts of justice, as insolence sometimes does in the country, Caesina would now yield to the impudence of Ebutius, as he then yielded to his insolent assault.”

Such is the following passage from the first Olynthiac of Demosthenes.

‘Ο μὲν γὰρ ὅσω πλείονα ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀξίαν πεποίηκε τὴν αὐτοῦ, τοσούτω θάυμαστότερος παρὰ πᾶσι νομίζεται· ὑμεῖς δὲ ὅσω χεῖρον ἢ προσῆκε κέχρησθε τοῖς πράγμασι τοσούτω πλείονα αἰσχυρὴν ὠφελήκατε.

OLYNΘ. A. 6.

For whatever he has accomplished beyond expectation is thought by all the more worthy of admiration; and the more you have neglected your affairs, the greater is the shame you have incurred.

Such also among many others is the following paragraph from Junius to the Duke of Grafton.

“ Sullen and severe without religion, profligate without gaiety, you live like Charles the second, without being an amiable companion; and, for aught I know, may die, as his father did, without the reputation of a martyr.”

But the four clauses of a period may be distributed in unequal portions. The ascent may terminate in one clause, and the descent may consist of three; as in the following from a speech of Burke.

“ When we speak of commerce with our col-

onies, fiction lags after truth, invention is unfruitful, and imagination cold and barren."

Or vice versâ the ascent may be of three clauses, and the descent completed in one; like the following from the same speech.

"Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this most perilous mode of hardy industry to the extent, to which it has been pushed by this recent people."

In comparing the purposes, to which these two modes of constructing a period will be most applicable, it will be obvious, that the division in equal parts is best adapted to express contrast, and the unequal division best suited for accumulation. That the former is the period for antithesis, and the latter the period for climax.

Of climax and antithesis I propose to speak more at large hereafter. They are among the most splendid and ambitious ornaments of speech; and as such their characters will most properly be investigated under the next subordinate branch of elocution; which, in conformity to the terms heretofore adopted from the ancients, I have denominated dignity.

LECTURE XXX.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.



WE have finished our examination of those constituent parts of elocution, which have been called by the names of elegance and composition, from which we are to deduce our principles for the selection and arrangement of the words, which combine to the formation of oratorical discourse. We have now arrived at the third subdivision of this department, which has been called dignity ; and which I have heretofore explained, as intending the decoration of discourse. It involves the consideration of all figurative language.

You have learnt from Mr. Locke, that all human ideas are ultimately derived from one of two sources ; either from objects perceptible to the

senses, or from the reflections of our own minds upon such objects. It is equally clear that language, the purpose of which is to communicate our ideas, must be composed of words, first drawn from ideas of sensation. For, in order that the articulate sound, by which an idea could be conveyed, might be received in association with the same idea, connected with it in the mind of the speaker, there must necessarily be some material prototype, to which both speaker and hearer might alike resort, and which they should agree to represent by that sound. Of ideas of reflection no such prototype can exist. The operations of the mind therefore, when exhibited by means of speech, must be embodied into figure; and hence every word, representing such an operation, must have been originally figurative. Figures have sometimes been called modes of speech, differing from the common. But this, from what I have here observed, is not altogether correct. Nothing is more common than figurative language.

The symbols, the hieroglyphics, the allegories of antiquity, all furnish examples of the prevalence of figures in the primitive ages of the world. Among the savages of this continent the same figurative character is found in their modes of com-

municating thought. It is among the most unlettered classes of civilized society, that figurative discourse principally predominates. The disposition so generally observed in men of every trade and profession to apply the technical terms, with which they are most familiar, bears the same indication. They all use figuratively the words, with which they are acquainted, instead of the proper terms, of which they are ignorant. So that figurative speech, instead of being a departure from the ordinary mode, is the general practice, from which the words, rigorously confined to their proper sense, are rare exceptions. The use of figures must indeed have preceded metaphysical reasoning. They communicate ideas not by abstractions, but by images. They speak always to the senses, and only through them to the intellect. They give thought a shape. They are therefore the mother tongue, not only of reflection, but of the imagination and the passions.

The observation of Cicero then, although in late times it has been contested, must be substantially true ; that figures were in the first instance used from necessity, and afterwards were multiplied on account of their beauty. They were necessary to express every idea, which had no mould

of matter to be shaped in. They were found beautiful, because they amused the imagination with unexpected visionary forms, in which that faculty chiefly delights. But it is one of the properties of figurative speech, that it loses its character by the multiplicity of its use; and words, originally figures, assume the character of proper terms by merely becoming familiar. The word *spiritus*, spirit, originally meant breath; a material though highly attenuated substance. It now means the soul; the portion of our nature, which we hold to be altogether distinct from matter.

The word figure, as I am now using it, is itself figurative. In its first and literal meaning it is defined by Johnson the form of any thing, as terminated by the outline. But what is the outline of thought, expressed by means of speech? Literally speaking the term figure, as applied to speech, is absurd. It is used metaphorically, by a supposed analogy between matter and language. Extension is a property common to all bodies; besides which every separate body has a figure, peculiar to itself. And so figures of speech, besides the common properties of being a conveyance for ideas, have each a separate modification peculiar to itself. Thus, if you were to say "Lon-

ginus was a critic of universal learning, united with a bold spirit, and poetical enthusiasm," you would express certain thoughts in their simplest form. But when Pope says,

Thee, bold Longinus, all the nine inspire,

And bless their critic with a poet's fire,

the same thought is expressed with a variety of figures. "Thee, bold Longinus," is an apostrophe. The nine is doubly figurative; first an ellipsis, the nine for the muses, and secondly a personification, the muses for the faculties of the mind. The remaining parts of the two lines form an allegory, in which all the muses are represented as inspiring Longinus, and blessing him with a poet's fire; a metaphor, fire for genius.

Dr. Johnson at the word figure, as applied to rhetoric, gives the following definition and remarks.

Figure (in rhetoric), any mode of speaking, in which words are detorted from their literal and primitive sense. In strict acceptation the change of a word is a trope, and any affection of a sentence, a figure; but they are confounded even by the exactest writers.

But there is another distinction, noticed by all the rhetorical writers from the time of Aristotle, be-

tween figures of thought and figures of diction, which is altogether without the bounds of this definition. A figure of thought need not to detort the words from their literal sense. It is on the contrary expressly termed a figure, not depending at all upon the words, in which it is clothed. The words may all be changed, or translated into another language, without impairing the figure. Such are exclamations, interrogations, comparisons, and many others.

The figures of diction are divided into the two classes, which Johnson's definition considers as including the whole ; that is, into tropes of a single word, and figures affecting the whole sentence, which the Greek rhetoricians call schemes ; but of which we have not adopted the name, as we have of tropes. The term trope is derived from *τροπος*, a conversion ; formed from the verb *τρεπω*, to turn round ; because the word used figuratively is turned round from its literal meaning. There are therefore as many tropes, as there are ways of diverting a word from the direct to the indirect signification.

In this sense every word in every language, excepting the primitive roots denoting material substances, is a trope. The author of the Diversions

of Purley contends at least with great plausibility, that those subsidiary parts of speech, called articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, are all abbreviations from words, which were originally verbs or nouns ; and if so they are, as now used, all tropes.

I have heretofore remarked the almost invincible reluctance, which prevails among mankind, to the introduction of a new word ; and have shown by some very striking examples their propensity to affix old words to new ideas. There is no part of the world, where this disposition more generally predominates, than on our own continent. Look over a map of the American hemisphere. You will see republics and kingdoms, states, counties, and towns, mountains, lakes, and rivers, in great multitudes, but scarcely a single new name. The great natural objects, mountains, lakes, and rivers, are known by the names, which they were found to bear among the aboriginal natives. But the whole new creation, which has arisen from the labors of man, has received names already familiar to those, by whom they were adopted, and significant of different objects.

In this enlarged sense perhaps nine tenths of the words in all languages consist of tropes. And the generality of mankind would be in the predic-

ament of Sir Hudibras, of whom it is said, that he could not ope

His mouth, but out there flew a trope.

It is not however to all such terms, that the rules for figurative language can be extended. It would perhaps be impossible to draw the line between figurative and literal language with precision. But although the boundaries be not accurately defined, and although there may be numerous gradations between expressions strictly literal and unquestioned figures, the real distinction between them still exists; and the ancient and modern rhetoricians in this, as in every other part of the science, have multiplied divisions, subdivisions, and names, until they have made out a perfect army of figures. To enumerate them would be useless; for, if you had them all by heart, they would rather deserve to be unlearned, than retained in the memory.

On the other hand the modern writers do not appear to have any settled notions of the boundaries between figurative and literal language. Dr. Blair for instance, after observing that some of the most admired and pathetic passages of the greatest ancient poets are expressed without any figure,

and with the utmost simplicity, gives among others the following passage from Virgil,

Te, dulcis Conjux, te solo in littore secum,

Te veniente die, te decedente canebat,

as a sample of that tender and pathetic simplicity ; while in truth there is scarcely a word in the two lines, but is highly figurative. The first word, *te*, introduces an apostrophe, which is a figure. Its repetition is a figure. *Dulcis*, associated with *Conjux*, is a figure. *Solo in littore secum*, for *solus in littore*, is a figure beyond the proper walks of oratory. It is not only his solitude, but the solitude of the beach, which this figure imports. *Veniente* and *decedente die* are figures. The day neither comes nor goes. I question whether in all Virgil two lines more figurative could have been selected. The prayer of Evander on parting with his son is another instance given of tender simplicity. It is nearly as figurative, as the lamentation of Orpheus in the above lines.

The effect of the extreme minuteness, which in ancient times discriminated and multiplied the names of figures, was to loosen the laws of composition. It avowedly sanctioned false grammar.

Almost every violation of syntax was set down to the account of certain tropes ; and Quintilian expressly says, that there are as many ways of making a figure, as there are of committing a solecism.

The effect of the uncertain boundary between figurative and literal language among the moderns is to leave every philological inquirer at liberty to settle his own canons of criticism. The indulgence of the ancients legitimated every trespass. The rigor of the moderns banishes for the most trifling offence against logical analysis. You will find it necessary for the purposes of composition or of criticism to take a middle standard between the two ; never to indulge a looseness of imagery, which would dissolve the texture of the sentiment ; nor yet to bind down language by the chains of metaphysics, until you discover, that there never was and never will be a correct sentence, written or spoken in any human language.

The great foundation of figurative language rests on the association of ideas. When a word has in the first instance been appropriated to any particular thing, and is afterwards turned or converted to the representation of some other thing, its new signification must arise from some associa-

tion with the old. This association must be sympathetic between the speaker and the hearer.

That is, the hearer must at the moment, when the word is uttered, form the same association, which existed in the speaker's mind at the moment of utterance ; else he cannot understand the figure.

The most abundant of all the sources of figurative association is the analogy between matter and spirit. For as ideas of reflection can be communicated only by material images, nothing that relates to spiritual nature can be expressed but by figures. This is an idea so important in the philosophical consideration of figurative speech, that it deserves particular illustration ; for which purpose let us recur to the two most solemn and most important topics of spiritual existence, the Supreme Creator, and the immortality of the human soul.

An immaterial Deity was an idea entertained by the Hebrews alone of all the nations of antiquity. And in order to preserve them from the errors of others in this respect, one of the commandments of the decalogue expressly forbade them to make graven images for objects of worship. Yet in their holy books God is said to have made man in his own image, after his own likeness. And in

all the interpositions of the Deity, with which their sacred history abounds, he is always represented, as operating by physical organs. This has been made, by some of the shallow cavillers against religion, an argument to dispute the authenticity of the scriptures. It is absurd, say they, that the almighty and eternal Creator of the universe should see, and hear, and speak, and work, and rest from labor, like the mere clod of humanity. True; but to make the conception of immaterial energies intelligible to the capacities of man, they must be presented in images of sensation. To show how impossible it is for the human mind to escape from this thralldom of sense, examine how the philosophical poet, in his essay on man, has undertaken to exhibit the Deity.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;
That, chang'd through all, and yet in all the same;
Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame;
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glow's in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect in a hair, as heart;

As full, as perfect in vile man, that mourns,
As the rapt seraph, that adores and burns ;
To him no high, no low, no great, no small ;
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

POPE, ESSAY ON MAN, EP. 1.

The meaning of these beautiful lines is that God is a Spirit, omnipotent, and every where present. And this is expressed partly by displaying him as the universal Agent, by which particular operations of nature are produced, and partly by marking the boundaries of material substance, and affirming that they are no boundaries to him. He warms in the sun ; he glows in the stars ; he breathes in our soul. To him no high, no low ; every reference, affirmative or negative, is to properties of matter.

In St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, treating of the immortality of the soul, a doctrine which constitutes the peculiar glory of christianity, as that of an immaterial God did of the old testament dispensation, he supposes some man to ask the question, how are the dead raised up ; and with what body do they come. After rebuking with pointed severity the propounder of this inquiry, he answers by pointing to the changes in the growth and substance of material objects ; seeds, the flesh

of animals, and the celestial bodies. He contrasts the glories of the immortal soul, by negation of the infirmities incident to our earthly condition. And he concludes in a strain of sublimity, beyond all Greek, beyond all Roman fame.

“ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? ”

This whole passage abounds in figures of the highest and most passionate eloquence. But every one of the images it contains is material. Death and the grave are personified. Their powers are characterized by metaphors of striking analogy, the sting of death, the victory of the grave. And

the interrogations addressed to them, where is thy sting, where is thy victory, glow with that triumphant exultation, so justly due to that religion, which thus vanquishes the heaviest of all human calamities. The true christian shares in this honest triumph. He feels the consolation and joy of believing, that his mortal shall put on immortality, and his corruptible shall put on incorruption. That is, that he shall no longer be incident to the frailties and infirmities of material nature. But his ideas are all negative. He has no distinct idea of what that condition will be. Not of flesh and blood ; not mortal ; not corruptible ; in one word, not material. The conception of what his positive state of existence will be is reserved for the time, when he shall be placed in it.

This eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.

From this impossibility of expressing abstract ideas, otherwise than by means of images borrowed from the senses, we can account for that propensity, so universal among mankind, to clothe anew those abstractions, which in the progress of refinement have lost their perceptible materiality. Hence the relations between spiritual and material exist-

ence are so multiplied; and hence the faculty of discovering new relations of that sort forms perhaps the first characteristic of genius.

Another great class of associations arises from the analogies between one material substance and another. This is varied and modified by the numerous differences and resemblances between animate and inanimate objects.

The third principal source of association is that of sounds, which produces a mongrel brood of genuine and of spurious wit; which is necessarily superficial, because it comes from the immediate report of the senses; but which for that very reason is more easily remarked, and more universal in its impression, than either of the others.

Sometimes these three kinds of association are all united in the composition of a figure. For example, Virgil calls the two Scipios "*duo fulmina belli*," two thunderbolts of war. Here is a striking analogy between the effects of their warlike talents and a natural phenomenon. The association is between physical and intellectual nature. But the poet did not intend that the whole analogy should be applied. The sudden, irresistible rapidity of destruction, effected by the thunderbolt, was the quality, which he meant to have compared with the

military powers of his heroes. But the thunderbolt falls indiscriminately upon the head of friend or of foe. The Scipios were thunderbolts only to the enemies of Rome.

When the western empire was overrun by Attila, king of the Huns, the Romans called him the scourge of God.

Here are two analogies between moral and physical nature. A scourge is an instrument, used for the punishment of offenders. Hence, in calling the king of the Huns a scourge, they considered him as the instrument to punish their own crimes. But he was the scourge of God ; of the Almighty Governor of the universe. The instrument then was terrible in proportion to the power of him, by whom it was employed. The scourge too is an odious weapon, implying the mastery of the being, by whom it is used, and the helpless inferiority of the sufferer under it. But in the two following lines from the Dunciad,

Jacob, the scourge of grammar, mark with awe ;

Nor less revere him, blunderbuss of law ;

the three kinds of association are united. Jacob is a scourge, like Attila ; an odious instrument of punishment. But he is the scourge of grammar, operating only upon children ; the weapon of petty

punishment for petty transgression. Jacob the scourge is as ridiculous, as Attila the scourge is terrific.

But in the next line, to shower still more contempt upon Jacob, the association of sounds is introduced. Jacob was the blunderbuss of law. To understand the force of these associations we must know, that Jacob was one of the writers, who undertook to convince the public, that Pope was a fool, who could not write English, and had no poetical genius. Jacob had published a grammar, and a law dictionary in a large folio volume. To make him therefore the scourge of grammar is a ludicrous image, disgracing him by the nature of the weapon. But the blunderbuss of law brings in a new association. A blunderbuss is a kind of musket, made for firing at random; very heavy, and of little use. The application of the term itself was already severe, by force of this analogy. But there is a second sense, in which the word is used, signifying a blockhead. In this sense it is so mean and vulgar, that Pope could not have ventured nakedly to apply it. The apparent sense, in which the verse employs it, is figuratively for the fire-arm. And under the decoration of this figure the poet knew, that the imagination of the reader

would of itself apply the other meaning as effectually, as if he had dared openly to express it.

Such then is the general doctrine of figurative language ; which originated first from the necessity of communicating ideas of reflection by means of the images of sensation ; founded upon a natural association of ideas, and upon the analogies between the properties of spirit, of matter, and of sounds ; and afterwards greatly multiplied by the charm, which the discovery and display of these analogies possess over the minds of men. From these principles we are to deduce a few rules for our direction in the management of figures, and to consider more particularly some of the figures most frequently used by orators and poets. This however must be the occupation of another day.

LECTURE XXXI.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.



HAVING in my last lecture considered the origin and character of figurative language in general, its foundation upon the association of ideas, and upon the analogies between matter and spirit, between one material substance and another, and between sounds, it will now be proper to consider the rules of practice in composition, which naturally result from these principles.

The purpose of figurative speech is to address the eye through the medium of the imagination. The sight, as has been remarked by philosophical observers, is the most perfect and most delightful of all our senses. As an inlet of ideas to the mind, its capacities are greater than those of all the

other senses together. Hence it is that the faculty of the human soul, by which we are enabled to bring into the mind ideas of sensible objects, which are not present and accessible to any of the senses, is termed the imagination. Its powers are not limited to the sense of seeing. It will call up in obedience to our will ideas, which originated from the taste, the touch, the smell, or the hearing, as readily as those, which first entered at the eye. Yet as an image can be perceptible only to the sight, so the word imagination, in its primary sense, could have been applied only to such objects, as came within the cognizance of that sense; which, from its great superiority to the others, has for all the purposes of fancy been received as the representative of all the rest.

The powers of the imagination are not confined to the reminiscence of ideas, which have been admitted to the mind through the medium of the senses; they extend also to the combination of such ideas into forms different from any of the combinations of nature. It is the union of these two powers in the faculties of man, which opens a new creation to the mind. It is possessed in very different degrees by different persons; and more

than any thing else constitutes the varieties of genius among mankind.

If the imagination and the eye thus predominate in storing the mind with ideas, they are equally essential to the art of communicating them by means of speech. For this purpose indeed the sense of hearing acquires an importance far beyond any, that it possesses for the mere acquisition of ideas. The ear is the sole receptacle of articulated speech ; but it must be remembered, that the sense of hearing receives no direct ideas from the sounds of articulation. Speak to a man in a language, which he does not understand ; his physical sense of hearing will receive the same impressions, as if he understood you ; but his mind will receive none of the ideas you would convey. It is not then the ear, which receives your ideas. But certain ideas have, by convention between those who speak the same language, been agreed to be represented by certain articulate sounds. The eye and the imagination therefore must have performed their whole task in producing the idea, before you can resort to the instrument of speech for imparting it.

But in oratorical discourse it very seldom occurs, that you can employ the senses of your audi-

tor, as means of communicating your idea. When it can indeed be done, it never fails to produce the most powerful effect. The artifices, which were employed to produce this effect by the orators of ancient times, have been mentioned in another part of this course ; and the practice was carried often to an excess, which defeated its purpose by becoming ridiculous. At all times however it must have been impossible to exhibit any considerable proportion of the ideas, which the speaker intended to impart, directly to the senses of his auditory. The most immediate and necessary substitute then must be the imagination ; that faculty, which exhibits to the mind's eye the forms of absent things. Hence the use of figurative speech. The object of the orator is to seize with accuracy those analogies, which exist in the nature of things ; and to exhibit them in the colors, which imagination can throw upon them. But the combining power of the imagination must here be used with great discretion. And the first rule, which the orator of figures must impress upon his mind, is the rule of unity ; that universal rule, which applies at least to every part of oratorical composition ; to the whole compass of the most complicated discourse, as well as to every thought, of which it is combined.

This rule of unity, and the reason upon which it is founded, have been urged with the utmost possible force by Horace, at the very threshold of his art of poetry. “Suppose a painter,” says he, “should clap the head of a man upon the neck of a horse ; and, gathering from all quarters the limbs of various animals, should stick them over with variegated feathers ; or join together the form of a beautiful woman and a disgusting fish ; would you not laugh at the sight of such an object ? Precisely such is the book made up of parts, as incoherent as a sick man’s dreams.”

The original passage is familiar to you all ; and it affords at the same time an excellent specimen of figurative language, and an admirable illustration of the rule of unity. The precept of simplicity and consistency might be presented abstractedly to the understanding a thousand times, without making the impression of this image. Here you see the object ; the motley compound of bird, beast, fish, and human kind. You need no process of reasoning to perceive its absurdity. You see, you laugh, and you adopt the poet’s conclusion, that a book, composed of materials thus dissimilar, is as ridiculous as the picture, which has been presented to your imagination.

The principle is peculiarly applicable to figurative language in general. Every image, under which a writer or speaker proposes to display thought, is a picture. It ought then above all things to be consistent with itself.

The critical, rhetorical, and poetical teachers of all ages have been so earnest in the recommendation of this rule, that one would imagine it must be observed with the utmost accuracy by all correct writers. It is however often violated by the most celebrated authors ; and it is sometimes enjoined by critics in cases, where it ought not to prevail.

You have perceived from the observations of a preceding lecture, that a vast proportion, perhaps nine tenths of all languages were originally figurative. But that when figurative expressions have once obtained a general currency, and become familiar to common discourse, they lose their picturesque character, and assume a literal signification ; just as gold and silver coins in great circulation lose the impression of the figure, stamped upon them, and retain only the value of the metal, of which they were composed. As this change from a figurative to a literal meaning is effectuated gradually and in process of time, there must always be a multitude of terms in a state of fluctu-

ation between the figure and the letter, and partaking more or less of the nature of both.

It is the province of taste and of judgment to discriminate between terms of these different kinds, and to apply the principles of figurative or of literal discourse to them according to their several acceptations. To those, which are purely figurative, the rule of unity applies in its most rigorous severity. In such cases the image cannot be perfect, unless it would endure the test of painting. For, as Quintilian remarks, to begin with a tempest and finish with a fire, or an earthquake, is a most flagrant inconsistency.

But if a term, originally figurative, has by frequent circulation, by adoption from a different language, or by a modification of idea, which custom has sanctioned, lost its primitive image as a figure of speech, and acquired a literal signification generally understood and recognised; the rule of picturesque unity no longer confines its powers, and it may freely form associations with similar derivatives from other figures, although such affinity would have been prohibited between them in their primary signification.

Between these two classes of words there is a third, which may sometimes be taken in a figura-

tive and sometimes in a literal sense. To these the rules of consistent imagery applies with some latitude of relaxation. A correct writer, in combining them with other words, will always be mindful of their descent, and avoid connecting them with other terms utterly incompatible with their primitive meaning.

The distinction between these three classes of terms, and of the rule of unity, as applicable to them in their varieties, may perhaps best be illustrated by examining several passages from some of the most recent and most correct oratorical English writers.

1. Of the first class, purely figurative, examine the following sentences from Junius.

“If the discipline of the army be in any degree preserved, what thanks are due to a man, whose cares, notoriously confined to filling up vacancies, have degraded the office of commander in chief into a broker of commissions ?”

Here are cares, which have degraded an office into a broker. Cares cannot with propriety be said to degrade ; neither can an office be degraded into a broker. This sentence, had the author not given it a figurative turn, would have read thus ; “ what thanks are due to a man, who, by no-

toriously confining his cares to the filling up of vacancies, has degraded the office of commander in chief into that of a broker of commissions."

Again, Junius to the Duke of Grafton. "But it seems you meant to be distinguished; and to a mind like yours there was no other road to fame, but by the destruction of a noble fabric, which you thought had been too long the admiration of mankind."

This figure is exquisitely beautiful. The classical allusion to the incendiary, who, to immortalize his name, burnt the temple of Diana at Ephesus, is barely hinted to the recollection of the reader, and adds much to the elegance and energy of the image. But it wants unity. The destruction of a fabric is not a road. And if a road could be supposed to be opened by the destruction of the fabric, still the word *other* would be superfluous. It gives a meaning contrary to that, which the writer intended. He meant to say, that to the Duke of Grafton's mind there was no road to fame but by the destruction of a noble fabric. As the sentence stands it implies, that there was another road in the Duke's mind; besides which there was no other, but by the destruction of the fabric.

One more sentence from Junius, speaking of Horne.

“No, my lord,....it was the solitary, vindictive malice of a monk, brooding over the infirmities of his friend, until he thought they quickened into public life, and feasting with a rancorous rapture upon the sordid catalogue of his distresses.”

The first part of this sentence introduces to us the malice of a monk ; in the second this malice is brooding like a dunghill fowl over a nest of infirmities ; in the third it is feasting with rancorous rapture upon a catalogue.

Yet this is one of the most striking figures in that whole collection of letters. It would doubtless have been an easy thing to render it more correct ; but I know not how it could be done without extracting some of its fire. Criticism is a frigid damper ; and you can seldom lay hold of any slight incorrectness in any of these bold, original figures, without taking from it all its vital heat. Thus too Junius to lord Camden.

“I turn with pleasure from that barren waste, in which no salutary plant takes root, no verdure quickens, to a character fertile, as I willingly believe, in every great and good qualification.”

The first part of this sentence is entirely figurative; the second is a mixture of figurative and literal. He turns from a barren waste to a fertile character.

These passages have been taken from Junius, because he is one of the most correct writers in the language; and because he has been much and justly admired for the beauty of his figures. But it would not be quite fair to select inaccuracies from him alone. Let us then bring to the test one or two sentences of Dr. Johnson.

“If he, who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horror, or panting with security; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction.”*

In this sentence the thread of life is divided by the wing of a minute. But a wing is not a proper instrument for dividing a thread.

The next passage I shall quote is less entitled to indulgence, because it is taken from the plan of his dictionary, a work professedly philological; and

because it is itself a reprobation of irregular phraseology.

“Barbarous or impure words and expressions may be branded with some note of infamy, as they are carefully to be eradicated wherever they are found; and they occur too frequently even in the best writers.”

Barbarous or impure words cannot indeed be treated with too much severity; but the rigor of their sentence must be limited by the powers of the judge. After being branded with a note of infamy as felons, they must undergo a metamorphosis before they can be eradicated as noxious weeds; and a second transformation before they can occur, that is, run out to meet you.

To brand and to eradicate, when applied to the treatment of words, are terms purely figurative; and as they present two images not only distinct, but altogether incompatible with each other, they ought not to have been coupled together in the same sentence. But I do not mean to include in the same censure the use of the term *occur*; for I consider that as belonging to the second of the classes of words, which I have enumerated; that is, of words which, though in their origin figurative, have by the custom of the language acquir-

ed a literal meaning, which absolves them from the laws of imagery, to which in their primitive sense they would have been subjected. So that either a word, a felon, or a weed, may be said without impropriety to occur.

2. Of this second class of words every language is full. I shall give you therefore only two or three examples, from the same authors I have just quoted.

Junius in his letter to the king says, "in this error we see a capital violation of the most obvious rules of policy and prudence."

The terms, *error* and *capital violation*, are derived from words originally figurative. And, if the laws of figurative language were still binding upon them, they could not have been brought together in this sentence. An error was a wandering of the feet; a capital violation was a fracture of the head. Now, although a broken head may often follow, as a consequence from the wandering of the feet, it would be a strange confusion of perception, which would see the one in the other; especially as the error is predicated of one object, and the violation of another; the error being supposed to be committed by the king, and the violation to be suffered by the rules of policy.

But the words, error and capital violation, are here used without any regard to figure; neither the writer nor the reader thinks of looking at them as embodied images; they are received and understood as bearing a literal meaning; and in their association together there is neither error of expression, nor violation of rule. The same principle must be applied to the following paragraph from Johnson, in his tract entitled taxation no tyranny.

“The legislature of a colony (let not the comparison be too much disdained) is only the vestry of a larger parish, which may lay a cess on the inhabitants, and enforce the payment; but can extend no influence beyond its own district.”

The terms, which I would here call to your attention, are *extend* and *influence*; words originally figurative, and which as such could not have been coupled together in the relation, which they here bear to each other. To extend is to stretch out; influence is flowing in. Unless you discard entirely this figurative meaning, you see how absurd the connexion between them would be. But the writer is speaking of an abstracted operation of political power. There is a literal meaning annexed to his words, which none of his readers

will mistake. . . He may therefore extend his influence freely, without needing a floodgate to be opened for its extention ; and he may extend the influence of a legislature, without being bound to invest it with all the other properties of matter.

3. Let us come to the third class of expressions, which I have designated as fluctuating between the literal and the figurative sense ; so that they may be occasionally amenable to the laws of picturesque composition, and occasionally released from their obligation.

“ Every common dauber,” says Junius, “ writes rascal and villain under his pictures ; because the pictures themselves have neither character nor resemblance. But the works of a master require no index. His features and coloring are taken from nature.”

This paragraph is entirely figurative. Political writers are represented as painters, and their works as pictures. But the term *index* applies to their works as written compositions ; and not to their works as paintings. An index is the table of contents to a book. But it also means a finger, pointing to its object. This is the sense, in which it is obviously used by Junius ; and in this sense it is perfectly consistent with the remainder of the figure.

The same writer, addressing the Duke of Grafton, says, "for the present you may safely resume that style of insult and menace, which even a private gentleman cannot submit to hear without being contemptible."

A style, in its primitive meaning, was the instrument used for writing. Figuratively it now means the character of written composition. In neither of these senses can a style be heard. Perhaps if the writer had said tone of insult, instead of style, the sentence would have been more perfect; for a tone can be heard. Yet, in the popular acceptance, style is naturally extended from the modification of written language to that of language spoken; and with this indulgence a style may obtain a hearing.

Dr. Johnson, in his life of Addison, makes the following remark on his character of Sir Roger de Coverley.

"The variable weather of the mind, the flying vapors of incipient madness, which from time to time cloud reason without eclipsing it, it requires so much nicety to exhibit, that Addison seems to have been deterred from prosecuting his own design."

An eclipse is the disappearance of one heavenly body by the intervention of another. It has

nothing to do with the variations of the weather ; and never can be effected by the operation of vapors. In rigorous analysis here is a mixed metaphor, one part of which has reference to an atmospheric phenomenon, and the other to the motions of the planetary system. Yet who would have the hardihood to efface one stroke of the pencil in this beautiful image ?

I have dwelt the more earnestly upon this distinction between the three classes of words and expressions, which may be termed the figurative, the literal, and the intermediate, because it appears to me essential for adjusting the principles of composition and of criticism ; and because inattention to it is one of the most abundant sources of erroneous judgment concerning works of taste.

I shall conclude this lecture with an example of false criticism in Dr. Johnson, originating in this same error, a misapplication of the rules, that govern literal language, to figurative speech.

In Gray's bard he apostrophizes the tower of London in the following lines.

“ Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
By many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head.

Here, says Johnson with a sneer, we are told how "towers are fed." In the literal sense it would certainly be absurd to speak of feeding a tower. But the personification of inanimate objects is one of the most unquestionable privileges of poetry; and Gray's bard might personify the towers of London, as well as any other object. He does so. Once personified, all the attributes of living persons may be applied to them; and of those towers, the towers of London, where many a foul and midnight murder had been committed, there was strict propriety, as well as striking energy in saying, that with such murders they were fed.

The result then is, that literal and figurative language are governed by different laws; that the realm of imagination has a code of its own, differing materially from that of grammar, and which must not be confounded with it.

Perhaps the rules for the management of figures might all be comprehended under this universal principle of unity, which I have here endeavoured to explain. There are however some others, which, though subordinate, deserve a distinct consideration; which shall be given them in my next lecture.

LECTURE XXXII.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.



IN my last lecture I endeavoured to point out a line of discrimination between figurative and literal language, essentially necessary for fixing the rules of composition; and as a standard of judgment upon the compositions of others. In illustrating the rule of unity, the great and vital principle of figurative speech, I was naturally led to a comparative view of that and of literal language. In the communication of thought by articulate sounds these are so intermingled together, and yet are governed by systems of regulation so different from each other, that their combinations and oppositions have often produced the effect of perplexing the writer, and entangling the critic.

This distinction I would again recommend to your observation and study. Literal speech, you will remember, is a direct representation of things to the memory and to the rational faculty. Figurative speech is an indirect representation of things to the senses and to the imagination. Literal speech therefore is combined upon principles of mere ratiocination; and the words, which stand for ideas, are put together by the rules of syntax. But figurative speech is subject in some sort to the dominion of the senses, and to the laws of matter.

Literal and figurative expressions are so blended together in the practice of speech, that the boundaries between them are imperceptible; like the colors of the rainbow, of which the dullest eye can perceive the varieties, while the keenest cannot catch the precise point, at which every separate tint is parted from its neighbouring hue. I have observed, that a great proportion of all human language consists of expressions originally figurative, but which from frequency of use have become literal; and I have urged, that to them the principles of figurative language can seldom be applied; that the abuse of such application to them is one of the great sources of erroneous criticism, and a

principle cause why "ten censure wrong, for one who writes amiss." I have particularly shown you by a variety of examples, that derivative words, adopted from foreign languages, can seldom be bound to the figurative analogies of their primary meaning. In this respect I have pleaded for a degree of indulgence perhaps greater, than most philological writers have hitherto been willing to allow. I plead for it however from the necessity of the case. That theory of human science must be false, to which no practice ever was or ever can be made to conform. They, who insist that the figure of a primitive word must be retained through all the changes, which it undergoes in its intercourse with mankind, should remember, that even the modifications of matter disdain all such limitations. Shakspeare's Hamlet traces the dust of Caesar and Alexander, until they stop the bung-hole of a beer barrel. But he does not contend that the patch, which expels the winter's flaw, is still to be admired as a hero, or obeyed as the conqueror of the world.

The second rule for the management of figurative language is that of congruity. As the power of imagery results from the association of ideas, to make the communication clear and distinct, ev-

ery heterogeneous mixture, presenting images and associations different from those intended to be imparted, ought carefully to be avoided.

1. The figure should be suited to the subject. A certain proportion of dignity or of familiarity, of magnificence or of simplicity, should be observed between the idea, proposed to be conveyed, and the image, by which it is presented. If the subject itself be great, it is degraded by figures, which carry with them accessories of meanness. If the subject be low, images of grandeur expose it to ridicule. This rule has not however always been observed by the greatest poets of antiquity. Virgil has been censured for comparing a queen, stimulated by a fury, to a top lashed about by a troop of boys; and many of the similes of Homer are liable to a similar objection.

This rule however does not always require that the image itself should be precisely of the character of the subject. The same figure may be exhibited in colors, surrounded with circumstances, and clad in words, which will either raise or sink it to the level of the subject.

Thus, at the opening of the eleventh book of the Iliad, we have a figurative exhibition of the morning.

The saffron morn, with early blushes spread,
Now rose refulgent from Tithonius' bed,
With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
And gild the course of heaven with sacred light.

To a lover of nature, and of the pure enjoyments, which a beneficent Providence has lavished upon us, there is no portion of existence more replete with unadulterated pleasure, than the return of the morning. It is here represented by an allegorical personification; and by an image strictly consonant with the subject appears rising from bed. Every circumstance, introduced as attending on this action, is calculated to excite ideas of tenderness and pleasure, of beauty and devotion. The blushes of the morn, her refulgence, the new-born day, the gilding of heaven with sacred light, are all accessories congenial to the sensations of delight, which the principal object presents to the imagination of the reader.

Let us now see how the same natural phenomenon, the return of morning, is exhibited in Butler's *Hudibras*.

The sun had long since in the lap
Of Thetis taken out his nap;
And, like a lobster boil'd, the morn
From black to red began to turn,

Here, as in the passage from Homer, is an allegorical personage rising from sleep; and thus far the image is suited to the subject. But Hudibras is a burlesque poem; the excellence of which consists in the degradation of its pictures. His allegorical person therefore is the sun; whom he represents as having risen, not from bed, but from taking a nap in the lap of Thetis. The change in the face of heaven from darkness to day-light is compared to that of a boiled lobster, turning from black to red. One of the most enchanting objects in nature is thus accommodated to the meanness of the poet's subject. The reader is indeed deprived of all those beauties of sentiment, which are communicated by the associations of the Grecian poet; but in their stead he finds the substitute of ridicule, and considers the incongruity between the natural object and the image, in which it is displayed, as reconciled by the nature of the poem.

In the *Annus Mirabilis* of Dryden, a work of which that poet boasted as his masterpiece, and for which he almost claimed the honors of an epic poem, there are two images, in two successive stanzas, which exemplify very strongly the observance and the breach of that congruity, which suits the imagery to the subject. They are in the de-

scription of a naval battle between the Dutch and English fleets.

In the first of these stanzas he says,

Sometimes from fighting squadrons of each fleet,
Deceiv'd themselves, or to preserve some friend,
Two grappling Ætnas on the ocean meet,
And English fires with Belgian flames contend.

The image here is well suited to the subject. Two ships of war in the flames of battle, metaphorically represented as two Ætnas meeting and grappling upon the ocean, present a figure at once magnificent and terrible.

But hear the next stanza.

Now at each tack our little fleet grows less,
And, like maim'd fowl, swing lagging on the main;
Their greater loss their numbers scarce confess,
While they lose cheaper than the English gain.

What a falling off is there. The grappling Ætnas in the compass of two lines have dwindled down into maimed water fowl. The image in the second line of this stanza is lively; the likeness striking; and the line itself,

Like maim'd fowl, swim lagging on the main,
highly picturesque. But it is altogether unsuita-

ble to the dignity of the subject ; and, coming so immediately after the grappling *Ætnas*, seems as if Dryden purposely meant his fleet should give a specimen of the art of sinking. The closing line, casting up an account of profit and loss between the two fleets, finishes the degradation of the stanza, by the incongruity between the imagery and the subject.

An example of gross incongruity between the image and the subject appears in the following lines of a poet, usually far more correct than Dryden.

Superior beings, when of late they saw
A mortal man unfold all nature's law,
Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
And show'd a Newton, as we show an ape.

The object, intended to be illustrated by this image, is the wonderful contrast between the powers and the infirmities of man ; a topic, in which there is little novelty, and which Young in his *Night Thoughts* has handled with as much vigor, and with more propriety. Pope supposes, that superior beings were struck with admiration at the discoveries of Newton ; considering them as far transcending the common capacities of the human species. And to demonstrate their admiration,

they showed a Newton as we show an ape. The idea of the poet was to exalt Newton at the expense of his species. But the sentiment, with which we show an ape, is not admiration. The accessories, which accompany the name of that animal, are all contemptuous and derisory. The object of comparison degrades instead of ennobling the character, to which it is associated in idea. The thought is complimentary to Newton; but the image in which it is moulded is insulting. It is unsuitable to the subject; and unsuitable to the sentiment of the writer. It violates then both the first and the second rule of congruity.

I have taken these examples to elucidate the first rule, congruity to the subject, from poetical writers, because they furnished more luminous views of this principle, than I could readily have found among the orators; and as poetry is still more than oratory within the dominions of figurative language, its records may with equal freedom be consulted for the knowledge of those laws, which are equally binding over all the regions of imagination.

2. The second rule of congruity refers to the sentiments of the speaker; and this rule is of the first importance to the purposes of oratory. When

the object is persuasion, when your great end is to make your hearer sympathize with the feelings which you are expressing, it becomes you to be peculiarly cautious to avoid mingling any thing contrary to your purpose in the ideas, which you excite in the mind of your hearer by the means of imagery. Would you recommend your subject to the affections of your auditory, let your figures bear the stamp of benevolence. Is it your purpose to rouse the angry passions, you must darken your canvass with harsh and odious colors.

Let us exemplify this rule by remarking the contrasted manner, in which Mr. Burke and Dr. Johnson, while contending for the opposite sides of the same question, derive arguments from the same facts, and paint the same objects. The subject of the particular passages I shall quote is the rapid increase of population in North America; of which Burke in his speech on conciliation with America speaks thus.

“ The first thing, that we have to consider with regard to the nature of the object, is the number of people in the colonies. I have taken for some years a good deal of pains on that point. I can by no calculation justify myself in placing the number below two millions of inhabitants of our own

European blood and color ; besides at least five hundred thousand others, who form no inconsiderable part of the strength and opulence of the whole. This, sir, is, I believe, about the true number. There is no occasion to exaggerate, where plain truth is of so much weight and importance. But whether I put the present numbers too high or too low is a matter of little moment. Such is the strength, with which population shoots in that part of the world, that, state the numbers as high as we will, whilst the dispute continues the exaggeration ends. Whilst we are discussing any given magnitude, they are grown to it. Whilst we spend our time in deliberating on the mode of governing two millions, we shall find we have millions more to manage. Your children do not grow faster from infancy to manhood, than they spread from families to communities, and from villages to nations."

The object of Burke in this speech was conciliation. A civil war between Great Britain and her colonies was just bursting out, on a question respecting the authority of the British parliament over America. Burke's desire was to promote peace, and restore harmony. You observe that, in the passage I have read, he draws an argument

in favor of conciliatory measures from the population, the great and growing population of this country. He presents in a variety of very striking lights the rapidity of this growth ; and concludes by comparing it to the growth of an individual from infancy to manhood. There was perhaps a little exaggeration in this idea, but not much. The eloquence of sentiment speaks in round numbers, and never concerns itself about fractional parts. But the great address and beauty of the image here introduced is the reference to the children of his hearers. “ Your children do not grow faster from infancy to manhood, than they spread from families to communities, and from villages to nations.” Had he said a single individual grows not faster from infancy to manhood, the image would have lost all its force. He amplifies the circumstance to touch the imagination of his hearers ; but he brings in their children to move their affections. The figure then was strictly consonant to the sentiments of the speaker. Its tendencies were all towards conciliation.

Dr. Johnson’s pamphlet, entitled taxation no tyranny, was published shortly after this speech ; and in many parts was doubtless intended as an answer to it. He too speaks of the rapid increase

of American population. But his inferences and his images are as different from those of Burke, as was the purpose, which guided his pen. Let us hear him on the same topic, just discussed by Burke.

“ But we are soon told that the continent of North America contains three millions, not of men merely, but of whigs ; of whigs fierce for liberty, and disdainful of dominion ; that they multiply with the fecundity of their own rattlesnakes ; so that every quarter of a century doubles their numbers.

“ Men, accustomed to think themselves masters, do not love to be threatened ! This talk is I hope commonly thrown away, or raises passions different from those, which it was intended to excite. Instead of terrifying the English hearer to tame acquiescence, it disposes him to hasten the experiment of bending obstinacy, before it has become yet more obdurate ; and convinces him, that it is necessary to attack a nation thus prolific, while we may yet hope to prevail. When he is told through what extent of territory we must travel to subdue them, he recollects how far, a few years ago, we travelled in their defence. When it is urged that

they will shoot up like the hydra, he naturally considers how the hydra was destroyed."

Johnson was writing in support of the system of measures, which the government was then pursuing towards America. His purpose was to counteract every thing conciliatory; to rouse and stimulate the violent and angry passions. The rapid increase of American population, a fact in which he coincides entirely with Burke, gives him an opportunity to address the pride of dominion; the jealousies, the fears of those, to whom he writes. How incongruous then to his sentiments would have been an image, which would have brought to the hearts of his readers the soothing sentiments of parental affection! How absurd would it have been for him to say, as Burke did on the same theme, "the Americans spread from villages to nations, as fast as your children grow from infancy to manhood!" No; the image of fecundity, which occurs to his mind as an object of comparison, is that of our rattlesnakes; an image, borrowed from the subject, as the rattlesnake is an animal peculiar to this continent. To instill ideas of disgust and abhorrence against the Americans, what association of ideas more forcible could have been presented, than that, which is connected with

the most odious and most venomous of reptiles ! The image of the hydra is more obscure, and in a popular harangue would have been unsuitable ; for it would have been too learned. It is a classical allusion ; and to be understood requires a perfect familiarity with the ancient mythology. But to those, who could comprehend it, the ideas associated with the image were as bitter and full of malignity, as the comparison to the rattlesnake. Our extraordinary rapidity of increase, he says, reminds him of the hydra, and leads him to consider how the hydra was destroyed. The hydra was a fabulous monster with fifty heads ; and whenever one of these was cut off, two shot forth in its stead. It was destroyed by Hercules ; and Johnson calls upon his readers to consider how. The how was in this manner. Hercules cut off all its heads successively ; and to prevent their shooting out again in double numbers he seared with a hot iron the wound of every head, as he cut it off. This is the remedy, which suggests itself to Johnson's mind ; and which he suggests to his readers, as fit to be employed for arresting the rapidity of American population. He seems however ashamed of disclosing it in all its nakedness, and leaves it under the veil of a general and indistinct allusion.

It is an amusing, and may be a useful speculation at this day, when the questions then agitated have been long settled, to compare with philosophical impartiality the course of reasoning and the body of sentiment, by which the opposite sides of that important cause were maintained, by two of the greatest and wisest men, that England ever has produced. This however is not within the province of these lectures. The passages I have read you, and the figures, to which I have called your attention, afford examples of one and the same principle of composition. I have adduced them to show you how the masters of language, in oratorical works, make their imagery coincide with the sentiments which they entertain, and which they wish to communicate. In both these cases you perceive how the imagination is made instrumental to the support of argument. You see how incongruous it would have been to the purpose of Burke, if, in speaking of our increasing numbers, he had thought of rattlesnakes and hydras; and how unsuitable it would have been to Johnson's intentions to have brought into view, in connexion with the same circumstance, the children of those, whose passions he was stimulating to anger and severity.

3. The rule of congruity has in the third place reference to the feelings and understandings of the auditory. Every idea, excited in the mind of the hearer, should perform its part towards effecting the object of the speaker ; that is, to convince or to persuade.

One of the most illustrious examples of a figure, accommodated to the feelings of the auditory, is the celebrated apostrophe of Demosthenes, in the oration for the crown, to the souls of the Athenians, who had perished at Marathon and Plataea, at Salamis and Artinisium.

Demosthenes had instigated his countrymen to take arms against the usurpations of Philip of Macedon. But the conduct of the war had been unfortunate ; and Eschines in his oration against Ctesiphon, to which the oration for the crown was an answer, had endeavoured to cast upon his rival the odium of the public misfortunes, by imputing to him the commencement of the war. In replying to this charge Demosthenes argues the extreme injustice of condemning his counsels merely from the inauspicious character of the event ; shows that the war had been undertaken to maintain the honor and supremacy of the state, and the general liberties of Greece ; and after insisting with

much address that the counsels, which he had recommended, were those of the whole people, who had made them their own by adopting them, affirms, that they were right, notwithstanding their issue had been unsuccessful. After thus preparing the minds of his auditors by making them partakers of his cause, he seizes upon their most ardent passions ; and engages every recollection, connected with the national glory, in his favor. “ It cannot be,” says he. “ No, my countrymen, it cannot be, that you have acted wrong in encountering danger bravely for the liberty and safety of all Greece. No ; by those generous souls of ancient times, who were exposed at Marathon ! By those who stood arrayed at Plataea ! By those who encountered the Persian fleet at Salamis ; who fought at Artemisium ! By all those illustrious sons of Athens, whose remains lie deposited in the public monuments ! All of whom received the same honorable interment from their country ; not those only who prevailed ; not those only who were victorious ; and with reason. What was the part of gallant men they all performed ; their success was such, as the supreme Director of the world dispensed to each.”

This is perhaps the most admired stroke of eloquence, that ever was uttered by this first of human orators. It exhibits a grandeur and generosity of sentiment, to which the heart of every virtuous man, through all the lapse of ages, must yield assent. But the peculiar power of the figure, with which it was associated, consisted in its application to the feelings of those, to whom it was addressed.

The principle, which requires that the figure should be adapted to the understanding of the audience, is applicable principally to extemporaneous discourse before popular assemblies. In such cases imagery should seldom be drawn from objects of science, or of nature, remote from the knowledge of the auditory. Generally speaking the figure will be forcible in proportion to its novelty, combined with the familiarity of the source, from which it is derived, to the mind of the hearer.

Other rules for the management of figures might be added ; but as this branch of the science enters into another department of your studies, I shall not enlarge upon them here. For the purposes of oratory, and so far as figurative language is employed in that art, the most important rules will be found included in the two, which have formed the subject of this lecture and the preced-

ing one; in the rule of unity, which will make every image consistent with itself; and in the rule of congruity, which will make it suitable to the subject, to the sentiments of the speaker, and to the feelings and understanding of the hearer. From these observations upon the subject of figurative language in general we shall next pass to the consideration of some particular figures, which from their importance are entitled to more special notice than the rest.

LECTURE XXXIII.

FIGURES. METAPHOR. ALLEGORY.

MY last three lectures have presented you some considerations on the subject of figurative language in general; a subject, which has been so much exhausted by all the rhetorical writers ancient and modern, that it was impossible for me to say any thing, which had not often been said before. I have therefore contented myself with presenting it to you in a light somewhat different from that, in which it is exhibited by the writers, with whom I suppose you to be familiarly acquainted; and with endeavouring to mark out more distinctly, than they have done, the boundaries between the language of the reasoning faculty, and that of the imagination and the passions. In descending to the examination of particular figures,

and the discrimination between those, which have obtained names for themselves, it were still in vain for me to attempt to entertain you with any novelty either of sentiment or of theory. As however it has been made my duty to notice the most distinguished among these modifications of speech, I shall devote this and the succeeding lecture to them ; referring you to the ordinary writers on the subject of belles-lettres for those particulars, which it would be useless for me to repeat.

The general definition or character of a trope, you will remember, is a word, employed in a sense different from that of its proper meaning. As the great object of all human language is the communication of ideas from the mind of the speaker to the mind of the hearer, it is obvious that, for the attainment of this purpose, the articulate sounds, uttered by the speaker, should be associated with the same ideas, which they will bear in the mind of the hearer. This may not be difficult, so long as the words used are the direct representatives of the ideas, for which they stand. But when the representation is indirect, when the face of the word imports one thing, and the intent another, the discourse must inevitably be misunderstood, unless there be some common principle of

association between the borrowed word and its adventitious meaning. When the patriarch Jacob, on his death bed, called his sons together before him, to tell them that which should befall them in the last days, and said to them, Judah is a lion's whelp; Issachar is a strong ass; Dan shall be a serpent by the way; Naphtali is a hind let loose; Joseph is a fruitful bough; Benjamin shall raven as a wolf; it is not to be imagined, that they could understand him to mean literally what he said. The language was figurative. It was probably not clearly understood by those, to whom it was addressed; for it was prophetic not only of themselves, but of the fortunes, which awaited their descendants. There was however a meaning annexed to all these metaphorical expressions, which doubtless made them sufficiently intelligible at the time, for the purposes of divine Providence; and which has been further elucidated by the subsequent history of the twelve tribes, whose destinies were thus shadowed forth in the last words of their common ancestor. There is indeed in all the most eloquent compositions of Greek and Roman oratory nothing, which could more clearly exhibit the uses and exemplify the efficacy and propriety of figurative language, than

this important portion of the sacred history. We are told for instance by Quintilian, and it has been repeated by all other rhetorical teachers, that figurative language in general, and metaphors in particular, should be used from necessity, for energy, and for beauty; from necessity, whenever the literal meaning of words is inadequate to express the idea communicated by the figure; for energy, when it conveys the idea with more force; and for beauty, when it adds to the idea itself graces, which amuse and delight the imagination of the hearer.

At the moment of that solemn and trying scene, certainly there could be no care of ornamental graces in the mind of the dying patriarch. But the history of nations was to be concentrated in a few sentences; the records of ages were to be comprised in a few moments. To express thoughts, pregnant with the burden of future time, imagery was absolutely necessary. Reflect upon all the meaning, contained in all those typical characteristics, to which I have referred, and say how, in any literal form of speech, it could have been uttered. Listen to that magnificent panegyric upon Reuben; “my first born, my might, the beginning of my strength, the excellency of

dignity, and the excellency of power." Then mark the blasting sentence upon all this superiority. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel;" and tell me how many volumes of sermons are opened to the researches of meditation, in that single sentence.

In the various forms of figurative speech, included under the denomination of tropes, there are three things which require our attention; the literal, or, as it is sometimes called, the proper meaning of the word; the idea, meant to be conveyed by it; and the chain of communication between them. This chain of communication is no other than the association of ideas. There are in the mind of every individual certain modes of association between ideas, peculiar to himself. But there are other modes of association, which are common to the generality of mankind; and others which, though not so universal, become habitual to all those, who speak the same language. And to these circumstances may be traced the use, the abuse, and the varieties of all metaphorical discourse.

There are four distinct principles of association so familiar to the minds of men, that they serve as the foundations, upon which the use of a

word, meaning one thing, for a thought meaning another, is justified in the practice of all nations. The first of these is similitude ; the second, the relation between cause and effect ; the third, the relation between a whole and its parts ; and the fourth is opposition. These various relations form the connecting links of all the principal tropes. Hence it has been contended, that there are only four primary tropes ; the metaphor, founded upon similitude ; the metonymy, founded upon the relation between cause and effect ; the synecdoche, standing on the relation between a whole and its parts ; and irony, the basis of which is opposition. There are however various other distinctions, which the continual analytic process of theory has discovered, which form a secondary class of tropes. I shall notice all those belonging to each of the four classes by themselves ; and endeavour, as briefly as possible, to mark the distinctions between them.

The most frequent and most beautiful of the tropes is the metaphor ; which has sometimes been called a short simile, or a simile in a single word. But there is a material difference between a simile and a metaphor, which is in some sort suggested by the terms themselves. The simile is a word

purely Latin, and means likeness. Metaphor is of Greek derivation, from *μετα Φερω*, and signifies carriage across. The simile exhibits both the objects of comparison, and notices the resemblance between them. The metaphor identifies the two objects in one, and transfers the idea, belonging to one word, to a word belonging to a similar idea. The simile may be compared to a portrait, delineated by the hand of a painter; the metaphor to the image of the same person, reflected by a mirror. The metaphor in Latin is called *translatio*, which is itself a literal translation of the Greek *μετα Φορα*. We have also adopted the Latin term, translation; but annex to it a different, though kindred idea. For a metaphor is to all substantial purposes a translation. But let us illustrate this view of the subject by examples.

In a tragedy of Shakspeare, Coriolanus on the approach of his wife, Valeria, speaking of her, says, she is

The moon of Rome; chaste as the isicle,
That's curdled by the frost from purest snow,
And hangs on Dian's temple.

Now suppose a person, perfectly versed in English grammar, and accurately acquainted with the

literal import of every word in these lines, but altogether ignorant of their figurative import; would he not pronounce the whole a composition of as arrant nonsense, as ever could be put together? A woman who is a moon! The moon of Rome too; as if that city had a moon of its own! That this woman should be chaste is indeed intelligible; but what can be more absurd than to say, she is chaste as an isicle! Chaste as that which, having no animation, can neither possess any moral qualities whatsoever! Yet, as if there could be degrees of chastity between one isicle and another, this lady's virtue must, it seems, be compared to a very particular isicle; an isicle, curdled by the frost; curdled from purest snow! And still it will not answer the purpose, unless it hangs on Dian's temple! No grammar, no dictionary can explain to you the meaning of this strange association of words. You must consider it as a translation. Let us now see how it is to be expounded into the language of common grammar.

The lady is said to be the moon of Rome. This in the first instance is a metaphor; and not a simile. She is not said to be like the moon, but to be the moon itself. The meaning however is, that she possesses certain qualities similar to quali-

ties attributed to the moon. But we may still be at a loss to imagine what properties a lady can have in common with the moon. Until we perceive that, here is another figure. The moon is put here, not for the orb of night, but for Diana; the goddess, who, under the system of the heathen mythology, was the regent of that luminary. Of all the goddesses she was the most distinguished for chastity; and this is the virtue, for which Coriolanus means to say, that Valeria resembled her. The moon of Rome therefore in this quotation, retranslated into literal speech, would simply say, she is chaste as the goddess Diana. The remaining part of the lines changes to another train of figures. Chaste as the isicle is a formal comparison; a simile, and not a metaphor. Yet the isicle is but metaphorically chaste, because it is cold. This analogy between physical coldness and moral purity forms the resemblance, upon which the chastity of Valeria is compared to that of an isicle.

You now see with how much propriety metaphorical discourse may be called translation. You see that in the lines I have read there is only a single word, *chaste*, which means what it literally imports; that the meaning of all the rest must be collected from associations, similitudes, and analo-

gies, which are scarcely hinted at in the words; and which must be supplied by the memory or imagination of the hearer. Here the foundation of the figures was similitude between things entirely distinct from each other; that is, the resemblance between the chastity of a woman and the chastity of a goddess, in the first figure; and the resemblance between coldness and chastity in the second. Hence you will remember, that similitude is the link of association for metaphor.

Quintilian draws a line of distinction for the different kinds of metaphors, arising from the substitution of beings, animate and inanimate, for each other, together with the diversities, of which this composition is susceptible. I perceive no sort of utility in this distinction. It would not be worth the time it would take to give examples of these differences; but it may be proper to remark, that of all metaphors those are the most beautiful, which substitute animated figures for inanimate objects; like the *Pontem indignatus Araxes* of Virgil.

The allegory is also a figure, founded on similitude; and is by some writers said to be nothing more, than an extended metaphor. There is however another difference between them, indicated by

their names. Metaphor, as we have seen, is a carriage across; a bridge. Allegory is another discourse, *αλληγορα*, where the figure is so complete, that the real or literal meaning is totally discarded. The metaphor mingles the literal and the figurative together very often, when it substitutes the one for the other. The allegory adheres inflexibly to the figure. The metaphor personates a character; but shows the face of the performer. The allegory assumes at once the character and the mask. It is consistent in disguise, and gives you no direct access to its real countenance. The condition of a dissipated youth, commencing with licentious pleasures, and terminating in fatal disappointment, has often been likened to the vicissitudes of a vessel, sailing with prosperous winds, but soon devoted to the tempest and hurricane. Shakspeare presents the idea in the form of metaphors.

How like a younker or a prodigal
The sharfed bark puts from her naked bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return
With over-weather'd ribs, and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!

Here the prodigal and the vessel both appear. The figure might be inverted, and indeed it is inverted; for the poet, in likening the weather-beaten vessel to the ruined prodigal, really means to liken the prodigal to the vessel.

But in Gray's bard there is very nearly the same image, to express nearly the same idea, in the form of an allegory.

Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm;
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
Youth on the prow, and pleasure at the helm.
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

In these lines you discover nothing but the mere imagery. The shadow stands alone. The body, from which it projected, is kept altogether out of sight. The real object, intended to be depicted in this representation, was the unhappy fate of Richard the second of England. The thoughtless splendor of his reign at its commencement, and the melancholy catastrophe, with which it terminated, are portrayed; but they are not mentioned. The vessel itself is all you see.

Allegories are susceptible of indefinite extension. The term itself implies more than a mere figure of speech. It is a discourse; and often expands into voluminous works. Fables and parables are almost entirely allegories. All fictitious history is allegorical; and there was a time, when the fashionable language of poetry was nothing but allegory.

There is a species of allegory, very frequently used in discourse of every kind, which is comprehended under the general name of allusion. This is a peculiar mode of sporting with ideas, as the term itself imports; an irregular association of ideas, which the writer or speaker intends without giving notice of it; and which is seldom employed, but when there is some reason for disguising the thought which is inspired. The allusion may be made in direct, as well as in figurative language. It is most commonly a subsidiary thought, which may be altogether distinct both from the image presented by the figure, and from the principal idea represented by it. There is no other figure of speech, which has so wide a range of means, as the allusion. It may be made so direct, as to strike every hearer, or so remote, as to escape the most penetrating discernment. An allusion may

be made, and in all public speaking you will find yourself making allusions, which none of your hearers will understand. You will say perhaps that this is a very idle waste of time; directly contrary to the main object of speech, which is the communication of thought. Certainly there could be no greater abuse of language, than to seek occasions for making such allusions, as will not be understood; but they may present themselves spontaneously to the mind, and there may be no substantial reason for rejecting them; particularly when the principal idea is complete, whether the allusion be understood or not.

In Dr. Johnson's pamphlet, entitled *taxation no tyranny*, there is an example of allusion, which, though at the time perhaps universally understood, would occur to scarce any reader of the present day, whose recollections do not extend so far back. This pamphlet was professedly written in answer to an address from the American continental congress to the people of England in the year 1774. He says,

“Those who wrote the address, though they have shown no great extent or profundity of mind, are yet probably wiser than to believe it; but they have been taught, by some master of mis-

chief, how to put in motion the engine of political electricity ; to attract by the sounds of liberty and property, to repel by those of popery and slavery, and to give the great stroke by the name of Boston."

The principal and apparent idea here is contained in a metaphor, which designates the address of the congress, as an engine of political electricity. The reflection upon the congress is gross, and insulting, and unjust. But besides the general idea, charging that body with political hypocrisy, there is here an indirect allusion to Dr. Franklin. He was the person intended by the words "some master of mischief." These words would have been of themselves insufficient to point him out ; but, when connected with the metaphorical operation of political electricity, they indicated who was meant, as much as if he had been mentioned by name. Dr. Franklin was at the time, when this address of congress was drawn, in England, in the capacity of agent from several of the colonies, which afterwards became the United States. He had obtained great celebrity throughout Europe by his experiments and discoveries in electricity ; and was then much distinguished by his zeal for the American cause.

He returned just at that juncture to America ; and at the time, when Johnson's pamphlet appeared, was himself a member of the congress. Johnson's intention therefore was to insinuate, that Franklin had written from England, recommending that such an address to the people of England should be made, and even suggesting the topics, upon which it should insist. The allusion presents a superadded idea, insinuating what the writer dared not assert, because he could not have any proof to maintain it ; but which he supposed would have its effect upon the public mind in England, to render Franklin odious, and the congress contemptible, as much as if he could have made the assertion upon the faith of unquestioned public documents.

There is a particular species of metaphor, distinguished by the name of the oratorical syllepsis ; which consists in the employment of a word, bearing at the same time two different senses ; the one literal, the other figurative. It is not always easy to distinguish this figure from what is commonly called a pun.

In one of Virgil's pastorals, the shepherd, Corydon, speaking in praise of his mistress, exclaims,

Nerine Galatea, thymo mihi dulcior Hyblae,
Candidior cynnis, edera formocior alba.

Galatea is whiter than a swan ; more beautiful than white ivy ; sweeter than the blossoms of Hybla. The two first of these epithets apply in the same sense both to the things compared, and the objects of comparison ; but the sweetness of the thyme of Hybla was literal. The sweetness of the shepherdess, Galatea, was figurative ; and the term *dulcior*, sweeter, applying both to the thyme and to the nymph, bears at one time two different significations.

So in Shakspeare's tragedy of king Lear, the king, pronouncing an execration against one of his ungrateful daughters, wishes that, if she should bear children, they may

Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt ; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child.

The sharpness of the serpent's tooth is literal ; the sharpness of having an ungrateful child is figurative. The term stands for both these ideas at once. It would not perhaps within the compass of human language be practicable to find words

capable of exciting stronger abhorrence against the crime of filial ingratitude, than these; and yet in this case, as in numberless others, the figure will not stand the test of a logical analysis. It is not the sharpness of the serpent's tooth, which renders it so dangerous and detestable; but its venom. If the tooth were ten times sharper, it would not be more fatal; and therefore to say of any thing, that it is sharper than a serpent's tooth, does not imply that it is more dreadful. That, which gives to these expressions their great energy, is the idea of the serpent; a creature, devoted most peculiarly to the abhorrence of mankind; and although the sharpness of his tooth is the only property, which the poet notices to make him rankle in the mind of the speaker, yet the natural association is so easily formed in that of the hearer, that all the consequences of a serpent's bite spontaneously rise in the imagination, without any direct reference to them.

Satirical writings are very often locked up in allegories. Personal satire especially provides for its own safety, by concealing its purposes under this partially transparent veil. Many distinguished writings of this description have been published, with indices under the name of keys. Soon

after Pope's rape of the lock was published, Swift wrote an ironical dissertation to ridicule this fashion of producing keys, in which he pretended to prove, that Pope's poem was a political satire upon the barrier treaty. Swift entitled his little treatise a key to the lock. This title was in the first place a metaphor, meaning a key to the rape of the lock. But it was also made a whimsical pun. The lock was at once the representation of two ideas ; meaning first a lock of hair, which Pope's poem had immortalized ; and next the smith's lock, which could be opened only by a key.

This use of words with two faces, by the graver critics of modern times, is very rigorously excluded from serious composition. But it is a powerful weapon for strokes of humor, and of great use for pointing an epigram ; of which Swift may furnish us also an example.

There was a translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, made by several persons of quality, published by Tonson ; a miserable performance, which Swift ridiculed in a ballad, closing with the following lines.

Now, Tonson, list thy forces all ;

Review them, and tell noses ;

For to poor Ovid shall befall
A strange metamorphosis.
A metamorphosis more strange,
Than all his books can vapor.
To what, quoth squire, shall Ovid change ?
Quoth Sandys—" to waste paper."

The point of this conclusion consists in the two-fold sense, applied to the term Ovid. Until the three last words, Ovid means the poet of that name. But he there undergoes his metamorphosis, and becomes the paper, upon which the translation of his principal poem was printed. The word in the first part is literal ; and at last is figurative.

The particular figure, by which the paper is put for the translation, and the translation for the author of the original poem, is one of those, founded not upon similitude, but upon the relation between cause and effect. Of this I shall speak in a subsequent lecture ; and in the mean time recommend to you the following rules of restriction upon the use of figures, founded upon resemblance.

1. That there should be some resemblance between the figurative and the literal object.

2. That the figure, when brought into view, be not too much dwelt upon. It is seldom safe even to run a metaphor into an allegory. Your

hearer expects you will leave something for his own imagination to perform.

3. Avoid selecting metaphorical figures from mean or disgusting objects.

Much less can that obtain a place,

At which a virgin hides her face ;

Such dross the fire must purge.

4. Let your metaphors not be too thickly crowded. The species, which give a relish to your food, would make but indifferent food by themselves. And the best food, over-seasoned with them, would be spoiled.

5. Distinguish between the metaphors suitable for oratorical discourse, and those which are reserved to the exclusive use of poetry. The poet may soar beyond the flaming bounds of space and time ; but the orator must remember, that an audience is not so readily excursive, and is always under the power of gravitation.

There are some other rules, which, applying to all figurative language, and not to the figures of similitude alone, may be reserved for a future consideration.

LECTURE XXXIV.

METONYMY. SYNECDOCHE.



FROM the class of figures, which convey a meaning different from the import of their words, by means of the association of ideas, resulting from similitude, let us now pass to those, where the connexion is formed by means of certain relations. Of these the two principal figures have been denominated the metonymy, and synecdoche.

These are both in common discourse; and even by the principal modern rhetorical writers confounded under the general denomination of the metaphor. There is however a very important distinction between them, affecting the principles of composition and of criticism. I have heretofore told you, that the test of a correct metaphor is

to examine how it would appear upon canvass; and this trial may be proper for all the figures, founded upon similitude; since resemblance or imitation is the essential object of painting. But between cause and effect, between the whole and its parts, there is no resemblance, which would bear a picture representing one as the substitute of the other. And if you should apply to a metonymy or a synecdoche the same rule, which would be proper to determine the correctness of a metaphor, you would find nothing but absurdity in images of the highest elegance and beauty.

The principal relation, upon which the metonymy takes its name, is that between cause and effect. But there are also various others, which I think you will most easily understand by direct exemplifications.

In my last lecture I told you, that when Shakspeare's Coriolanus calls Valeria the moon of Rome, the moon was put for the goddess Diana. This is a metonymy. Thus Virgil in one passage says, that the companions of Æneas made a meal upon Ceres, corrupted by the waves; that is, upon bread damaged by the sea water; in another, that their bottles were filled with an old Bacchus; though Dryden tells us, that Bacchus

was ever young. But Virgil's Bacchus is mere wine.

So Ovid tells us that a flame will revive, by infusing Pallas into the lamp. Plautus makes one of his characters ask another where he is going with that Vulcan shut up in a horn; that is, with a lanthorn in his hand. And Juvenal advises a young poet to call for some sticks of wood, and give his verses to the husband of Venus; that is, to throw them in the fire.

In the ancient mythology each of the principal divinities presided over some material substance, or some moral or political relation. To these the poets, orators, and historians often gave the names of the presiding deities themselves, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect.

It is by a figure of the same class, that the general of an army is said to have fought a battle; that the works of an orator are designated by his name; as when you say you have read Cicero or Demosthenes; and that a mechanical instrument passes by the name of its inventor; as an Orrery, a Wedgwood, a Rumford.

In the holy scriptures each of the twelve tribes of Israel is often called by the name of the patriarch, from whom they descended; and the whole

nation was in like manner included in the name of their last common ancestor, Israel, or Jacob.

In the most familiar language of conversation, when you say that a man writes a good hand, or writes a handsome style, or holds a powerful pen, you speak in this same figure ; a metonymy of the cause for the effect. A common expression in the scriptures is, that a soul which has sinned shall bear its iniquity, or shall bear the indignation of the Lord ; both which are causes, put instead of their effect ; the punishment, flowing from the iniquity, and inflicted by the indignation.

2. With equal freedom the metonymy substitutes the effect instead of the cause. Thus Ovid, intending to tell us that there were no trees upon mount Pelion, says that Pelion had no shades.

In the personification of the passions, of diseases, and of death, their attributes, as causes, are often taken from their effects.

These shall the fury passions tear,
The vultures of the mind ;
Disdainful anger, pallid fear,
And shame, that skulks behind.

“ O thou man of God,” said the sons of the prophets in Gilgal to Elisha, “ there is death in

the pot;" meaning, that there were poisonous herbs, which it would be death to eat. The effect is here again put for the cause.

3. A third species of metonymy is that, which names the container for the contents; as we every day speak of the bottle, or the glass, for the liquor, contained in them.

"O my father," said the Saviour of men, "if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

The cup is a metaphor, signifying that apparently ignominious death, he was about to suffer; drinking the cup is a metonymy, where the cup is put for the bitter potion, which he was to drain from it.

Says Johnson, speaking of Charles the twelfth of Sweden,

He left the name, at which the world grew pale,

To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

By the world is intended here its inhabitants.

4. The name of a place is often substituted for things produced in it. This is one of the domesticated figures, which we continually meet in the most ordinary discourse. Manufactured articles are often known by no other names, than those

of the places, whence they came. Such are China and Nankins. Others are indiscriminately mentioned by the name of their place with or without the name of the article itself; as Madeira, Champaign, and Burgundy. These examples show how little foundation there is for the opinion, that figurative speech is a departure from the common forms of discourse. We are so familiarized to these modifications, that, in asking a friend to drink a glass of Madeira, you would hardly imagine it had cost you a double metonymy to put so simple a question. In these cases the figurative meaning is worn out. But let the article be of rarer use, and the substitution less hackneyed, and you will immediately perceive the figure.

Lady Macbeth in Shakspeare says, "all the perfumes of Arabia would not sweeten this little hand." In the words "all the perfumes of Arabia" there is no figure. But when Pope in the rape of the lock says,

And all Arabia breathes from yonder box,

he puts Arabia for the perfumes of Arabia; and every reader of taste is delighted with the beauty of the image.

5. The sign for the thing signified. So the sceptre, the throne, the crown, are all taken as expressive of royal authority. The sword and the gown indicate the military and clerical professions. The symbols and armorial bearings of nations, of heathen gods, of christian saints and martyrs, the oak, the palm, and the laurel, as expressive of civic virtue, of martyrdom, and of glory, come under this modification of the figure.

6. "Who hath redness of eyes;" says Solomon, meaning to say, who hath red eyes. Redness is mere abstraction; and, when connected with any substance, becomes one of its attributes. With the distinction between qualities in the abstract, and the same qualities, as they are logically said to be concrete, you are well acquainted. In this question of Solomon the abstract is substituted for the concrete term. The abstract for the concrete is a metonymy frequently used, and equally accessible to every gradation of style.

Here is an example from the historian, Gibbon.

"The experience of so many princes, whom he had esteemed, or endured, from the vain follies of Elagabalus to the useful rigor of Aurelian, taught him to form a just estimate of the duties,

the dangers, and the temptations of their sublime station."

You observe, that neither the follies of Elagabalus nor the rigor of Aurelian were princes, either to be esteemed or endured. Yet the figure is not incorrect. In literal language he would have said, from the vain and foolish Elagabalus to the just and rigorous Aurelian. He substitutes the abstract for the concrete terms.

7. There is a particular species of metonymy, which has obtained a name for itself. It is the substitution of the antecedent for the consequent, or of the consequent for the antecedent. It is called a metalepsis; as in the line, Troy has been, and Ilium was a town. Such too is the scriptural prayer; "remember not, Lord, our transgressions;" intending to deprecate the punishment of them.

There is an example of this figure in the speech, upon the British treaty, of our illustrious countryman, whose recent loss we deplore. A speech which, for splendor and eloquence, may be compared with the brightest beams of eloquence, ever emitted from the European world.

He has been arguing, that one inevitable consequence of rejecting the treaty would be an In-

dian war ; the horrors of which he paints with a glow of coloring adequate to the subject, and to the richness of his imagination. It concludes thus ;

“ The darkness of midnight will glitter with the blaze of your dwellings. You are a father ; the blood of your sons shall fatten your corn-field. You are a mother ; the war-whoop shall wake the sleep of the cradle.”

The representation of Indian cruelties had arrived at the highest pitch, before he came to the last clause. That idea was too shocking to be exhibited by direct expression. It is therefore veiled with equal judgment and elegance under a double figure. The cradle is put by synecdoche for the infant in the cradle, and the antecedent is put for the consequent ; the waking of the infant's sleep, for the fate, which must anon befall him.

In all these varieties of the metonymy you will remark, that there is no identity between the thing intended and the thing expressed. They exist independent of each other ; although so connected together, that the name of the one is sufficient to excite the idea of the other. The term, metonymy, implies in its original derivation the substitution of one name for another ; being

compounded from the Greek words, *μετα* and *ονομα*, a by-name.

Synecdoche is likewise a Greek compound of the two words, *συν* and *ειδοχη*, signifying to take with; and this is the figure, by which the whole is taken for a part, or a part taken for the whole. There is therefore absolute identity between the image and the object represented, which have no existence independent of each other. The varieties of the synecdoche are nearly as numerous, as those of the metonymy. Thus the genus is put for the species; as in that common phrase, the race of mortals, for the race of man; or the species for the genus; as when a beautiful garden is called a paradise; or you say, so many souls, intending so many human beings. Thus in numbers the singular is put for the plural, and the plural for the singular. Him the Ammonite worshipped in Rabba, says Milton. The supple Gaul was born a parasite, says Johnson. In these examples the singular is put for the plural. Lord Chatham said of Dr. Franklin, that Europe reckoned him among her Newtons and her Boyles; which was putting the plural for the singular. So the material is put for the thing made of it; as

steel, for a sword; oaks, for ships; as in these lines of Pope,

Let India boast her plants, nor envy we
The weeping amber and the balmy tree ;
While by our oaks the precious loads are born,
And realms commanded which those trees adorn.

POPE'S WINDSOR FOREST.

Marble, for a monument of that stone ; as in these other lines of Pope,

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, here lies an honest man.

Dust, for the human body ; as in that solemn sentence upon our first father, dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Certain parts of the human body, and of some other compounded material objects, are often taken for the whole. But every part cannot thus be indiscriminately used. Custom exercises in this respect a very extensive sway, and with different impressions upon different languages. A sail is, I believe, universally taken for a ship under sail ; though it would be improper to express a ship at anchor. The head and the heart are often put for the whole man ; but the usage of every language modifies the ideas, with which they can be thus

associated. In lamenting the death of a friend, Horace says, "what bounds can there be to the desire of so dear a head?" But this figure will not bear translation, thus applied, into English.

There is also a species of synecdoche, applied principally to persons, and called antonomasia. It is the substitution of a proper name for a common one, or the reverse. As the philosopher, the poet, the general, are common names to indicate certain individuals; and, on the other hand, a wise legislator is called a Solon; a cruel tyrant a Nero; a learned judge a second Daniel; and Thomson calls Charles the twelfth of Sweden "the frantic Alexander of the north."

Perhaps of all the figures of speech, that, which would least require an explanation, is the irony; which is so convenient an instrument of that mutual benevolence, which mankind are delighted to extend to one another, that I question whether there was ever a student, who had made the proficiency necessary for obtaining admission within these walls, but understood its character, as well as any of his teachers. It is the nature of irony to mean directly the contrary of what it says; and yet not to be chargeable with falsehood. Irony has a double face; not like Janus looking in op-

posite directions ; but fronting each other. Irony may be used for panegyric, as well as for satire. But, as praise is seldom under the necessity of assuming a mask for its own safety, it is not often fond of assuming the language of censure.

Examples of irony are to be found in the holy scriptures ; but they are extremely rare ; while the sacred books lavish every other figure of speech, with the utmost profusion.

Hoimer has made one of his characters in the *Odyssey* much addicted to irony. This is Antinoüs, the principal suitor of Penelope, and the first slain by Ulysses. The first words he speaks in the poem are in answer to the severe reproaches of Telemachus.

Silence at length the gay Antinoüs broke,
Constrain'd a smile, and thus ambiguous spoke ;
What God to your untutor'd youth affords
This headlong torrent of amazing words ?
May Jove delay thy reign, and cumber late
So bright a genius with the toils of state !

I. 490.

Irony, like allegory, is not merely a figure of speech, but a modification of sentiment and language, which may be continued through long dis-

courses. In this respect it may afford us a theme for further consideration hereafter.

There are two other figures, which seem to have some relation to this and to each other; the litotes, which means more than it says, and the hyperbole, which says more than it means.

In the *Paradise Lost* satan, addressing the sun, says,

to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice; and add thy name,
O sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams.

It is obvious that the words, "with no friendly voice," say much less than they mean; since in the next line he declares how much he hates the object, to which they apply.

So St. Paul told the people of Jerusalem, that he was a citizen of no mean city; that is of Rome, the mistress of the world. He says less than he means. These are examples of litotes.

The hyperbole is a figure much more in use, and better understood, in just as much as it is natural to men to say more than they mean, rather than to mean more than they say. Hyperbolic expressions mingle themselves very much in ordinary conversation, and especially in proverbial phrases. They are admissible into every kind of

composition and discourse ; but they should be used with caution.

The last figure, which I shall notice for the present, is the catachresis ; a term which literally signifies abuse ; and it consists of a misapplication, purposely made, of a proper term to some use, bearing a resemblance more or less remote to that of its just destination. As it has thus its foundation in similitude, it is sometimes classed among the metaphors. But as by its very name it imports transgression, it is not confined to that particular tribe of figures ; but occasionally herds with others.

In the treatise upon the art of sinking, which was the joint composition of Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, the catachresis is said to be the most copious of all the sources of the Bathos. The examples of this figure there given are, mow the beard ; shave the grass ; pin the plank ; nail my sleeve. " From whence," says he, " results the same kind of pleasure to the mind, as to the eye, when we behold harlequin trimming himself with a hatchet ; hewing down a tree with a razor ; making his tea in a cauldron, and brewing his ale in a tea-pot ; to the incredible satisfaction of the British spectator."

The catachresis is perhaps of all the figures that, which deserves the least indulgence ; for it seems by its appellation to glory in its shame. It professes to turn imperfection into a beauty ; and, being by its own confession an abuse, it must be the most unpardonable of all, when it fails to redeem the sin of its own intrusion by the introduction of an equivalent beauty. Yet such beauties are often introduced by means of this figure ; and, ludicrous as the examples I have just given appear, it will not be difficult to produce passages from eminent writers, where precisely the images, here ridiculed, are rendered highly ornamental by the misapplication of the very same words.

In Dryden's translation of Virgil, describing the death of Tarquitus in battle, the poet says, that Æneas

Stands o'er the prostrate wretch, and as he lay
Vain tales inventing, and prepar'd to pray,
Mows off his head.

A head is not a more proper subject to be mowed, than a beard. But substitute in this passage the proper term, cuts off his head, and you will instantly perceive how the expression has flattened the idea.

In Gray's bard, *years* are turned into *mowers*.

Long years of havock urge their destin'd course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.

The image is allegorical. It is a prediction of the dreadful wars between the houses of York and Lancaster. The scythe of time is indeed a very old figure ; but here its use is to mow through kindred squadrons. Suppose now the literal term should be here restored to its place, and you were to read, "and through the kindred squadrons *make* their way;" the abuse of the term *mow* would disappear ; and with it would go all the energy of the image. Pope himself, describing a game of cards, played in his rape of the lock, makes a mower of Pam.

E'en mighty Pam, who kings and queens o'erthrew,
And mow'd down armies in the fights of lu,
Sad chance of war ! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguished by the victor, spade.

Pam is a mighty conqueror by the help of a metaphor ; but he must use a catachresis to mow down armies.

Dryden again nails a man's hand to his side with an arrow.

He clasp'd his hand upon the wounded part ;
 The second shaft came swift and unespy'd,
 And pierc'd his hand, and nail'd it to his side.

Shakspeare does not pin a plank ; but he pins gates.

Our gates,
 Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes ;
 They'll open of themselves.

CORIOL. i. 4.

And St. Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians, nails hand-writing.

“ Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

What then, is it the application of mowing to a beard, and of shaving to the grass, which constitutes the absurdity of the examples, given by Scriblerus ? Not even that ; for Milton in his *Allegro* says,

And missing thee, I walk unseen
 On the dry, smooth shaven green.

Where then is the incongruity of shaving grass, so humorously exposed in the treatise on the *Bathos* ? Assuredly no critic of taste would think these lines improved by reading

On the dry, smooth mowed green.

Try by the same standard the character, painted by Shakspeare's Hotspur.

A certain lord, neat, trimly dress'd,
Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin new-reap'd,
Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest home.

What would you think of exchanging here the term *reap'd*, for the proper word *shav'd*? And his chin new shav'd! You would think that none, but a master of the Bathos, could propose it.

The justification of this figure then must always be an affair of taste. The catachresis indeed is not one of those figures, which will escape from a lively imagination before he is aware of it; and which cool reflection will discover to be incorrect. It springs from analogies, which must have been compared together in the mind of him, who employs it. The best criterion therefore to ascertain its merit in every particular instance is that, which I have recommended for these quotations. Substitute the proper, instead of the figurative word, which has taken its place; and determine between them from the comparative satisfaction or displeasure, with which the respective combinations affect your fancy.

Let me conclude these remarks with an earnest recommendation to those of you, who intend to devote your future lives to literary professions or pursuits, not only to examine and to meditate upon the extent and boundaries of figurative language in theory, but to peruse those writers, who use it most freely ; habitually to inquire, and, as far as may be, ascertain the kernel of thought, contained within the shell of imagery. This advice is above all important to those, whose duties will lead them to the study of the scriptures ; and who, “ desiring to be teachers of the law, would be ashamed of understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”* We often hear of the sublime simplicity of the sacred books ; and, if by simplicity be meant the total exemption from affectation, this quality is justly ascribed to them. But there is not in the world a volume of equal size, more abounding in imagery of every description, than the bible. It is a remark of the learned Selden, that the doctrine of transubstantiation, that amazing error of the Romish church, was only rhetoric, turned into logic. That is, it was the folly of understanding ; in their literal sense, expressions manifestly figurative. What a world

* 1. Tim. i. 17.

of calamity this single blunder has brought upon mankind ! Yet the same kind of mistakes have laid the foundation of almost all the schisms in the christian church, and many of the bloodiest wars between christian nations.

Here too I shall close my observations upon the third principal division of the rhetorical science, elocution.

LECTURE XXXV.

MEMORY.

WE have at length travelled through the three great divisions of rhetoric, which, according to the distribution of Aristotle and others of the Grecian masters, comprehend the whole science ; invention, disposition, and elocution. The two remaining branches, memory and pronunciation, which have been superadded by more recent teachers, always anxious to add something of their own to the discoveries of real genius, will require no very elaborate investigation ; and a single lecture, devoted to each of them, will suffice for the completion of our course.

The subject for our present consideration is memory ; and the order, in which the observations

I have to make concerning it may be arranged, will naturally lead from the inquiry, what it is, to that of its peculiar importance to the public speaker, which has raised it to this distinction, as one of the constituent parts of the science; and thence to the means, by which its aid may be most effectually secured to the purposes of oratory.

A difficulty occurs at the threshold, which has hitherto proved utterly insuperable to human exertion, and which like others I must leave, as I find it. If, as philosophical inquirers, you were to call upon me to tell you what memory is, my answer could be only the confession of my ignorance. It is an operation of the mind, which has never yet been explained. It has however been much observed and investigated by the poets and philosophers of ancient Greece; and by their successors in modern days. Let us hear what they have said of it; and first for the poets.

Memory, say the poets of the Grecian mythology, is a goddess. Her name is Mnemosyne. She is the daughter of heaven and of earth; and, impregnated by Jupiter, she was the mother of all the muses.

This fable, like almost all the others of the Grecian theogony, is philosophical. Memory

was the daughter of heaven and of earth. The faculty, which is personified by this allegorical being, is a special privilege, partaking of a celestial nature. But it is enjoyed by man, and in an inferior degree by some of the brute creation. Mnemosyne therefore is descended on one part from heaven, and on the other from earth.

Mnemosyne was the mother of all the muses. These were the patronesses of all the arts and sciences, the inspirers of human genius, and the guardians of learning. They were begotten by Jupiter, the best and greatest of the gods, the emblem of productive power and energy. They were born on the Pierian mountain, the region of fruitfulness; as is indicated by the etymology of the name. The active energy of the intellect must generate, but memory must bear the faculties, which adorn and dignify the human character. Such were the imaginations of the poets. They were justly honorary to the merits of memory; but they did not suppose her mother to the muse of eloquence alone.

And now for the philosophers. Let us take the doctrine of Aristotle in the words of the learned Harris, from the third book of his *Hermes*.

“ Besides,” says he, “ the distinguishing of sensation from imagination, there are two other faculties of the soul, which, from their nearer alliance, ought carefully to be distinguished from it; and these are ΜΝΗΜΗ and ΑΝΑΜΝΗΣΙΣ ; memory and recollection.

“ When we view some relict of sensation, reposed within us, without thinking of its rise, or referring it to any sensible object, this is fancy or imagination.

“ When we view some such relict, and refer it withal to that sensible object, which in time past was its cause and original, this is memory.

“ Lastly the road, which leads to memory through a series of ideas, however connected, whether rationally or casually, this is recollection.

“ When we contemplate a portrait, without thinking of whom it is the portrait, such contemplation is analogous to fancy. When we view it with reference to the original, whom it represents; such contemplation is analogous to memory.”

Quintilian seems afraid to meet the question, what memory is; but adopts this theory of Aristotle.

“ I do not think it necessary,” says he, “ to stay and inquire what constitutes memory; but

most people are of opinion, that certain vestiges are imprinted upon our minds, which are preserved like the impression of seals upon wax."

The same relict of sensation, the same impression upon wax is all, that the searching probe of Locke's understanding could discover to explain the essential character of memory. In speaking of the memory and its infirmities, even Locke himself abandons the grave and simple style of metaphysical inquiry; and hides his ignorance under a blaze of resplendent imagery.

"The memory of some it is true," says he, "is very tenacious, even to a miracle; but yet there seems to be a constant decay of all our ideas, even of those which are struck deepest, and in minds the most retentive; so that, if they be not sometimes renewed by repeated exercise of the senses, or reflection on those kinds of objects, which at first occasioned them, the print wears out, and at last there remains nothing to be seen. Thus the ideas, as well as children of our youth, often die before us; and our minds represent to us those tombs, to which we are approaching; where, though the brass and marble remain, yet the inscriptions are effaced by time, and the imagery moulders away. The pictures drawn in our minds

are laid in fading colors ; and, if not sometimes refreshed, vanish and disappear. How much the constitution of our bodies and the make of our animal spirits are concerned in this, and whether the temper of the brain makes this difference, that in some it retains the characters drawn on it like marble, in others like free-stone, and in others little better than sand, I shall not here inquire ; though it may seem probable, that the constitution of the body does sometimes influence the memory ; since we oftentimes find a disease quite strip the mind of all its ideas, and the flames of a fever in a few days calcine all those images to dust and confusion, which seemed to be as lasting, as if graved in marble.”

It has been remarked of a very distinguished literary character of France, D'Alembert, that there was too much poetry in his mathematics, and too much of mathematics in his poetry. Of this poetical and philosophical explanation of memory something similar might perhaps be said. The one is just as figurative, as the other. I have brought them here together to show you how much they are alike. For in sober truth you may just as well believe, that memory is the daughter of heaven and earth ; that she had an in-

trigue with Jupiter, and bore him nine daughters in so many days ; as you may credit, that memory is the impression of a seal upon wax ; or the inscriptions of figures upon marble ; or the painting of colors upon a canvass ; or that the flames of a fever can calcine its images.

The difficulty consists in this, that memory is a faculty of the mind ; and that its operations, like the other processes of the pure intellect, can only be exhibited in speech by the means of figurative language ; by images derived from the senses, and addressed to them. From this difficulty I shall not attempt to escape ; but, after noticing this impossibility of saying precisely what memory is, must content myself with admitting and adopting the similitudes, by which it is likened to objects better known.

Memory then is that faculty of the human mind, by which we are enabled to call up at pleasure ideas, which have been before lodged in it. It is the key to the hoarded treasures of the understanding.

Memory, like all the other faculties which we possess, is frail and imperfect. It is itself the characteristic of an imperfect being ; since it is the child of change. Perfection is not susceptible of change ;

and to the omnipresent mind there can be no succession of ideas. Where all is present, there is nothing past to recal.

But as all the ideas, of which the human mind is capable, are in their nature transient, the power of calling some of them back was indispensable to the constitution of a rational being. To the perfection of this power it would be necessary that all the ideas, which ever pass through the mind, should go to the common deposit; and should remain there subject to the absolute control of the will. That all should be ready to appear when commanded; and that none should presume to intrude itself, without being called.

These, as Mr. Locke conjectures, may be the capacities of beings superior to the race of man. The powers, which we possess, are but remote approximations to this. Of the ideas, which constitute the sum of our earthly existence, a very small proportion are ever admitted to the receptacles of memory. Of those, which are committed to its trust, numbers are continually perishing, uncalled for; and of those, which she preserves, many are in every point rebellious to the will.

Some, like Owen Glendower's spirits in the vasty deep, will not come, when they are called;

and others, like unwelcome visitors, force themselves upon our company, when we should be most anxious to exclude them.

As the value of memory to a human being must depend upon its subserviency to the will, so perhaps all the varieties of genius among mankind are little more, than varieties in the degrees of this subserviency. Vain is every endeavour to store the understanding with ideas, if the mind possess not the faculty of retention. And equally vain is that magazine, which, however stored with accumulated materials, holds them in darkness and confusion, so that they cannot be recovered without loss of time and laborious search.

In this regard it is, that memory has been so peculiarly connected with rhetoric. She is the mother of all the muses; but with this one she must forever dwell. The poet, the historian, or the astronomer, though relying perhaps equally upon the funds of memory, can indulge her caprices, and compromise with her stubbornness; but the orator must have her not only in subjection, but at all times ready and alert to his service. For him she must perform at the same instant a double task; she must furnish him at the moment, when they are wanted, not only the idea, but the

expression with which it is clothed. She must bring him at one and the same time things and words. Nor can he brook a minute of delay. If at the precise point of time, when they are needed, the thought or its vehicle refuse their office, the opportunity is lost, never to be retrieved.

A memory, completely under the control of the will, is a thing unexampled among men. It is said of Themistocles, that he was so much oppressed with the burthen of a memory too retentive, and too liberal, that he longed for an art of oblivion, instead of a more ready remembrance. We are not precisely told what was the motive, which made him sigh for relief from his own reflections; but whatever it might be, at least the anecdote ascertains, that his memory was not obsequious to his will. Mr. Locke mentions, that it was reported "of that wonderful genius, Pascal, that, until the decay of his health had impaired his memory, he forgot nothing of what he had done, read, or thought, in any part of his rational age." Upon which I shall here only remark, that, like some other stories told of that famous Jansenist, this report was more marvellous than true. Pascal was beyond all doubt a genius of the highest order; and his memory was perhaps the most extraordinary

of his faculties; but that he should have forgotten, for a series of years, nothing of what he had done, read, or thought, must be received with great qualification to the meaning of the term *nothing*, or its belief must rely upon its impossibility.

The dominion of the will over the memory may be strengthened and extended in various ways by our own exertions. The art, for which Themistocles sighed, the art of forgetting, is often very successfully pursued; and sometimes it may be the most effectual means of promoting the wisdom and the virtue of individuals. But it may be more advantageous to the moralist, than to the orator. The improvement of the faculty, for the purposes of public speaking, consists in its enlargement, and not its contraction; in manuring its fertility, rather than in eradicating its luxuriance.

The means, by which a public speaker is enabled to improve his memory, are of three kinds; first, care to preserve himself from the causes, by which it is impaired; secondly, the discipline of persevering application, exercise, and method; and thirdly, certain contrivances, which have been invented and practised with so much success, as to obtain the denomination of artificial memories.

1. We learn from universal experience, that the control of the memory depends in a great measure upon the state of the brain. Memory is a faculty altogether acquired; it is not, like the senses, enjoyed from the moment of birth. It is gradually formed; and by a process of years. The ideas of earliest infancy are obliterated, beyond all possibility of redemption, from every human mind. Our earliest recollections are indistinct and confused. The idea of succession in time is itself one of those latest acquired; and hence of the particular incidents, which first leave durable impressions upon the mind, we are unable to remember the order of time, in which they occurred.

The memory is the first of the intellectual faculties, which follows the decays of the body. This experience is general, though not so universal, as the absence of memory in childhood. It is a law of nature, which admits of exceptions; and these indulgences are most usually acquired by a life of temperance and of virtue.

The memory is impaired by all the diseases, which the vices of men bring upon them; and by some, which are merely the visitations of heaven. It is occasionally suspended for a time by sensual

excesses, and particularly by intoxication. It is gradually corroded and consumed by long continued habits of intemperance. All the violent passions, for the time while they exercise their dominion over the mind, encroach upon the memory. Grief, anger, and fear, sometimes obtain such uncontrolled ascendancy over the mind, as to terminate in madness or in idiocy. Prejudice and superstition are unfriendly to the memory, as they close the understanding against the admission or retention of any ideas, which do not precisely suit them. A firm and conscientious regard to truth is a quality very material to the memory; and hence the deficiencies of that power in persons, whose veracity is feeble, has in all ages been proverbial.

The first and most important rules then for the preservation and improvement of this inestimable gift of Providence belong rather to the moralist, than to the rhetorician. They teach us temperance, self-government, and a sacred and inviolable regard to truth.

The practice of these virtues, and the constant caution of avoiding all those causes, by which this energy of the mind is weakened, are however only means for preserving and keeping in repair an in-

strument, the use of which in its utmost perfection can be acquired only by application, exercise, and method.

To the active command of the memory a certain application of the mind to the object of remembrance is indispensable. Human existence consists of a succession of ideas; and there are from day to day thousands of impressions upon the senses, which are fleeting as the moment which brings them, and with it vanish, never more to be perceived. There are others, upon which the mind fastens; and, by grappling them to itself, gives them a more permanent being. This application is sometimes spontaneous, and attended with delight; at others involuntary and ungrateful; but oftentimes dependent altogether upon our own will. In either of the former cases, when the object has either attractions to recommend itself, or a force to crowd itself, however unwelcome, upon the mind, we are able by the effort of the will, in a certain degree to improve or to counteract this impulse of feeling; in the last we direct our own attention without control. And hence it is that, when in Shakspeare, Macbeth inquires of the doctor,

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;

Raze out the written troubles of the brain ;
And with some sweet, oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff,
Which weighs upon the heart ?

the physician answers him, " therein the patient must minister unto himself."

But the orator in a peculiar degree must be in the constant use of his judgment, in selecting the objects, to which he should devote the application of his mind. There is perhaps as much failure of excellence, arising from the misapplication of this faculty to frivolous or irrational objects, as from its utter neglect. No mistake is more dangerous, and at the same time more common, than that of following our inclinations in the distribution of this labor of the intellect. The bias of the mind is sometimes so strong towards a particular course of study, that nothing better can be done, than to indulge it ; but in general it should be our endeavour to obtain and to strengthen the empire of the will over the direction of our pursuits ; and the strength or weakness of individual understanding may perhaps be accurately measured by the degree of command, which it possesses over its own application.

“ But,” says Quintilian, “ if any man ask me what is the greatest, nay the only art of memory ; my answer is, exercise ; labor ; much learning by heart ; much meditation ; and, if possible, daily repeated ; this is worth all the rest. Nothing thrives so much upon industry ; nothing perishes so much upon neglect. Let then the practice be taught and made frequent in childhood ; and whoever, at any period of life, would cultivate his memory, must submit to the disgust of going over and over again what he has written, and already many times read. The habit of learning by heart, when acquired in early youth, gives ever after a readiness, which disdains paltry indulgences. No prompter, no looking at the paper then should be endured, for it encourages negligence ; and, when we have no fear of being left in a lurch, we shall always be too confident of our own remembrance. Hence the course of delivery will be interrupted ; a hesitating, stammering, hobbling mode of speech will be formed ; and all the grace of the most elegant writing be lost in the continual confession of the performer, that, instead of speaking, he is reading a written composition.”

In these sentiments of Quintilian you will recognise a doctrine, which your own experience

will invariably confirm. It is not indeed a very palatable precept ; and its observance to men, who are engaged in much active business, must undoubtedly be qualified by the scantiness of time. But the public speaker, who shall devote some of his time to this tedious toil, will not find it wasted without reward ; and the injunction is the more peremptory, as this species of exercise is entirely under the control of the will.

Both application and exercise will be facilitated, and derive great aids to their efficacy, from systematical arrangement and method. Verse is more easily committed to memory than prose. And even of prose the acquisition is found easiest, when the divisions of the subject are clear and the composition correct. The time for tasking the memory may be judiciously selected. The close of the day and the return of morning present the hours, when the mind is most exempted from the intrusion of interfering ideas, and most vigorous for the employment of its powers. Aurora, the friend of the muses, will be found equally propitious to their common parent.

As a succession of ideas can be retained in the memory, subject to the control of the will, only by the means of method, it is not possible perhaps to

limit the extent of that control, which method can enable us to acquire. The systems of artificial memory, which have been invented and recommended, both in ancient and modern times, have been only experiments of methodical arrangement.

The most celebrated artificial memory of the ancient orators is that, said to have been invented by the poet, Simonides, of the island of Ceos, between five and six hundred years before Christ. The story, which they tell in connexion with it, if it have no other recommendation, has at least enough of the marvellous.

Simonides, like other poets of that age and of all ages, was poor; and made his talent a profession for subsistence. He wrote panegyrical odes for hire; and sung them at the banquets of the great men, who were willing to pay for renown. Simonides had agreed with one Scopas, a rich Thessalian, to write and recite at his house one of these odes in his honor. But the genius of the poet revolted from the task of incensing stupidity, and lavishing adulation upon meanness. He wrote and recited his ode; in which, after exhausting all the materials afforded him by his subject, he had indulged his own feelings by a digression in honor of Castor and Pollux. Scopas, determined to

make a good bargain, took advantage of this incident, paid Simonides only half the stipulated price, and told him, that for the remainder he must look to Castor and Pollux. A few minutes after the poet was called out from table, and informed, that there were two young men waiting at the gate, who insisted upon seeing him, and would take no denial. He went out, found nobody there; but before he had time to return the roof of the hall fell in, and crushed to death every person at the table. The bodies were all so disfigured, that, after the removal of the rubbish, their friends were unable to distinguish one from another, until they were ascertained by Simonides, from his recollection of the place, where each one of them had been seated at the table. This first suggested to him the idea of assisting the memory, by an assumed and artificial arrangement of places. The system of artificial memory, which he or his followers erected upon this foundation, was as clumsy and ill-contrived, as the fable, said to have occasioned it, was ingenious. The story is very gravely told both by Cicero and Quintilian; but neither of them appears to have much confidence in the invention of Simonides, as explained and recommended by his followers.

The association of ideas between places and the persons seated in them, together with the divisions of a large space into small parcels, concur in the arrangement of guests at a table to furnish the greatest assistance to memory. But the plan of memory, attributed to Simonides, multiplied incumbrances, instead of assistance. It consisted in assuming a large, imaginary space, like a public building, or a market place; dividing it into imaginary compartments; placing on each of these compartments an image of some animal or other object emblematical of the subject, which you wish to remember. This unwieldy process of remembrance, first of imaginary places, then of imaginary animals, and then of the real object, to which you would refer, was applied even to single words; and we are seriously taught, that we may remember a conjunction copulative by thinking of Vulcan and his forge; or a conjunction disjunctive by recollecting the graces, as they stand back to back.

A Mr. Grey has recently published in England a different system, under the title of *Memoria Technica*; the application of which he has confined to chronology, geography, and the ancient weights, measures, and coins. His plan consists

in taking the first part of certain well known names of men, places, or coins ; and, instead of their terminating letters, substituting another termination of letters, representing certain numbers. Thus the union of the half-name with the numerical termination forms a barbarous word, by fixing which in the memory, we shall always retain not only the name, but any circumstance of numbers connected with it, which it may be material to possess. Thus instead of Alexander, Caesar, and Mahomet, we are to say Alexita, Caes, and Mahomoudd ; the first letters being sufficient to remind us of the persons, and the closing letters intending to represent numbers, which mark the year before or after the christian era, when they died. A chronological succession of Roman emperors or English kings may be composed of such associated letters, and formed into six, eight, or ten lines ; which, being once learnt by heart, may fix upon the memory in the compass of half an hour the whole history of a nation.

Mr. Grey's system, like the art of writing in shorthand, will be found useful to those, who will undergo the toil of making themselves masters of it. To those expedients a reflecting mind will always be able to add others of its own. The pow-

er of association is susceptible of numberless modifications; and its effects upon the understanding are as great, as in the following lines of a living poet they are said to be upon the affections.

Lull'd in the countless chambers of the brain,
Our thoughts are link'd by many a hidden chain.
Awake but one, and lo, what myriads rise !
Each stamps its image, as the other flies.
Each, as the varied avenues of sense
Delight or sorrow to the soul dispense,
Brightens or fades ; yet all, with magic art,
Control the latent fibres of the heart.

PLEAS. MEM. I. 170.

LECTURE XXXVI.

DELIVERY.



AT the introduction of the course of lectures, which I am now to conclude, in dividing the science of rhetoric into its principal constituent parts, according to the distribution of the great masters of antiquity, I informed those of you, who then heard me, that what we now include under the common term, delivery, as applied to public speaking, was by them called action or pronounciation. It consists of two things; the deportment of the body, and the utterance of the words. It was therefore denominated action in reference to the gestures; and pronounciation in regard to the voice.

The modern usages of public oratory are so different from those of antiquity, and gesture bears so small a proportion of an oratorical performance, that we can scarcely conceive how it could have been of such importance, as to have engrossed the name; as if the whole delivery had consisted of action. But Demosthenes, according to the well known anecdote related of him, carried his ideas of it still further, and considered it as comprising the whole art of eloquence.

Cicero, in his dialogues de oratore, observes truly that in every thing, appertaining to the action of a discourse, there is a certain energy, derived from nature herself; and which has therefore a peculiar efficacy upon all mankind; which sways the illiterate, as well as the learned; the vulgar, as much as the wellbred; the savage, as much as the civilized. Words can effect only those, with whom the speaker is associated by the ties of a common language. Pointed sentences often skim over the minds of men of senses unrefined. But action is the very emotion of the soul, and moves all alike; for the affections are universally excited by the same gestures; and they are by every heart recognised in itself; and indicated to others by the same tokens.

In the early ages of human society we can readily imagine, that the eloquence of gesticulation should have been rendered necessary in proportion to the poverty of language. As in process of time every sentiment of the soul had a word appropriated for its expression, the excess of gesture fell into disuse, and pronunciation became a substitute for action. This term itself underwent a corresponding process of change. In the first instance action was the mere delivery of a discourse ; and the speaker was called the actor. But as early, as the days of Cicero, these terms had acquired a more limited signification. An actor was a public accuser ; and the prosecution of a criminal was called an action. Thus we have, among the works of Cicero himself, his first and second action against Verres. Still however it was not applied to theatrical representations ; and Cicero, in his directions to public speakers, draws a very strong and judicious line of distinction between the delivery proper for an orator, and that of a stage player, from this very difference between them. Remember, says he, that upon the stage the performer is only the imitator, while the orator of the forum or the bar is the actor of truth. There is therefore all the difference between the

modes of speaking suitable to each of them respectively, that there is between action and imitation.

In a later age, at the time when the body of the civil law was compiled under the orders of Justinian, an action was expressive of the right, by force of which individual citizens prosecute their claims upon others by the process of law. The word in this sense has been engrafted upon the common law of England, and is now familiar in our courts of justice. So one man sues another in an action of debt, or of covenant, or of trespass, according to the circumstances of his case.

We have also applied the terms, *action* and *actor*, to the theatre, where, notwithstanding the pointed and accurate discrimination of Cicero, the performers are now universally called actors; while the name has been wholly discarded by all classes of public speakers; so that a lawyer, a divine, a legislator, would at this day deem it an insult to be called an actor. As Dr. Johnson doubtless meant it an insult upon Lord Chatham, when he described him as "the great actor of patriotism."

The other term, *pronunciation*, has also lost in common acceptance its meaning, although a

speech or a sermon is still sometimes said to be pronounced. We have indeed in daily use terms, appropriated to this part of public discourse, varied according to the object of its performance. A member of a popular assembly makes a speech; a lawyer at the bar argues a cause; the orator of a festival delivers an oration; and a clergyman preaches a sermon. These are all however the same action, diversified by the purpose of the speaker and the occasion. The term *delivery*, as applied to them all, is that, upon which I am now to treat; as including, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *τα πᾶσι τα τῆς φωνῆς*, the affections of the voice, and *τα σχήματα τοῦ σώματος*, the figures of the body.

The passions of the voice; from which expressions you will infer, that the functions of the voice in public speaking are twofold. First to articulate sounds; to transmit words to the ears of the audience; and secondly to electrify with sentiment; to convey passions to their hearts.

As the mere conveyance of sounds the material circumstance, relating to the voice, is its quantity. Sound is imparted to the ear by the means of a certain vibration of the air. This vibration is effected by the expulsion of a certain portion

of air from the lungs, agitated by the various organs of the voice. The stronger the exertion of these organs is, the more rapid is the vibration, and of course the louder is the sound, produced by it. But the vibration diminishes in proportion to the distance ; and, when it is too weak to produce a corresponding vibration of the organs of hearing, the conveyance of articulate sound must fail. The quantity of sound then must be accommodated to the size of the building, in which you speak ; and, as far as the powers of the voice will admit, to the hearing of the most distant auditor.

A second injunction respecting the quantity of the voice is to speak slow. Every syllable uttered must have its distinct sound. If they be crowded too thick in succession upon each other, the vibrations of air, which are to convey one sound, encroach upon those, which are adapted to communicate another, and produce indistinctness and confusion. At the same time it overstrains the organs of the speaker ; exhausts his breath, and deprives him of that command of his own respiration, without which he cannot proceed. A pronunciation too rapid is also utterly incompatible with that harmony of discourse, which constitutes one of the greatest charms of eloquence.

With regard to this second rule, of speaking slow, as it is a habit, the acquisition of which depends altogether upon the will of the orator, he, who pretends to speak in public, must be inexcusable for neglecting to acquire it. The case is not precisely the same with regard to speaking loud. Many public speakers have not the advantage of enjoying lungs and other organs of speech always adequate to the constant emission of that volume of sound, which is necessary to fill those buildings, commonly devoted to the purposes of oratory. To them the soundest advice perhaps would be to devote themselves to some occupation more compatible with their tenderness of constitution. If however they find that impracticable, Quintilian recommends bodily exercise, bathing, and temperance, bordering upon abstemiousness, as the great strengtheners of the voice. But when the voice has communicated the words of the speaker, it has performed only half its office. The thoughts of a discourse are indeed contained in the words, of which it is composed; but as it is always one of the purposes of oratory to move the affections of the audience, the most powerful of all the instruments of the speaker for accomplishing this purpose is the voice. Hence it is that we perceive the pro-

priety, with which Dionysius speaks of the passions of the voice; as if the communication of passion were its only object.

It is remarked by all the rhetoricians, that there is not in the heart of man an emotion, but is capable of being indicated by a corresponding modification of sound by the voice. This power of the voice is also recognised in every part of the holy scriptures; where in numberless instances the voice of a passion is identified with the passion itself. Thus in the Psalms, David says "I went to the house of God with the voice of joy." "Thou heardest the voice of my supplications." "Shout unto God with the voice of triumph." Nor are these expressions confined to the poetical language of the Psalms. In the prophetic books of the old testament, and in the narratives of the new, the voice of gladness and of mirth, of the bridegroom and the bride, the voice of thanksgiving, and the voice of salutation, occur with equal familiarity. From the history of the Jews we know, that they attributed preternatural powers to the voice. It was an universal opinion, that to hear the voice of God was the precursor of immediate death. In the book of Revelations its author embodies it into substance, and says "I turned to

see the voice that spake ;” and among the customary modes of divination of the Hebrews was that of Bath-kol, or the daughter of the voice.

If the miraculous effects of the voice, like all other miracles, have ceased, we are still sensible of its efficacy upon the passions. And who is there among us, but without the instruction of any other school, than that of nature, has felt the magic of its influence ? Who is there, but in the sharp and angry tones of contention has felt his bosom swell with emotions of anger, until they required, if they did not spurn, the control of his sober reason ? Who, but from the accents of distress, has found his eyes unconsciously filled with the drops, that sacred pity had engendered ? Who, but in the artless eloquence of an infant’s tones, has by a soft compulsive sympathy exulted in all his little joys, and saddened with his little sorrows, until manhood itself returns with rapture to the whistle and the bells ? Who, but in the maturity of a still more exquisite affection, on meeting, after long absence, a friend or lover, has found only half the sentiments of the heart gratified by the sight, until, to complete its fruition, he has heard the voice ? “ Let me see thy countenance ; let me hear thy voice ; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.”

These are powers far beyond the competence of rhetoric to bestow. But they are not beyond her competence to employ. Nothing, that I can say to you from this place, can ever put you in possession of this faculty ; but I may without impropriety urge you not to throw it away. For you all possess it, by the gift of nature ; though perhaps not all in equal degrees. But by a phenomenon, which would be inconceivable, were it not so commonly tested by experience of the fact, it is one of the most common habits of professed orators, and has been so even at the periods, when the art has flourished in its highest perfection, to lay this irresistible weapon aside, on the very occasions, when it would be most serviceable.

It is by the means of variety alone, that the voice can be made the vehicle of the passions ; and this variety principally consists in the tones. Variety of sounds is essential to the formation of the words ; and variety of tones is equally necessary to give those words their proper force. They depend rather upon the quality, than upon the quantity of the voice.

In speaking to a very numerous assembly no considerable variety can be used with regard to the loudness or softness of expression. For it is

necessary to remember, that there is a very material distinction between loud and soft sounds, and high or low notes. A distinction, with which in musical performances we are all perfectly familiar ; but which has sometimes been overlooked by public speakers, and even by rhetorical writers. There is a certain natural pitch of voice, to which every person is accustomed in his ordinary discourse ; and which every orator should be careful to assume and to preserve in addressing an audience. The same, or nearly the same degree of loudness should be preserved throughout his discourse ; because it is the measure of the extent, at which he can be heard. But it does not follow, that because he must speak in a louder tone, he must also speak in a higher note before a thousand hearers, than to a single friend. The most important varieties are those, which are effected by means of the accent, the emphasis, and the pauses ; and the inflexions, whereby the voice slides from the lower to the higher note, or inversely from the higher to the lower.

It would not be consistent with the purpose of these lectures to enter minutely into the consideration of these particulars, relating to the mechanical part of public speaking. The rules for placing

the proper accent upon words, for marking the emphatic words of a sentence, for pausing at the proper places, and for modulating the voice by the rising, the falling, and the reciprocal inflection, are generally contained in those elementary books, which are in the hand of every school-boy. Their attainment however in that perfection, to which those of you, who are destined to oratorical profession, will, I hope, steadily aspire, can only be accomplished by assiduous and persevering practice ; by observation of the manner, which distinguishes the most eminent public speakers ; and by continual comparison between your observation and your practice ; and between both and the principles, elucidated by the writers, who have investigated most thoroughly the subject. The elements of criticism by Lord Kaimes, and the various writings of Sheridan and Walker upon elocution and the art of reading, will deserve your particular attention and study. Between Sheridan and Walker you will find many differences of opinion, not quite so important, as the latter of these writers appears to believe them. Sheridan led the way in the attempt to settle and methodise the public pronunciation of the English language. Walker was ambitious of improving upon his

master; often controverts his opinions, and claims with great earnestness the merit of a new discovery, in the doctrine of vocal inflexions. You may perhaps sometimes not be able easily to settle in your own minds the points of contest; but they will not lead to any very serious perplexity; if, in reading these rival rhetoricians, you recollect the instruction of Lord Bacon; and “read, not to contradict and refute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.”

From these writers may be collected also the rules of gesture, as far as they have been made in modern times a subject of positive précept. But of all the treatises upon this part of delivery the most complete and most methodical, that has ever come to my notice, is the third chapter of the eleventh book of Quintilian's institutes. It is long and very minute; containing not only the necessary injunctions for the management of the voice, but particular rules for the government of every feature and member of the body, which may concur to the end of public oratory. He considers the modes of gesture likewise in regard to all the possible directions, which can be given them; as right and left, up and down, forward

and backward; pointing out which of these are most easy and most frequently suitable. He directs the accommodation of the voice and gesture to each other, and of both to the subject; to the several parts of the discourse; to the thoughts and sentiments of the speaker; and to the words of his discourse. He gives also the most particular directions for the dress of the orator; how he is to manage the folds of his gown; and how he is to wear the rings upon his fingers. Much of this no doubt is useless for the practice of our age and country. Much of it is interesting only as evidence of the importance, given in the most flourishing ages of eloquence to objects apparently trivial; and of the study, lavished upon the most insignificant trifles at the time, when the art was in its decay. Thus, in the early progress of oratory at Rome, we are told, that Gracchus, in haranguing the people, kept a man close behind him with a pitch-pipe to regulate the modulation of his voice. Cicero, who relates this circumstance, advises his young students of oratory to leave the pitch-pipe at home, and acquire a previous control over their own voices, which will answer the same purpose. But in the age of Quintilian, that is in the declining days of oratory, the public appear to have

been more fastidious with regard to the looks of the orator, than to the tones of his voice or the substance of his discourse. The poet Juvenal, who was cotemporary with Quintilian, says, that Cicero himself in that age could not obtain a fee, unless he should wear an enormous ring.

Fidimus eloquio? Ciceroni nemo ducentos

Nunc dederit nummos, nisi fulserit annulus ingens.

VII. 139.

And he adds, that a certain distinguished lawyer increased his practice by hiring a sardonix to wear, when he argued his causes in court. This despicable foppery Quintilian himself dares not treat, as it deserves; but only manifests his own sentiments by recommending to his pupils not to wear many rings, and those not to pass the middle joints of the fingers.

There are also many directions respecting the movements of speakers at the bar, which cannot well be adapted to our usages. Our public orators, as well in the judicial courts, as before legislative assemblies, or in the pulpit, are usually confined to a single spot; and their gestures can only be partial, and limited to certain members. But in the time of Quintilian it appears, there was a large area, over which a lawyer could range in the

course of his argument. The judges were numerous; and it was customary for the speaker in the midst of his discourse to pass to and fro between them. This travelling oratory was sometimes carried to such lengths, that Quintilian mentions, as a good jest, a question put to a lawyer, noted for his activity at this exercise, how many miles he had spoken.

As our eloquence is in none of its forms itinerant, unless it be in that of field-preaching, we have little or no present occasion for those parts of Quintilian's instructions, which relate to these practices; and as gesticulation in common discourse is much less used, than was customary among the ancients, and even of the moderns far less by those, who speak the English language, than by the inhabitants of the southern parts of Europe, it is unnecessary to dwell with much earnestness upon this topic. It may suffice to say, that the head should be kept in an erect position; steady, but not immoveable; avoiding on one hand the stiffness of a statue, and on the other the perpetual nodding vibrations of a Chinese image. The countenance should be firm, without any appearance of presumption or of bashfulness; and composed with equal exemption from all affecta-

tion of harshness or of levity. The eyes should not be fixed to any one spot, but move round to every part of the audience particularly addressed. This, in the case of pulpit discourses and public orations, includes the whole auditory. But at the bar and in our legislative assemblies there are often numbers of spectators, who attend merely from motives of curiosity. As the discourse cannot with propriety be addressed to them, the speaker should seldom extend his eyes to them, or appear to be too sensible of their presence. . There is a fashion with some of our clergymen of keeping their eyes closed during a certain part of their services. This practice may perhaps be convenient to the speaker, by assisting his self-abstraction from all objects, which might divide his attention; but it has an ungracious appearance; nor is it supposable, that the only expedient for giving fervency to devotion is voluntary blindness. Quintilian says, that to cover or shut the eyes in speaking is so gross a fault, that a caution against it could not be necessary.

The eyebrows and shoulders should seldom or ever be remarked by any perceptible motion. A shrug of the shoulders is no unusual gesture at the bar, and even in the pulpit; but its awkward-

ness and vulgarity make it always ridiculous. And in that violent invective of Cicero against Piso, there is perhaps not a passage, where he exposes him more thoroughly to contempt, than that, in which he describes him speaking to the senate, in the dignified character of consul, with one eyebrow screwed up to the forehead, and the other dropped to a level with the chin. *Respondes, altero ad frontem sublato, altero ad mentum depresso supercilio, crudelitatem tibi non placere.*

To the arms and hands some movement is indispensably necessary. This should be varied according to the position, in which the speaker stands. Our public orators most frequently speak before a table, or within a bar, or in a pulpit, where only their upper half, (to use an expression of our most eminent poet), is seen by the auditory. The hands occasionally find resting places on the table or the cushion; but the arms should never be suffered to loll upon them. The movements of the arm should commence from the elbow, rather than from the shoulder. They should generally be from left to right; and very seldom from right to left. In extending the arm, the fingers should also be extended; and the left hand

or arm should seldom or never attempt any motion by itself.

Finally, let it be remembered, that the movements of the hands should generally accompany the tones of the voice, for the expression of passion ; but very rarely for the imitation of action. Even upon the stage, if a performer should be repeating the discourse of another character, he cannot assume all his manners, unless in representations of low buffoonery. But the orator has a real character of his own to maintain ; and he degrades himself by assuming the character of a mimic.

This is the substance of the principal rules of oratorical action, prescribed by Quintilian ; which may still be studied to advantage, and applied with success. Little of material importance has been added to them in modern times ; nor would any multiplication of written precepts enable you to acquire that ease and elegance of oratorical action, which can only be obtained by experience and practice.

This course of lectures, comprising a system of the rhetorical science, as distributed and taught by the great masters of Greece and Rome, is now completed. It has been my endeavour to give you a general view of the principles, upon which

their rhetorical doctrines were founded; of the writers chiefly distinguished in this career; and of the historical progress of their speculations from the earliest ages, until the extinction of ancient science and literature. At the same time I have been sensible, that a knowledge of Greek and Roman elementary treatises could be of little use, unless their instructions could be accommodated to the manners of our own times, and the language of our own country. The acquaintance with those writers, which it has been possible for me to give you, has been necessarily slight and superficial. To open the avenues to science is the duty of the teacher. To explore them must be the labor of the scholar himself. Of the aid, which it has been or may be in my power to contribute to your advancement in this department of your studies, I can but regret, that it is so small. Of my ardent wishes, that your success in this and every other laudable pursuit may answer every expectation of your friends, and every hope of your country; as they were the first sentiments, with which I entered on the duties of this place, so they are the last, with which I close this period of their fulfilment.

Here follows the concluding part of LECTURE XXIV, as delivered July 28, 1809, referred to in the Note, annexed to that lecture.

CONCLUSION.

AND here, gentlemen, our disquisitions upon the second great division of the rhetorical science, that which teaches the disposition of the various parts of an oration, are brought to a close. At this stage of our inquiries a portion of our fellow-laborers have arrived at the term of their collegiate life. While I am treating of the conclusion of a discourse, they are brought to the conclusion of their academical career. At the same time an event, which removes me to a remote region, has suddenly arrested me in the course of these studies, and brings them also to a premature conclusion.

Two years have elapsed since you, gentlemen, who are now about to issue from the halls of science into the tumult of the world, first became my hearers. And this lecture completes the course, upon which you have attended. We have been fellow-students upon subjects in many respects new to myself, as well as to you. We are now to part; and you, as well as myself, are to be separated from those of your successors, who at a later period have become sharers in these studies.

The situation, in which we respectively stand towards one another, is interesting to us all ; and in taking leave of you, I trust you will indulge me with a few additional moments for the utterance of the sentiments, inspired by the occasion.

The period, to which those of you have arrived, who are bidding adieu to the residence within these venerable walls, is perhaps the most critical and important of any moment of your lives. It is the hinge, upon which your future destinies are balanced. It is from this moment, that most of you, ceasing to be merely members of a family, become active partners of the state ; efficient citizens of the commonwealth. Henceforth you are to unite the study of living man with that of ages expired. And so rapid is the succession of years, that you will soon find the balance of your feelings and of your duties pointing with an irresistible magnet to futurity ; and the growing burden of your hopes and wishes concentrated in the welfare of your successors upon this earthly stage ; of yourselves upon that, which is to succeed. If at this moment, in which so many circumstances concur to give solemnity to our feelings, I may be permitted to use with you the freedom, as I feel for you the solicitude of a parent, and to express in the form of advice those ardent wishes for your

future happiness, which beat with every pulsation of my heart, I would intreat you to cherish, and to cultivate in every stage of your lives, that taste for literature and science, which is first sought here, as in their favorite abodes. I would urge it upon you, as the most effectual mean of extending your respectability and usefulness in the world. I would press it with still more earnestness upon you, as the inexhaustible source of enjoyment and of consolation.

In a life of action, however prosperous may be its career, there will be seasons of adversity, and days of trial. The trials of prosperity themselves, though arrayed in garments of joy, are not less perilous or severe, than those of distress. The heart of man is, alas, liable to corruption from both the faces of fortune; and the vices of insolent success are as fatal to the moral dignity of the human character, as the reckless plunges of despair. It is only by absorbing all the interests and all the faculties of the heart, that passion spreads over it like a consuming fire. Form but the habit of taking delight in other objects than those, which merely affect your personal condition in the world, and you will be guarded from that dissipation of mind, which is the wretchedness of prosperity, and from that perturbation of soul, which is the agony

of misfortune. The mastery of our own passions can perhaps only be accomplished by religion; but, in acquiring it, her most effectual, as well as her most elegant instruments are letters and science. At no hour of your life will the love of letters ever oppress you as a burden, or fail you as a resource. In the vain and foolish exultation of the heart, which the brighter prospects of life will sometimes excite, the pensive portress of science shall call you back to the sober pleasures of her holy cell. In the mortifications of disappointment, her soothing voice shall whisper serenity and peace. In social converse with the mighty dead of ancient days, you will never smart under the galling sensation of dependence upon the mighty living of the present age; and in your struggles with the world, should a crisis ever occur, when even friendship may deem it prudent to desert you; when even your country may seem ready to abandon herself and you; when even priest and levite shall come and look on you, and pass by on the other side; seek refuge, my unfailing friends, and be assured you will find it, in the friendship of Laelius and Scipio; in the patriotism of Cicero, Demosthenes, and Burke; as well as in the precepts and example of him, whose whole law is

love, and who taught us to remember injuries only to forgive them.

The satisfaction of this intercourse with you I had flattered myself with the hopes of enjoying for a series of years to come; and it was my wish and intention to have added to these lectures, which you have heard, another, though a shorter course, more particularly devoted to oratory; which was essential to the completion of my original plan. I was deeply sensible also, that after filling up the outline, sketched in my first lecture, a severe and deliberate revision of the whole would be necessary to remove some of its imperfections, and render it more worthy of that unremitting attention, for which I must gratefully acknowledge my obligations to my hearers. From these dreams of hope I have been awakened, by a destination, of uncertain continuance, to a distant country. It is not without reluctance that I have yielded to this call, and resigned the privilege of aiding, by such instruction, as I could give, the studies of you, my young friends and fellow-citizens. In estimating comparatively the permanent dignity and importance of the employment, which I must abandon, with those of the occupation, which I am to assume, I cannot hesitate to prefer that, in which I appear before you. But as the one

belongs only to the relations of private life, while the other embraces the complicated relations of the whole community; the duties of the citizen must retain their precedence over those of the individual; and point to the public service of the country, as that, from which an unsolicited call will admit of no refusal upon personal or private considerations.

This, gentlemen, is my apology to those of you, who, having yet some portion of your time to pass in this temple of the muses, were entitled to my assistance in those parts of your pursuits, connected with the institution of this professorship. In comparing our losses by the separation, which is now to ensue, it is some consolation to me to reflect, that if mine, in losing you as pupils, is irreparable, yours, in losing a teacher, will be transient; and in a short time I trust more than repaired. Still greater is the gratification, with which I bear in mind, that I leave you under the literary guidance and aid of other instructors, all of whom feel the same ardent zeal for your improvement; and many of whom have the advantage of a longer experience in the art of instruction, and a more intimate association with your studies, than it has been or could be my fortune to enjoy. Most of all is my confidence in your future honor and use-

fulness in the world supported by the conviction, that it has an immoveable foundation in your own characters ; that you all feel the moral obligations, which a liberal education imposes upon those, to whom it is given ; that science is only valuable, as it expands the heart, while it enlarges the mind ; that the acquirements, which you can here obtain, are talents put into your hands ; a deposit, of which the fruits belong not exclusively to yourselves, but in common to your fellow-citizens and your fellow-men.

Finally, gentlemen, though my inclination still lingers at the word, I must, however reluctantly, bid you, one and all, adieu. I have heard of two lovers, who, upon being separated from each other for a length of time, and by a distance like that, to which I am bound, among the contrivances, which the ingenuity of affection devised, to bring them in fancy nearer to each other, mutually agreed, at a given hour of every day, to turn their eyes towards one of the great luminaries of heaven ; and each of them, in looking to the sky, felt a sensation of pleasure at the thought, that the eyes of the other at the same moment were directed towards the same object. Let me cherish the hope, that between you and me there will be some occasional, nay, frequent remembrance, reciprocated by analogical

objects in the world of mind. Whenever the hour of studious retirement shall point our views to those luminaries of the moral heavens, which shine with such benignant radiance for our benefit and delight; when the moralists, the poets, and the orators of every age, shall be the immediate objects of our regard; let us in the visions of memory behold one another engaged in the same "celestial colloquy sublime."

Let us think of one another, as fellow-students in the same pursuit. Let us remember the pleasant hours, in which we have trod together this path of wisdom and of honor; and if at that moment the sentiment of privation should darken the retrospect, may it be your consolation, as it will be mine, that the only painful impression, which resulted from our intercourse, arises from its cessation; as the only regret, with which the remembrance of you can ever be associated, is that, which I now experience in bidding you FAREWELL!

END.

ERRATA.

VOL. II.	Page 2, line 2, for <i>thirty five</i> read <i>thirty four</i> .
— 170 — 9 —	<i>my</i> — <i>may.</i>
— 247 — 2 —	<i>snd</i> — <i>and.</i>
— 327 — 9 —	<i>species</i> — <i>spices.</i>