AN ESSAY,

UPON THE

ACTION OF AN ORATOR,

OR,

HIS PRONUNCIATION AND GESTURE;

BEING THE

METRICAL VERSION OF AN OLD ENGLISH PROSE TRANSLATION,

FROM THE

French of Simon Foucher, of Dijon,

Who died at Paris, 1696,

BY FRANCIS ORTON, D. C. L.

INCUMBENT OF ST. GEORGE'S, ALTRINCHAM.

ALTRINCHAM;

PRINTED BY THOMAS BALSHAW, CHURCH STREET.

1848.

DEDICATION.

TO WILLIAM FLEMING, Esquire, M. D.

Of Broughton View, near Manchester.

Dear Sir,

It being usual for authors, especially in their first appearance before the Public, to solicit the patronage of some kind friend of whose judgment and talents there can be no doubt; I could think of no name which would tend more to the honour of my little performance, or be so welcome to the eye of the reader as your own; connected as it is, with all the institutions of your city, Humane, Scientific, and Literary; so that there is no one but will allow that you, and your Father before you, have the highest claim to local estimation, and deserve to be enrolled in the annals of Manchester, it having been his, as it is now your, desire, to devote your time, talents, and wealth to the promotion of the best interests of your fellow citizens, and to be forward in every good work. Hence we find you at once, Chairman to the Council of the Royal Institution—Vice-President of the Natural History Society,—and a Member of the Literary, Philosophical, Botanical, Geological and Cheetham Societies, &c. &c. &c.! Associated, in fact, with all that is Humane, Useful, and Ornamental, in our Northern Emporium of Commerce!

It is several years since I had the good fortune, being Vicar of Hope, in Derbyshire, to meet with a little book, of which this is a Metrical Copy, in the house of a Parishioner at Great Hucklow, when it struck me, that its most valuable

hints, (though sadly in the rough, through the coarseness of the English phrascology of those days into which it was transcribed,) might be brought to bear with considerable advantage, upon a subject in which the Public is especially interested, namely, the greater efficiency of the Pulpit, the Bar, and the Platform, by a more popular, and pleasing style of address. For my own improvement and recreation, therefore, and to beguile the long evenings of winter, I made the Translation, but with no idea of its publicity, until of late several persons of excellent judgment after a comparison of the Prose Version with my manuscript, urged me to publish it,—still I paused, from a conviction of the inadequacy of the performance, until you, Sir, upon being consulted, were pleased to add your encouragements to the former, and allow me the Privilege and Honour of inscribing it to you. Under such favourable auspices, I could hesitate no longer, and now my only hope is that it may not prove altogether unworthy of your Patronage; and contribute in some degree to the advantage of those for whose assistance it is written, namely, for young gentlemen in course of education for the Church, the Bar, or other departments, in which good Elocution, and a handsome address are quite indispensable.

With every acknowledgement of your kindness and my best wishes for your Health and increasing Honours,

Believe me, dear Sir,

With the Highest Esteem,

Your most obliged Friend,

THE TRANSLATOR.

A TABLE OF CHAPTERS IN THIS TREATISE OF ACTION.

ERRATA.

For "Phthsis," read "Phthisis," page 43.

For "Unparalell'd," read "Unparallel'd," page 63.

For "Prosopœia," read "Prosopopœia," page 64.

For "Ctetiphon," read "Ctesiphon," page 71.

CHAP. I.

The Introduction.

Setting forth the Necessity of Action in general, by several Examples.

No question but judicious Thoughts and Words,
Are the chief study of an Orator;
And certainly convince the Judgment more
Than any thing in all the world besides.
We likewise readily concede that these,
Into due Order and Arrangement brought,
A knowledge quite distinct of what is said,
On the assisted memory impress;
Whilst all the pleasing influence allow
Of Language, well selected, to adorn
The solid argument, and happy thought,
Thus set, as 'twere, in sparkling diadems.
Whence, by the greatest schools, the three first parts
Of Oratory, were defined to be
Invention, Disposition, Utterance.
But observations of the mighty power
Of what affects the Senses o'er the Will,
And Understanding, made them add a fourth,
Which very properly, was Action call'd;
And its extensive sphere, the mien and voice.
This Action was regarded formerly
Of such importance that Demosthenes
Has made no scruple of accounting it
First, second, third, and all of Eloquence.
And Tully of the same opinion too,
Said that it had the sole and sov'reign power,
And sway supreme, in every public speech.

To write a Sermon, or to draw a Plea,
Denominated fine, or elegant,

Were no hard matter, with the former gifts ;
But to affect the hearers to the life,
And reach their hearts the Orator must add
A pleasing gesture, and accordant voice ;
Or all will be dispassionate and dead,
Inadequate to wake, or keep the ear ;
Nay it has often been remark'd that men,
Well qualified with other excellence,
To speak in public, but deficient here,
Are heard with great impatience and contempt :
Through bad Pronunciation, awkward Mien ;
Whilst half their talents, with a good Address,
Will win the plaudits of the audience.

So widely does this influence extend,
That all the Senses, captive made thereby,
Feel the impression, and denounce or laud
The Speaker by his more or less of it.
Take an example which Philostratus
Gives in his Barristers—Philiscus shone
Superior to them all ; his tongue and pen
Were to perfection eloquent in Greek ;
His voice was also excellence itself,
Yet were these great advantages destroy'd
By his pronunciation, and his mien,
Erroneous and offensive to the eye :
So that the Emp'ror Antoninus said,
(Whose very nature led him to regard,
And countenance the learning of the bar,)
He would not grant the point he pleaded for,
And several others had before obtain'd ;
Nay more than this he bid him hold his tongue!

Quintilian, on the other hand, relates
That Trachalus, though no great Orator,
Compar'd with some that flourish'd in his time,
Surpass'd them all in pleading ; for his look,
Commanding and majestic won the heart.
His Action was most graceful, and his voice
Came to the ear like a Tragedian's,

Compos'd and grave, excelling far the best
That, in his day, was heard upon the stage.
So likewise, I myself, sometime ago,
Was present at a Nobleman's in France,
When an Address was read, which in itself,
Appear'd replete with depth of argument,
Beauty, and most effective eloquence,
If we had leisurely examined it;
But most unhappily for all who heard,
And to the disadvantage of the speech,
It was deliver'd by a gentleman,
Who had not only an impediment,
But no more gesture than a very post;
Or if the slightest, so unsuitable,
Unpolish'd, and offensive, that we thought
The time all thrown away in hearing it.

Again, some instances I also knew
Both in Divinity and Law, of men
With very slender merits, rising high
In public estimation, from th' effect
Their Sermons and their Pleas have gain'd for them,
Set off with Action and good Utterance.
In short, external graces work so well,
And cause such prepossessions in the mind,
That now-a-days they are the every thing,
And he is nothing who enjoys them not.
To say this, by the by then. They who write
To a felicity, with all the gifts
Essential, save the last, do well to Print
Their learn'd Orations, adequate to please
The reader in themselves, though wanting all
The great advantages of hand and tongue.
And vice versa, they who may excel
In nothing but this Action should decline
The public scrutiny nor publish theirs;
Lest what was heard with honour, in the book
Should meagre seem, and all its beauty fade.
Examples are not wanting; Pericles,

By all the Poets, was allowed to be
The most persuasive, as his pealing words
Broke on the ear, astounding all who heard;
Or his swift reasons flash'd across the mind,
Like lightning through the sky, till Greece herself
Trembled beneath his weighty arguments;
Yet his orations never went abroad,
Because their lustre in the Action lay,
Not in their composition, as he knew.
And therefore Plutarch says, we merely find
A few decrees and acts of his remain.
As to those speeches in Thucidides
Attributed to him, 'tis obvious,
They are by the historian, not himself.

Hortensius, on the other hand, conceived,
But most erroneously, that what he said,
Was praised for its intrinsic excellence;
And found not, till too late, that he was Heard
With greater pleasure than he could be Read.
His sprightly wit and graceful Action here,
Quintilian says, could not but disappear.
And this reminds me of a public speech,
Deliver'd by a gentleman of parts,
And graceful Action too, which gain'd applause;
But sometime afterwards, he foolishly
Consented to draw out the said Harangue;
Which now had quite as much of just dispraise,
For when his hearers had examined it,
Without the charms of his harmonious voice,
His mien, and winning manner, in disgust
They straight denounced it as inelegant,
And hardly could believe it was the same,
That came with such acceptance from his lips.

This is the faculty which Tully styles
Corporeal eloquence—so main a point,
For the effect it has upon the mind,
That all must wonder, why in former times,
The ablest Rhetoricians pass'd it by,

With only half the encomium it deserves.
Thus Aristotle deem'd it quite a Gift,
And not within the compass of his art.
Nor in his treatises of Eloquence,
Has Cicero done more than frequently
Press Action, as a great accomplishment,
Without assigning it specific rules.
It has indeed been treated more at large
By Cornificius, but what he says,
Poor in itself, is almost now forgot.
Quintilian's extant treatise is the best
For nicety of method, and of wit;
But then his rules are only for the bar,
Not for the Pulpit, though as needful here.
Besides, among a many specimens,
Which ought to be in fashion now-a-days,
As much as they were then, he recommends
Some truly foppish gestures, as, to beat
The brow, the breast, the thigh—to stamp the foot,
And such like actions, which might do perhaps
In his time well enough, but not with us,
Who live in a more chaste and polish'd age.

Wherefore, it being matter of regret,
That no such work as this appeared in print,
Especially, as many Orators
Both in the Pulpit and the Bar, should seem
Defective in the art of speaking well;
With proper variation of the voice,
Or Action correspondent with their words,
(And as no other pen assum'd the task,)
Solicited by many valued friends,
Supported by two worthy gentlemen,
Who had especial claims to my regard
I could not, though I wish'd it, say them nay.
Such is the hist'ry of this little Tract
And, till a better offer, let me hope
It may, for their sake, find some countenance
Though, on the Writer's own account, it fail.

CHAP. II.

Shewing that Action is advantageous both to Divines and Barristers and may be used without any impropriety by the Clergy.

Divines and Barristers should speak both well,
And with the grace of Action. But I know
Some people will explode, at one coup d'œil,
The object of this Essay, and maintain
That any cultivation of the voice
Or gesture is not needful in the Law,
And still more foreign to Divinity;
Fantastical, as Cotta, who would use,
As Tully says, low words and obsolete,
Together with a clownish mode of speech,
Out of a fancy for Antiquity.

Others will needs object through idleness,
That they may shun the study it requires,
In order to proficiency therein,
All unambitious of the world's applause,
Too dearly purchas'd by a little pains.
Like these were they, in early christian times,
Who disapprov'd of any aid at all
From eloquence, in preaching; till the plea
Of Chrysostom appear'd to sanction it,
And vindicate it from gross calumny,
In his discourses on the ministry.
There are some people, of splenetic turn,
Who nothing can approve that pleases sense,
However profitable to the mind;
So that whatever strikes the present age,
As good, and called for, must offend their taste.
Yet if I had but these to satisfy,
And their objections only to remove,
Perhaps I might not let my spirits down.

But others of good sense, and feeling too,
Though somewhat rigid in their views, believe
That it is wrong to call in human aid
Upon religious subjects, in the Church.
Now as I think that scruples of this kind,
Should be respected on so nice a point,
Let me endeavour to anticipate
Th' objections first, and then resolve them all.

They say this Action strikes them as unfit
For those who minister in holy things!
Nay more, that it is scandalous, because
They should do something better than consult
How best to frame the voice, and move the hand,
Whilst setting forth God's glory! 'Tis enough
If of his sacred Majesty they think,
His holy Gospel, of his saints, and crown
Of glory that awaits them after death.
But to expect to bring men to the truth,
To holiness and usefulness, by pow'r
Of eloquence and action, were to sink
Religion into sense, and substitute
A carnal worship, wit, and flourishing,
For that which is alone acceptable,
Proceeding from the fervour of the heart:
And, on these principles, to make the Church
No better than a Theatre, a stage
To please the congregation with their airs
And graces! These ambassadors of Christ!
And stewards of his word! To which they add,
That the Apostle's converts were not thus
Brought to repentance, faith, and holiness!

Now this objection let me obviate
By saying first, that I have no design
To teach old men the art of speaking well,
Who have, through life, adopted their own style,
And like it, doubtless, whether good or bad.
If good, they have no need of any help;
If bad, it is too late for them to mend,

Although, perhaps, by reading in this Book,
With patience, and due care, they might correct
Those glaring errors which offend the ear,
And are so prejudicial to their fame.
But to the Students of our Colleges
And Inns of Court, these pages may be found
Of some great service: for young gentlemen,
Who have not yet imbibed a vicious mode
Of speech or manner, are most apt to learn
The rules and features of true eloquence.

Augustine's observation, which he makes
In his fourth book upon the Christian Faith,
Explaining his design in sending out
His Helps to Pulpit Oratory, has,
Almost verbatim, the same arguments.
"Observe I do not recommend these rules
To elder persons in the ministry
But to young students, and of these alone
To such as have no natural defect
To bar their progress in this useful art."
The conscientious scruples some allege
Against this Action, and their arguments
For its disuse, would be invincible,
If preachers should be chiefly occupied
In studying these precepts, or bestow
More thought about an ornamental style,
Than how they best may preach the word of life.
Or if they gave the honour of the work,
In men's Conversion, to external means,
And, from no higher motive, should adjust
Their voice and hand, than for their own applause
And better estimation with their flocks:
This were a sin abhorrent to good men,
A sacrilegious crime of deepest dye,
A profanation of the Saviour's name;
To make the ministry a laughing stock,
A theatre for their own vanity!
Nor is it here design'd to lend a hand

To any such iniquity and pride;
But only to assist them so to speak
That they may edify, and not offend
Their hearers, by monotony of voice,
Or manner, quite inadequate to please.

The Rules which follow, will, I trust, be found
Consistent with the Gospel, nor beneath
The dignity of Preaching, or the weight
Of any topic upon which they treat,
Nor unbecoming in the house of God;
But of a nature to impress, and move
The hearts of all the hearers, to attend
To what is spoken for their real good.
Now, where's the harm of these advantages?
"Why, they rejoin, the man who is intent
"Upon his voice and mien, undoubtedly
"Bestows more pains to please, than profit them;
"Amuse their fancy, than illume their minds!"

Let us admit the passions thus are charm'd;
Still, as this object is subordinate,
Within the Speaker's mind, to nobler ends—
God's honour, and the welfare of their souls;
Ought they to quarrel with the means employ'd
To win attention and secure this end?
And should they not much rather eulogize
Such gen'rous efforts to instruct and please?
The self-same Arguments, must needs remove
All scientific music from our choirs,
Vocal and instrumental, forasmuch
As this, no less than Action, is by art.
And yet, methinks they will not thus reflect
On Zion's Lyrist, or the sacred songs
Tun'd to the honour of Jehovah's name,
Which even Babylon desir'd to hear,
"Come, sing us one of Zion's tuneful hymns!" Ps. 137. iii

Hereby too they reflect on Christ himself,
Who sang a hymn on that distressing eve, Mat. 26. xxx.

When he went forth to bear our sin and shame,
And doubtless found (as man,) relief thereby.
Added to which, th' Apostle recommends James 5. xiii.
All christians, in prosperity or woe,
To vent, in psalms and hymns, their joy or grief.

But they object still farther, and assert
That the Apostles never kept to rules
In their discourses, for the voice or hand!
Pray who inform'd them that these holy men
Employ'd no action in their ministry?
The contrary appears more probable;
For two of them are Boanerges call'd Mark 3. xvii.
Or sons of thunder, whence we may infer,
That they were wont to preach with vehemence,
And in their declamations against sin,
Not with a faint and low, but mighty voice,
And ardent zeal, to set God's terrors forth.
So, when saint Paul, exhorts with many tears,
The Elders of the Church of Ephesus, Acts 20. xix.
To feed the Church of Christ; can we suppose
He was less mov'd than all his hearers were,
Or was not their emotion from his own?
I grant that the Apostles never made
This art their study; nor did they require
The Grammar, or the Logic of the Schools,
Or any of the methods we adopt:
But shall we argue hence against the use
Of education in our colleges?
Or written sermons, since they wrote not theirs?
Not, surely, till we find ourselves like them
Inspired, to speak forth truth and soberness
Without premeditation, and enjoy
Their gifts, far greater than the choicest now!
Till then we must be thankful to attain
To eminence, by ordinary means
Under the blessing of Almighty God.

Then, they possess'd the gift of miracles,
Which were no sooner wrought at any time,

Than the conviction of the Gospel's truth,
Flash'd in upon the minds of all who heard,
And evidenc'd their mission from on high.
But not so now, since miracles have ceas'd,
Divine afflatus, and celestial power;
So that no argument is tenable,
(Drawn from the early apostolic times,)
Against the Art and Ornaments of speech,
Unneeded then, but quite essential now.

Still all that has been said, will not suffice
With some opponents of our eloquence;
Who urge "that it were better to confine
"This Action to the Theatre, where all
"The motive is to captivate the sense."
But with no shew of reason, for if they,
Comedians and Tragedians, on the stage,
Abuse their talents to gross wickedness,
T' enflame the passions with a love of sin;
How shall not we, the ministers of Christ
Strive so to use, as not abuse, God's gifts.
But by them to advance his holy name,
To edify the Church, assist the faith,
And forward the salvation of mankind?
All is resolv'd into the principles,
With which we prosecute our studies here;
And if our motive be to touch the heart
With a more lively sense of things divine;
To raise the soul above this fleeting world,
And its delusive joys; we need not fear
But we shall be accepted and approv'd.
Were not the Tabernacle and the House of God
Adorn'd with gold of Egypt? Or because Ex. 35. xxii.
Some have profan'd, shall we neglect the gift?
Such is our argument, and we desire
To be inform'd by these objectionists,
Whether a good Delivery and Mien,
The gifts of bounteous nature and of art,
Are not to be regarded and esteem'd,

As talents for God's service? Would they not
Be far more willing to hear such a man?
Else why do they, in most unmeasur'd terms,
Dispraise the preacher who has none of them—
But that they think, and justly, that he might,
By industry, and art, and exercise,
Attain to mediocrity herein,
And ought, at least, to study to excel.

Thus for th' exception against Ministers,
Or Action of Divines. The Lawyers next,
Are gainsay'd in this study—Why? "Because,
Say our opponents, "God did not appoint
"The public courts of justice to this end,
"That Barristers should cut a figure there,
"Or captivate with sounds the Judge's ear:
"To warp his mind with fine spun eloquence!
"But to declare the plain unvarnish'd truth,
"The simple facts, and argue thereupon,
"According to Reports and Precedents,
"And cases parallel before adjudg'd.
"In doing this what need, they ask, of art,
"To modulate the voice, or please the eye
"By graceful gesture?" None, we would reply,
Provided justice only were the rule,
And merit duly honour'd; but we know
(As Aristotle honestly remarks,)
That Lawyers are not always call'd to plead
Before Athenian Judges, upright men,
Of perfect probity and splendid gifts,
Who, with unwearied patience, heard both sides,
And without passion, or a prejudice
To either party; nor a single thought
Beyond impartial justice in th' award!
Thus circumstanc'd, there were no need of art,
Exordium, Peroration, or the flowers
Of Rhetoric, because it would suffice,
To make a simple statement of the facts,
To serve his client and resolve the doubts

Occasion'd by the counsel pro and con.
But as it often happens otherwise,
And judges of inferior talent sit
To try the several causes, and may err,
And innocently too, through reasoning
Fallacious and distortive of the case
By counsel for the plaintiff, it becomes
Of paramount importance to employ
The utmost talent to conduct the suit
With interest to the jury and the court,
Both to assist them in unravelling
The specious argument, collect themselves,
And weigh impartially the evidence
For the defendant. And what better way
To fix attention, prejudice repel,
Establish law, and fraudulence confront,
Than thus to plead with eloquential truth
In virtue's own behalf, the cause of all?
Many a truly honest cause has failed
For want of Action. Thus, to name no more
That of Rutilius, which Cic'ro cites
In his first treatise of the Orator.
The counsel was Rutilius himself,
Cotta his nephew join'd with Mucius,
Who pleaded it so coldly and without
All ornament or life, as Tully states,
That it resembled more a Trial made
Ideally in Plato's commonwealth,
Than real life. No heartfelt sigh was heard,
Or exclamation, moan, or just complaint,
Imploring of authority, or ought
To win upon the auditors, no foot
Was heard, or hand uplifted in their eloquence,
As if they felt the matter. So it fail'd,
Entirely through mismanagement, and he,
Rutilius was banish'd. A Crassus had
Undoubtedly been quite successful here,
His elegant deportment, winning air,
And skilful pleading would have carried it,

Acquitted him with honour and applause.
And though we grant herein Rutilius shewed
Great constancy of mind and confidence
In his own innocence by acting thus
With stoical indifference of the end;
Yet can we not at all approve of it,
Or as a man, or as an orator.
For we should do our utmost to protect
Our name, our fortune, and profession too.
The Commonwealth could ill afford to lose
His presence, counsels, or his virtuous life.
But after all perhaps he wish'd to leave
The government of Sylla, and reside
Retired, where he was lov'd, than in proud Rome
Where only jealousy and strife prevail'd.

Consider also that the voice and mien
Not only draw attention and assist
To make the judges cautious how they act,
But to convince them that the Barrister
Is in good earnest in his Client's cause;
These being, (Cornificius remarks)
The plainest symptoms of veracity
Sincerity and candour. That the heart
Most deeply feels the ev'ry word he speaks
Whereas the absence of this energy
Creates a doubt if what he say be true,
So unimpassion'd is his eloquence.
This gave occasion for that sarcasm
Of Cicero, when once an Orator
Evinc'd this frozen manner at the bar.

"If what you said, good gentleman, were true
Would you have pleaded it no otherwise,
Where was your grief, your fire and fury, sir?
You shew'd no passion of the mind or frame,
So far from raising in us any warmth
Of sympathy, you sent us all to sleep."

When we advise the Lawyer to adopt
This handsome way of speaking, it is not

That he may win upon the Judge's mind,
To blind it in the cause of sacred truth,
But on the contrary, by honest means
Oblige him to his duty; to beware
Of listlessness and weariness therein,
To quicken his attention to the claims
Of injured innocence, and poise the whole
Of what is said, in justice's equal scale.
And were it not within our power to urge
Another argument, this were enough—
That we should labour to express ourselves
On every subject, as good sense and taste
Invariably dictate to us all.

Again, another plea I also add
Which seems considerable in itself,
And well deserving our opponent's ear;
Namely. that if our Barristers decline
These lawful graces to assist their cause,
The unprincipled will use them to distort
And wrest sound judgment. And it seems but fair,
That counsel on both sides be talented,
In order to dispute on equal grounds.
The same will hold in reference to divines;
And we may say of Action, in the words
Of Austin in his Christian doctrine, that
As Rhetoricians labour to persuade
On subjects true and false promiscuously,
Who dare assert that truth ought not to be
Defended against fiction or a lie?
As if they that dispute against the truth,
Alone should have the furniture required,
To win attention and secure success,
And honest advocates have none of it!
As if a falsehood should assume the air
Of credibility, through artifice
And energetic pleading; and the while,
Truth suffer prejudice from want of skill
To clear it from aspersion and deceit!

Shall some with ease exert an influence
Upon the public mind, and move the soul
This way or that, and to astonishment,
With joy or sadness even as they please,
By handsome action and a tuneful voice ;
And virtue's advocate stand motionless,
Dull, unconcerned, and almost impotent,
Nor raise a finger in her sacred cause ?
O who can bear to think of such a thing,
And will not henceforth labour to improve
The gift of eloquence for gracious ends.
Especially as enemies to God,
And all his righteous servants, will be sure
T'avail themselves of every vantage ground,
To compass their own wicked purposes !

But others yet there are who with disdain
This science treat as quite superfluous,
Because, as they allege, to us is giv'n
Pronunciation, and a gesture too
By nature, all sufficient to express
The several passions of the human mind.
But this is just as if they should declare
That seeing God has given to the earth
Fertility to yield us bread and wine,
To nourish and restore our weaken'd frame,
'Tis therefore useless to employ the means
In ordinary vogue to cultivate
The yielding furrows for the scattered grain !
Or that, as man by nature is endued
With intellect, unneedful to adopt
A systematic method to assist
The opening mind to exercise its powers !
Or since he's fitted for a social life,
By interchange of thought and business,
He therefore need be under no concern
To study œconomics, or the rules
Of civil or of moral policy !

When arguments like these shall go for sense,
And not till then will we discard the aid

Of science to improve the faculty,
The polish, and the purity of speech,
And vicious habits of untutored minds.
Yes, when it shall appear that Husbandry,
Is not required in order to produce
The golden harvest, in all soils alike
Spontaneous found! And men have equal minds,
And every one from imperfection free,
Can solve with readiness each question rais'd,
As well without, as with, logistic help!
When wisdom and discretion shall be found
In all their councils, with propriety
Of action to persuade, we then will yield,
But not before, our ev'ry argument;
And close at once our colleges and schools.
At present, all our skill is requisite
To this perfection, for experience proves,
That earth is not productive everywhere
Of valuable fruits, but sterile some;
Or yielding only brambles, thistles, thorns,
The next to nothing! whilst the richest asks
Unceasing labour from the husbandman.

And as to men, they reason pretty well
On common matters; but in higher things,
'Tis needful to assist the intellect
Of the most learned.—Thus in social life,
Within our cities, under fixed restraints,
And laws of intercourse, they may perchance
Do well enough; but in their private walk,
Professions, callings, and capacities,
They many times betray an ignorance,
Or wilful dereliction of the rules
And precepts of morality. So all can speak
In ordinary, but for eloquence
Convincing, argumentative; without
A careful education in the schools
Of art and grammar, we shall look in vain.

And on the point of Action, they require
As much tuition. How uncouth are some,
How elegant are others to persuade
To please the eye, and charm the list'ning ear!
And wake up all our sympathy and love!
This made the Ancients notice take of such
As shone the brightest in this faculty;
And seeing that they were on this account
Far more persuasive and acceptable,
Have noted down with care the leading traits
Of voice and mien, which gained them such applause.
They likewise from considering the power,
And reason of their Action, have devis'd
Some precepts for its government; address'd
Both to the students of those times, and all
Who now may wish to emulate their fame.
Those rules of Gesture and of Rhetorick,
Or for the Pulpit or the Bar, I give,
To finish what kind nature has begun:
And by a system, help them to attain
To such a happy mediocrity,
As shall from errors on the right, and left,
(The finical and slovenly,) be free;
And with variety and emphasis,
Distinct and à propos, express themselves.

Demosthenes and Cicero arose
To all their eminence by these said rules;
And, in the estimation of the world,
Had not their equals, or in Greece, or Rome.
The great Demosthenes indeed, at first,
Was nothing, nay, was voted from the bar
At Athens, and alone, on the account
Of bad Pronunciation. But by dint
Of patient application to the means
Propounded by the masters of the art,
He gain'd unrivalled admiration there!

And that his great success was owing more
To action, than his eloquence appears

From Eschines' remark upon a speech
Which he recited, though against himself,
Amongst the Rhodians, and with great applause.
On seeing them admire it, "Ah," he said,
"How would you then have cheer'd it, had you heard
It spoken by Demosthenes himself?"

So Cicero, no less, when he began
To practise at the Bar was prais'd for wit;
But his delivery was far from good,
With nothing captivating in his style,
Because he set no limits to his voice,
And suffered it untutored to offend
With sounds discordant, harsh, inelegant;
But when this roughness had been polish'd off,
Its cadence soften'd with the greatest skill,
He was consider'd the most talented
Of all the Orators, and overruled
The judgment of the court in ev'ry cause
He took in hand, and with the greatest ease!

Now after this, will any one presume
To say that precepts are superfluous
For Voice or Hand? And will not all the world
Allow 'tis worth the while to study them?
Or how can any pains be deem'd too great
To gain repute, and make us eminent?

CHAP. III.

Directions for Action, to young Gentlemen who are ambitious of speaking well in Public.

Bear then in mind the object of this book,
Namely, Th' assistance of young Gentlemen,
Who may intend the Pulpit, or the Bar,
To be their future field—and first,
Let me most earnestly admonish them
Against delay, or error in the choice
Of tutors in this art. Against delay,
I cannot say too much. Let them begin,
If they would rise to eminence, betimes ;
And practise it as often as they can,
Ere imperfections creep into their style,
It being always easier to prevent
An awkward gesture, by a graceful one ;
And quaint expressions by more elegant,
Before, than after habits have been form'd,
Confirm'd by custom, rivited by time ;
For then 'tis very difficult indeed,
If not impossible, to leave them off.
In youth the mind is apter to imbibe
The rules of art, and mem'ry to retain ;
But with advancing years, the intellect
Becomes less vigorous and teachable :
True, at that period, men begin to feel
Their own deficiency with deep regret,
And may lament it, but the time is gone,
And to repair the loss, alas! too late,
Of thirty, or of forty, precious years!

A many worthy persons whom I know,
Have bitterly regretted their neglect
Of this most pleasing study; and in vain,
At such an age, anticipate success.
One in particular, of shining parts,
And excellently qualified to speak
In public, but he never kept to rules
For voice or gesture; so that when he found
His disadvantage, through a candid friend,
Who told him of this art, he felt afraid
Of making at his time of life, the change,
Lest it should never answer.—Certainly,
He judg'd most prudently in his own case:
For with his constitution, bold and warm,
Sanguine in whatsoever he espoused,
(Wherein his talent lay,) he had been cramp'd,
And fetter'd only, with the choicest rules!

Another necessary caution, is,
To guard against the disadvantages
Of Nature, or of Habit, in the best
Of Tutors, or of Parents; whom to love,
And imitate in points of excellence—
Becomes our duty; but we must avoid
The imitation of their blemishes;
Which contradict the laws of Rhetorick,
Or this said Action; even as we shun
(On moral and religious principles)
Ought that offends the Majesty on high,
In those we most esteem: but chiefly youth,
As Alcibiades, mistake it here—
Who fancied he must copy out his sire,
In speaking thick and fast, one word, as 'twere,
Upon another—and abroad, no less,
Turning his neck, and tossing up his head,
Tiptoe, just like him, in the streets, with gown
Dragging behind him, quite effeminate,
Or foppish, one; degrading to a man,
For which Archippus chid him to his face.

Plato's disciples, out of compliment,
Shrugg'd up their shoulders just because he did!
And Aristotle's even went so far,
As to affect his painful stammering!

So Alexander, 'cause Leonidas
Destroy'd his Soldiers, needs must do the same;
And led them by forc'd marches to the field
Without an interval, till overcome,
Not by the sword, but sheer fatigue, they died.

The same has been remark'd in colleges;
When any celebrated lecturer,
(On classical accounts,) has got the way
Of breathing short, at every syllable;
Or an impediment, provincial brogue,
Or unbecoming air; the consequence
Will be, that, more or less, his auditors,
Unconsciously will catch the same defect;
Because he is the model of them all;
And as he is himself, so they will be!

This observation holds with public men,
Of all departments. Thus fam'd Bresson rosə,
Monsieur du Vair remarks, above all praise
For eloquence; yet this fine orator,
And most illustrious President, display'd
No grace of Gesture; but inanimate
In the extreme, deliver'd his harangues,
Without one look towards the Senators;
For fear, as it was thought, his memory
Should thereby suffer inconvenience;
Hence, not a finger, nor an eye must move!

Let then all imperfections such as these,
And others, be avoided with due care,
By all who wish to shine as orators:
And whilst they labour to avoid their faults,

Let them no less imbibe their excellence,
Nor think that Action makes amends for all—
As Seneca's disciples, for his skill
In elocution, substituted noise!
A truly wise, and choice philosopher,
And a rare pattern for aspiring youth,
In former times; but, as Quintilian says,
He also had a number of good faults;
And these unhappily were more in vogue,
And sooner learnt, than his philosophy.
And hence his pupils, in their vain attempt
To follow him, did but the rather draw
Discredit on their master's just renown,
Whom they dishonoured by their foppery!
So, at this present time, we may observe
Not only students, but experienced men,
Adopting the same vices in their style,
And choice of words; as if it were enough,
To follow Seneca through thick and thin,
Despite of reason, and our common sense!

CHAP. IV.

Of Speaking; and first of all what the Orator must do, to be heard without difficulty and trouble.

The first, and most considerable point,
Is the Pronunciation; as regards
The satisfaction of the Public ear;
The organ of all learning, or the sense
Of Discipline, as it may well be term'd;
Seeing thereby, the very elements
Of wisdom and of science are convey'd
Into the understanding. Give me leave
Then, first of all, to press upon your mind,
The Orator's chief object—To be heard,
And understood with ease.—For otherwise,
It were lost labour to stand up at all.
And if but partly heard, or with great pain,
Two disadvantages would thence arise—
People would not be willing to bestow
The trouble it required, to make him out,
For any length of time—or secondly,
This close attention to the simple words,
Would shut out all improvement of the mind,
From the intrinsic matter of the speech;
Our chief desire in every thing we hear.
Now, to avoid these evils, he must have
A voice both clear and strong; if not like that
Trachalus had, of whom Quintilian speaks,
(That when four courts within the Julian Hall
Were sitting to hear causes, and dispense

The claims of public justice, he was heard,
And understood, not only by the first
Where he was pleading, but throughout the room,)—
Yet such a voice as will at least pervade
The place where he is speaking ; to the end,
As Austin well observes, "That he who sits
The most remote may hear and understand."
Some men by nature have a voice like this;
Others have part by nature, part by art ;
The latter perfecting, what that began.

Where nature has bestowed this faculty
To a degree of excellence, a gift
For public speaking is discerned at once,
If he discharge his duty, and improve
So good a talent, to right worthy ends.
But on the other hand, if nature give
No power of voice ; his lungs, his throat, his tongue,
Organically weak ; or if he lisp,
Or hesitate, or falter in his speech—
I counsel him, as Apollonius did,
Those gentlemen who would have learnt this art:
As soon as he perceiv'd they wanted all
The requisite endowments, he pronounced
Their incapacity, and plainly said,
"He would advise their studying something else,
Rather than rack their brains, without a chance
With all the help of man, of much success ;"
Or run the risk of injuring their health,
Than which no greater blessing is on earth !"
But if a man possess the requisites
Of Oratory, save the voice alone;
That is, sound judment to invent and clothe
In polish'd language all his arguments,
On any subject ; let him turn his gifts
To good account on paper, as we find
Isocrates conceiv'd he ought to do.—
In his Athenian Festivals, he says,

"I knew my nature was too delicate
For Action, and my voice too feeble far,
To plead in public for our Commonwealth.
In this respect, I felt inadequate;
And yet it seem'd that I was capable
Of quite as much research as other men,
Who boasted of a deeper knowledge far;
Though not to speak it off so fluently,
Because I felt myself, in two main points,
Unfitted for an Orator; the one,
Sufficient nerve; the other, a strong voice!
And they that are not furnish'd first with these,
Should not anticipate forensic praise.
However I had so much courage yet,
As to attempt renown another way—
By private study of Philosophy,
With my own comments; not on little things,
As cov'nants, bargains, deeds, or contracts made
'Tween man and man; but chiefly on the state
Of Greece, and the affairs of Government.

Thus, though good speaking and fine gesture give
To Composition its chief ornament—
A man may shine in print, if he adorn,
Instead thereof, his writings with the grace,
And beauty of expression; cadences
Smooth, and delicious to the list'ning ear;
With sprightly turns, and figures intermix'd,
Th' embellishments of wit and eloquence;
So that his writings, of themselves shall be
Agreeable enough, without the hand.
Or voice of some great Orator, as were
The tuneful periods of Isocrates.

But let not, for all this, a man despair
Of mediocrity, whose voice is weak:
For, with due care, it may be much improved,
And strengthen'd for his purpose at the bar,

Or in the pulpit; as Demosthenes
O'ercame the disadvantages of his;
As Plutarch, his biographer relates:
For having ventured into public twice,
With all his imperfections, he was hiss'd
On both occasions; whereat much chagrin'd,
He made his plaint to Satyrus, and said,
"I take more pains than any other man,
But cannot please the people." "Well, replied
The famous actor, "I will mend your voice"
And hereupon, he caus'd him to repeat
Some verses, either from Euripides,
Or Sophocles, but murdered you are sure,
(Because of his impediment,) and then
Recited the same passages himself;
With all the elegance and classic taste
Required to set them off. At once, he saw
And felt his own defects, and wretched style;
Nor longer wondered that he miss'd success:
Especially when Eunemus of Thrace,
And Andronicus gave the same advice—
So that he fell at once upon the art
Of Speaking, and of Gesture, in this way:—

"He made a small apartment under ground,
And thither he resorted, day by day,
To practice speaking, and this action too:
Nay so determin'd was he to succeed,
That fearing interruption, he immured
Himself for months together in this cave.
And when oblig'd to break from his retreat,
For business or diversion, he would shave
His head half way, that he might not appear
In the costume he wore in privacy.
Here, with increasing earnestness, he spake,
The declamations he had learnt by heart;
Adopting such a Gesture as he saw,
Within a full length mirror, was the best

And most approved by masters of the art.
Whilst this was going on, the chest and lungs
Expanded, and acquired augmented power.
But he had other troubles to surmount;—
For his articulation was so bad,
That indistinction marked his ev'ry word.
And there were letters in the Alphabet,
With all his labour he could not pronounce;
R, in particular; whence people said,
"He did not know th' initial of his art."
Nor could he read a single clause entire,
Without an inspiration of the breath,
Midway, at least, to help him to the end.
He also had to overcome the noise
Of public courts. These were his obstacles!
And for the first, his painful remedy
Was speaking with some pebbles in his mouth;
Thus fettering his tongue yet more and more!
But afterwards, when these had been removed,
He knew what liberty of speech implied,
And could, with comfort utter anything.
To cure his breathing, he would climb the hills,
And as he ran, repeat some verses off!
And last of all, the buzz of crowded courts,
Was made familiar to him, by the sea,
When lash'd into a tempest with the winds:
For on the murmuring shore he read aloud,
And tried to raise his voice above the waves!
Thus he at length attain'd a name by far
The most distinguish'd both for eloquence
And elegance of Action!—Well, bestow,
As he did, equal pains, and you no less
Shall at the Bar, or in the Pulpit shine.

But to be more particular, your voice,
You say, is weak! To strengthen it, rehearse
Or read aloud, (with moderation,) one
Or more choice extracts daily; taking care
Not to o'erstrain your voice: and so, your health

Shall not decline, but rather be improv'd.
Plutarch, in recommending excercise
To other people, such as may divert,
Or aid the constitution, wisely adds,
(In reference to the Lawyer,) Let him use
The exercise peculiar to the bar;
For none so good as this, it thins the blood
Increases nat'ral warmth, and opens all
The pores, and keeps the circulation free
From gross and thickening humours in the frame;
While other labour only sets the limbs
In play, a far more worthy work is here;
To exercise the nobler parts of man;
His chest, his lungs, his voice, his very heart.
But if at first, it seem too violent;
Begin quite low, as Ambrose did, for fear
His private speaking, should impair his lungs
For public declamation—Only mind
To read at times a page or two, quite loud,
Lest the voice suffer in its energy.

Are you a falterer in your speech? Observe
Distinction in your words and syllables,
In all your private reading; and bestow
A full proportion of the sound on each.—
And when this plain, intelligible mode
Of speaking is acquir'd, you may proceed
To greater fluency without a fault.
But if you find a proneness to break down,
On certain words and phrases, substitute
A smoother particle or two, or word
Synonymous, for that which teases you,
And this will bring you pleasantly to port.

And if you cannot sound the letter R,
After your utmost pains to master it,
So that you rather fall into despair,
Against an obvious incapacity;

Yet be advised to labour at it still,
And use all means within the power of art;
For though the Athenians with so nice an ear
Might tolerate in Alcibiades
The imperfection, as their favourite;
Or think his other virtues made amends;
Or that this single blemish added charms
To all his other gifts; yet stammering,
Is, notwithstanding, an egregious fault;
Offends the ear, and often dubious makes
The speaker's meaning, and to ridicule
Exposes him; as in the Theatre
At Athens, if what the poets say be true.
For all which reasons, you should aim at least,
At its removal, with Demosthenes:
And if you cannot so distinctly sound
The letter R, as he, at length contriv'd,
With all the ease and clearness in the world;
You may succeed so far, as to prevent
The slightest pain, in the discerning ear.

Again, some persons have another vice
Called Plateasm, by the learned Greeks,
Or a broad way of speaking; with the mouth
Wide open, boisterous, but indistinct,
As the far sounding billows of the sea;
Or roaring of the lion in the woods!
And this they fondly take for majesty,
And think it adds a weight to what they say;
A weight of empty noise it perhaps does;
A weight of disadvantage to the voice!
Whose chiefest beauty is to be distinct,
Soft, and intelligible to the mind.
Five or six words pronounced in such a storm
Will dissipate the meaning of a clause;
And many sentences so boisterous,
A whole discourse; from which the auditors
Derive no pleasure, nor the speaker praise.

Contrariwise, there is what Grecians call
Cœlostomy, a mumbling with the lips,
As if the words could not escape therefrom ;
Or pent within a cave, or hollow churn,
Were struggling all they could to catch the air ;
Or, for the clinching teeth, could not express
One syllable, with due propriety.
This hollow way of speaking, is as bad
As that of Plateasm, if not worse.

Two words, and I have done upon this head ;
A public speaker, to be understood,
Must have a voice articulate and clear,
And a Pronunciation vigorous ;
The former is most needful of the two ;
For if a man have an indifferent voice,
But clear and quite distinct, he will be heard
With far more ease and profit, than the man,
With less articulation, though more strength.

A worthy person, who for many years,
Was my much valued friend ; of slender powers,
But speaking most distinctly all he says,
Is heard with admiration ; if his age
Has not remov'd him from a public life.

The next to this is Audibility,
Or strength of voice to fill an ample space.
Now this is not to be attained at once,
But by degrees ; till that which at the first,
Was but a faint, a low, and feeble voice,
By exercise insensibly becomes
Stronger and stronger, (nor with prejudice,
But benefit to health,) till finally,
It reach to that perfection, which (unless
We make the trial,) is incredible !

CHAP. V.

The Way to be heard with delight.

A speaker never should be satisfied
With being heard distinctly without pain;
But aim at giving pleasure and delight;
And with a view to this, endeavour, first,
To make his voice, as much as in him lies,
Soft and agreeable to every ear;
And if he find it naturally harsh,
Hoarse, or immoderately loud, enquire
Into the reasons; for perhaps it may
Arise from habit, as with many men—
And must be cured by counter practising
The voice, and reading in a quiet way.

But if it spring from natural defect
Within the organs, he must seek the cure
In regimen, and the Physician's skill,
And constant exercise. For regimen,
I leave it to the Doctors: for exercise,
The morning is the season most approv'd
For study, when the mind, and body too,
Refresh'd with sleep, have far more energy.

Now that this art of softening the voice,
And curbing the extent of utterance,
May be acquir'd by care and exercise,
Is plain, from Cicero, who, Plutarch says,
Had at the first, before he went to Greece,
A rude, obstrep'rous voice, but staying there
Awhile, he so completely conquered it,
That all who heard its sweetness were amaz'd!

The Student then must labour to impart
A smoothness to his voice, that all its tones
And chasten'd measures, may afford delight,
E'en though the audience should be Foreigners,
Nor understand the tongue in which he speaks.
As in the case of those great Orators,
Adrian and Phavorinus, who declaim'd
In Greek, with so much sweetness, that e'en such
(According to Philostratus) as were
Quite strangers to the language, would attend!

And let me next advise the abstinence
From coughing, at each period in the speech!
A most disgusting vice, injurious
And prejudicial to the best discourse:
Which, that it may be cur'd, as being more
Th' effect of habit, than necessity,
Appears from common observation made;
Because most speakers do refrain from it.
And a Divine I know, who never coughs;
No matter whether he accomplish it
Through persevering care, and self-control;
Or, as perhaps it may, his energy,
And ardour in the service check the rheum:
However, so it is; and hence, at least,
I argue that a man may shun the fault,
(Unless phlegmatic to a high degree,)
And will, by ev'ry effort in his power,
Contrive to spare his congregation pain.

Surely our Clergy will not imitate
Th' affected cough of Monsieur Maillard;
Who in a sermon preach'd at Bruges, mark'd
The paragraphs at which he meant to cough!
With 'Hem, hem, hem', as still appears in print!

The next important matter which I urge
Upon your care and time, is to adopt
As much variety as possible,
(According to the subject) in your voice;
And as the passions which you would excite,
Within the breasts of others, shall require;
Stronger or weaker, loud or soft, as best
May serve your purpose, and promote your end:
For as a fiddler, scraping on one string,
With music most tormenting to the ear,
Becomes ridiculous! so he who reads
Or speaks, but always in the self-same key!

I have observ'd that this monotony,
Is a prevailing error in the church,
And though, indeed, no voice that fills the place,
Can fail of having something we admire;
Yet how much better might it not be made
If varied and adjusted to the life?
Besides, such voices, as ill government
Is not entirely able to destroy,
Are very rare; whilst ordinary ones,
Are good for nothing, if monotonous.

But to proceed, this uniformity,
Not only is unpleasant to us all,
But prejudices the discourse itself;
Defeating its impression on the mind.
And for two reasons; one of them, because
This equal way of speaking, where no stress
Is laid on any part above the rest,
Makes all the features of the speech alike;
And most unjustly so; diminishing
If not destroying, all the weight and power
Of reason, and of argument; nor less
All ornaments and lustre from the tropes,
And figures introduced in the address:
So that in short, what ought to strike the mind,
Affects it not at all, by being said
Without distinction or variety!

The other is, that nothing so inclines
To sleep or dulness, as monotony :
And there are many, who although they strive
Against it all they can ; and keep their eyes
Upon the preacher, with the utmost pains,
Resolv'd to hear him out, if possible ;
Fall fast asleep, before he has half done ;
And simply for the reasons here assign'd.
Strange that so great an evil should prevail
Amongst our public speakers, as it does !

I was myself, indeed, at setting out
In life, addicted to this very fault ;
And often wonder people could endure
To hear me speak, when I could not abide
The sound of my own voice ; till afterwards
I varied it as often as I could,
To make it less ungrateful. First of all,
I fell to musing on this vicious mode,
So prevalent in others and myself.
Some quite unconsciously adopting it ;
And others knowing well its viciousness,
Unwilling to bestow the needful care
To check the growing evil ? till at length,
I think I trac'd its baneful origin
As follows—When we first begin to read,
If we but call the letters right, no pains
Are taken with us to discriminate
Between the sounds ! we go to grammar school,
And study Rhetoric ; 'tis quite as bad ;
The measure and the method are the same ;
Without correcting the monotonous,
And hum drum way of speaking we have got ;
The master rather gives encouragement
To this offensive habit, saying off,
And reading with us in another voice
Than that in which he speaks when out of school ;
All in one accent, one unvaried tone !

Instead of which, the voice should then be train'd
To the variety of which we speak;
How to proportion all its emphasis,
According to the subject we're upon
At ev'ry turn, and figure of the speech,
And as the room and audience may require,
To the delight, and benefit of all.
The consequence of these reflections was,
That I determin'd to have better help
From Nature, and from Reason, now my guides:
And, in my judgment, all who would attain
To any excellence, must do so too!

Nature is plain enough in what she says;
Namely, that when we speak of doleful things,
It ought to be in quite another key
Than upon Joyous subjects, festal days!
When we reprove our hearers for some fault;
Or would convince them of our sympathy,
In their distress. In one way to Upbraid,
Another, when we make apologies.

Again, in Promising, she teaches us
To use one kind of voice; another, when
We humbly sue out pardon for offence;
When speaking in good humour, calm, sedate,
And under anger, peevishness and pain!

This variation is so natural,
That if we could but hear two disputants,
And in another language, we might tell
Which bosom heav'd with anger or alarm—
Which, with the influence of joy or grief!
These different emotions would appear
Not only in the countenance and air,
But in the tone, and cadence of the voice;
So that Pronunciation ought to be
As nature dictates, let the subject turn
On whatsoever point: and here, observe,
That the most unaffected, is the best!

A ready way by which we may succeed,
In varying the voice, is to observe
The difference in ordinary chat,
And table talk, we always make ourselves.
The warmth with which an injur'd woman speaks
Of all her wrongs! and how, when she laments
A tender husband dead, or only child!
Then try to imitate these passions well,
Supposing circumstances to require,
Allowing, for the place, a louder tone;
A spacious Church, for instance, or a Court,
And not a private closet. On the stage,
Tragedians thus adapt their voice to fill,
(And in a nat'ral way) the Theatre.

Then, as to Reason, it instructeth us
That God has blessed us with the faculty
Of speech above all creatures; and with words
For the interpretation of our thoughts,
And mirror of our passions; to the end,
That, out of duty to ourselves and Him,
We should set forth his truth to all mankind;
And speak our sentiments, with high disdain
Of falsehood; and, with glowing zeal, inspire
The hearts of others in the sacred cause!
It likewise teaches us that when the Earth
Was first created, God, in general,
Divided it into the many shapes,
And forms and figures, we so much admire;
Mountains and Vallies interchangeably,
In order that our sev'ral tastes might find
Exhaustless pleasure in the rich survey!

So in the structure of the human frame:
The many members, all distinct, unite
To make one perfect whole; and beauty give,
To what were otherwise a cumb'rous mass,
And not available, as now it is,
To all the purposes of useful life!

Hence we infer, that this Variety
Is no less needful to the Orator;
(According the figures he employs,
And object in his view) than classic taste,
Invention, and judicious choice of words!

Would you then polish, and refine your speech,
Set off your Pleas and Sermons with a grace
And air of elegance, engaging all
With pleasure to attend to your harangues?
Imprint the little word 'Variety'
Deep on the tablet of your memory;
Together with the Precepts which ensue.

CHAP. VI.

General Rules for the Variation of the Voice.

As then the body has three measurements,
In length, and breadth, and thickness; so the voice
Is loud, or soft, slow, rapid, high or low;
According as the speaker has a mind:
Whose chief endeavour is to modulate
Its various tones, to gratify the ear;
And keep the happy medium in all.
For, as in other things, extremes are bad!
And therefore let the Orator avoid
The utmost pitch of what his lungs allow;
And, on the other hand, the lowest notes;
For to be always up to such a strain
Were not to preach, or plead, but make a noise,
Like some whom Tully pleasantly compares
To cripples who must needs on horseback ride,
Because they cannot travel on their feet.
So these must raise their voices to a height
Beyond all bounds; as Pliny did himself
Before he took instructions in this art.
Such over great exertion chokes the voice,
With hoarseness, and offends the auditors.
Also, to sink it to the lowest note,
Is not to speak, but mutter a discourse;
Inaudible to more than half around,
Who were as well away, for any good
Deriv'd from such a mumbling orator!

Capella Martianus seems to err,
Or else is not quite clear, when he directs
The Orator in reading by himself,
To set about it rather in a low,
Than in a loud, and elevated tone,
Before he pleads in public; to acquire
A proper standard! Surely he mistakes
For how could he be heard or fill the place
With voice at this low pitch?—The mean is best,
The happy mean, between the two extremes.

Then secondly for strength or vehemence,
Oppos'd to softness; as in instruments,
The medium is undoubtedly preferred:
Because we could not carry out a speech
To any length, with so much violence;
But Adrian like, most probably break down;
As, from Philostratus, we find he did,
On one occasion; when he work'd himself
To such a pitch of speaking, that at last
He lost his voice, and in a moment dropp'd
To such a perfect whisper in the court,
That he was neither heard nor understood!
Think too of that afflictive consequence
Of Zosimus; young Pliny's freeman's zeal,
Who broke a vessel by his violence,
And though a tour to Egypt did him good,
And partially repair'd the injury;
Yet having no more prudence afterwards,
He soon relaps'd into the same complaint,
With symptoms more alarming than before!

A man whose constitution is but weak,
Should guard most carefully against this fault;
Or he thereby may bring on instant death:
King Attalus at Thebes, in his old age
Whilst speaking with this violence, fell down
Almost a corpse, and died in consequence
A little after he had reach'd his home.

Yet on the other hand, the Orator
Ought not to be too mild in what he says ;
Or shy in gesture ; but with energy,
Though moderation, state his arguments :
Because an unimpassioned eloquence,
Is little better than our private talk,
And raises no more fervour in the heart !
So, as to slowness, and rapidity,
Avoid extremes no less ; and neither be
Precipitate, nor Drawling in your mode.
Against the former rock, Haterius dash'd ;
When driving once at a tremendous rate,
Augustus order'd them to put a drag,
For fear of danger to the flying wheel !

Serapion also err'd on this same point ;
Of whom Lucilius wrote to Seneca,
That speaking as he did, so fast, and thick,
One word upon another ; no one tongue
Would be sufficient for his fretted mouth,
If he continu'd so precipate,
And let his words so far outstrip his thoughts !

Now such immod'rate volubility,
Is not to be consider'd eloquence,
But school-boy haste, to get his lesson done !
Or like the Mountebank, who strives to draw,
By talk and rattle, children to his show !

Tis anything but real fluency,
Aud quite beneath the man of solid sense,
And topic of solemnity and weight ;
Inelegant, as if a gentleman
Should race with foot-boys through the public streets !

The Orator should keep a steady eye
On all his words and thoughts, and aim in both,
(As Tully did) at uniformity ;
Which Seneca so much admir'd in him.

A man, indeed, may, with the populace,
Obtain some credit by this rapid style,
As Greg'ry Nazianzen has remark'd;
Nothing appearing half so wonderful
As this loquacity to vulgar minds!
But this false reputation is confin'd
To oral speeches, and in writing, fades;
Where not a shred of learning can be found,
To embalm his mem'ry in a future age.

Thus Tacitus observes, Haterius shone
During his life time, for his eloquence:
But if the works which he has left behind,
Are any fair criterion of his worth—
He has not much pretence to this renown;
More fire than study, fluency than wit,
Which was extinguished with him: whilst the praise
Of solid learning, and of other men,
Enkindles in posterity the glow
Of emulation, and transmits their fame,
Long after they are gone to happier worlds!

This vice not only very ill becomes
The speaker, in a Sermon, or a plea;
But frustrates the design of eloquence,
Which should be, to convince the auditors
But how can he convince who gives no time,
To weigh his reasons, or his arguments?
How can a Judge be able to keep up
With one who pleads as he were riding post?
Or can the people catch one inference
In twenty, which the breathless preacher hurls
Upon their ears, as lightnings 'cross the sky?
The truth and justice of the cause he pleads,
Must suffer in his hands, if felt at all!

This volubility without a pause,
Is no less prejudicial to himself,
As well as an injustice to his friends;
Because he gives his auditors no time.

To note his Cadences, and Periods,
The graces, and the ornaments of Speech;
Whilst his poor lungs are grievous sufferers,
From this intolerable violence;
If not to Phthsis driven, with the loss
Of life itself, and in a little time!
Note on the other hand, the limping style
Is quite as faulty; and the orator
Must take the middle path, to all alike
Agreeable; not rapid, nor too slow,
To weary patience, or outstrip the wind!

Vinicius had this failing, for he spake
Asellius says, by tedious intervals,
Delays and pauses; that 'twas wonderful,
How he obtain'd the name of Eloquent;
When, as another states, he could not speak
Three words consecutively in a breath!
What pleasure can it be to hear a man
Drawl out his words, till one is almost made
To say, 'Go on, good sir, or hold your tongue,'
Fluent the speech should be, but so flow on
As the soft gliding stream, not swelling flood.
It also was observ'd that we should speak
With ev'ry possible variety—
Which is quite practicable, though the voice
Avoid th' extremes to which we have referr'd:
Because there is sufficient latitude
Between the highest and the lowest note,
(Six tones at least,) with which to vary it;
So that the Orator has scope enough,
Without transgressing either boundary;
Provided, with good taste, he modulate
The soft and loud, to a just harmony;
And such pronunciation, as may suit
The character of the discourse or plea—
Faster or slower, voluble or smart,
To raise th' emotion of his auditors!

But let him take this hint along with him ;
When he intends upon a turn of speech,
To vary in his voice, he must beware
Of a too quick transition in the tone,
All in a moment ! And with courtliness,
Softness, and moderation, make the change.
Because I find that some distinguish'd men,
Have, like the deafening thunder, all at once
Burst on the ear, so as to terrify,
And overwhelm the feelings ! such a turn,
Offends all rules ; and had we not our eyes,
We should exclaim, 'Tis sure another man !
Avoid this error, pray, for decency.

CHAP. VII.

Particular Rules for this Variation of the Voice according to different subjects.

More is required than for a man to know
How to adjust his voice to varied tones,
To render it attractive ; nor enough
To practise it in general ; but this art,
(If any great proficiency is sought,)
Must be attain'd by fix'd and certain rules,
According to the passions we would raise ;
The several parts and figures of our speech ;
And the variety of phrase and style.

Observe then first, the subjects of Discourse
Are either upon morals, good or ill—
Adverse, or prosperous events of life—
Which topics, (of a different nature quite,)
Require no less an alter'd voice and mien.
If we are speaking upon common things,
With an intention merely to convey
Some useful knowledge of them ; there's no need,
For heat and action here ; a clear, distinct
And ordinary voice will serve your end :
Because your object is not to excite
The will or the affections, but inform
The understanding. But if you desire
To raise an admiration at the pow'r,
And wonders of Creation ? Elevate
Your tone to an admiring gravity !

If moral actions be the argument,
Deprav'd, or noble, and you would arouse
A corresponding feeling in the mind,
Of commendation, or abhorrency;
You must adjust the Voice accordingly;
Expressing approbation with a full,
Majestic accent—Your Dispraise with bold,
Precipitate, and angry Emphasis.
So when we speak of the events of life,
With an intention to congratulate,
Or sympathise, distinction must be made;
The former with a 'brisk' and 'cheerful' air,
The latter in a 'sad' and 'mournful' tone;
For 'mirth' with our good fortune best comports;
And 'lamentation' with adversity;
The one to joy and praise: the other pray'r
And tears, our christian sympathy, invites.

Another thing is worthy of remark,
Namely, that all our themes are not alike,
Some, for their grandeur, and their beauty, far
Exceed the others; as the firmament,
With all its shining orbs, transcends the earth,
And insects, or the vegetable tribes!
The former subject therefore will demand
A more magnificent and lofty voice.

The same remark applies to the events,
Felicitous or adverse, of the world,
Which are not all of the same character.
The moral turpitude, and principle
Of evil, in a great or petty crime,
With God, is just the same; but to mankind,
The mischief that results is more, or less:
And in this point of view, the orator
Will limit, or extend the public plaint.

Thus Murder is a crime of deeper die
Than Theft, because the life is more than meat!
The noble exploits of a Conqueror,

Are far more worthy of our eulogy,
Than the achievements of a demagogue!
The safety or destruction of a state,
Than the advantage of a private man!

These topics will require diversity
Of treatment by the skilful orator:
Absurd, and quite ridiculous, it were
To speak of great affairs, affecting all
The interests of life in such a tone
As if a fly were drown'd! Or to bewail
This trifling incident in tragic strains!

CHAP. VIII.

How to vary the voice according to the passions.

The subjects just now mentioned, being weigh'd
And well engraven on the Memory
Will, as occasion serves, inspire our souls,
With joy, or sorrow, fear, or confidence,
Anger, or pity, honour, or disdain.
And let us but depict these passions well,
By Voice and Gesture, and the audience
Will feel a corresponding sympathy!

The Orator, must therefore, first digest
In his own mind, the Theme of his Address;
And stir up all the passions in himself,
Before he can expect to touch the hearts
Of others to the Life with what he feels!
The Barrister must muse upon the wrongs
His client, in estate, or name, sustains;
Before he can succesfully engage,
Or plead with energy in his behalf:
The malice and vexation of his foes,
Drawn out before his eye, will make his words
As goads to Justice, in the list'ning court;
And straight convince them of his honesty,
And win the suit which he so ably pleads!

So the Divine ought, first, to frame his thoughts
To high conceptions of God's Majesty:
His holy Doctrines, and his dread commands:
To cherish in himself the love of truth,
Hatred of sin, compassion for the woes

Of human kind, with, chiefly, a concern
For the salvation of the flock he feeds.
Let him be fill'd before-hand with these views,
And he will easily, in speaking, move
With kindling pity all his audience;
Who seeing his emotions in his eye,
His voice, his hand, will be dissolv'd in tears,
And readily believe, that what he says
Is for their temp'ral, and eternal good.

Thus as the tuneful lyre repays the touch
Of rough, or gentle hand, with soft, or loud,
Or quick, or solemn sound; the human voice
Varies its euphony, and strikes the ear
According as the passions of the mind
Are violent, or gentle, calm, or full;
E'en as the sacred orator shall feel,
And grace enable him to reach the heart.
'Love,' by a soft, a gay, a cheerful tone,
Because he fain would make the heart rejoice.
'Hate,' by a sharp, severe, and sullen one,
That all may see it in his countenance.
'Joy,' by a brisk, a flowing and full voice,
That the thrice welcome glow may spread around.
'Grief,' by a dull, a languishing, sad moan,
A sob, or sigh, will be the best express'd.
'Fear,' by a trembling and a falt'ring speech,
Inclining to uncertainty and dread.
But on the contrary, his 'confidence'
Will be at once discovered or conveyed
By a sonorous, bold, and steady voice,
For no despondence chains his ready tongue.
'Anger,' is sharp, impetuous, violent,
As if it gave no time to take your breath.
So, in Terence's Adelphi, Geta says,
Oh mis'ry! oh misfortune! I'm inflamed
Beyond all bounds, transported with my ire!

Out of my senses! would I might confront
That wretch, and all his family, whilst now
I thirst for the revenge—I'd hamper them
For all the insults they have done to me!
First, for his father, with a quick despatch
I'd send him to the shades of Tartarus,
For bringing such a son upon the earth!
And then for Syrus, author of my wrongs,
Abettor of these mischiefs, how I'd tear
Him piecemeal, wretch! and fling him in the air
And dash his brains on the polluted ground!
As to vile Æschines, I'd bandage him,
And throw him head-long to a wat'ry grave,
Or chase him down from the Tarpeian rock!
And for the rest—Oh! but I'd do for them,
I'd trample them beneath my stamping feet,
As sacrifices to envenom'd wrath!

These words must needs be utter'd rapidly,
With rage and fury, bord'ring on insane;
As we imagine one in such a case;
And when he says again, on meeting there
His mistress in the crisis of his ire—
Madam, wer'e all undone! no remedy—
Forsaken now of Æschines! His love
Is now another's—In the open day—
And 'neath the public eye he carries on—
The base intrigue, and glories in his shame!

Here Sostrata's expresssions intimate
That they were spoken out of breath—his rage
Cut short his sentences, and chok'd his words.

But when the Orator designs to melt
His audience into pity, let him use
A soft, submissive and most plaintive tone:
As Cicero concludes for Quintius;
"Good sirs, believe me, Quintius has left

No stone unturn'd, but tried all honest means
To gain the public ear, but never found
A Prætor who would give him leave to speak.
Nor friend of Nevius to express his wrongs!
Repeatedly, upon his very knees,
By all that's sacred, he has begg'd of them,
Either to do him justice, and proceed
Against him in the public Courts of Law;
Or at the least preserve inviolate
His honour, if they mulct his whole estate!
Oh! with what resolution has he borne
The angry looks of his malignant foes,
Kissing the hand that dealt the cruel blow!
He has endeavour'd, Sirs, to mollify
And win upon his heart, adjuring him
First by a Brother's ashes, then the name
So dear to all, of Father, and the tears
Of his poor Wife and Children, and the claims
Of amity, of kindred, and of age;
If he had no regard to his affairs!
If Quintius could not make his heart relent,
Yet, as a man, he had undoubted claims
To his humanity, insisting too
On nothing else, but justice to his name,
Relinquishing, in fact, to courtesy
His every thing but honour—Could he more?
Turn'd by his cruel kinsman out of doors,
Rejected by his friends, whom he besought
With tears, to pity him—brow beaten too
E'en by his judges, as the last resource
He asks, Aquilius, your kind services,
And throws himself upon your clemency,
His honour, his estate, his life, his all.
You are the umpire of his Innocence,
The arbitrator of his destiny;
On you hangs all his safety and his hope.
After so many trials, obloquy,
And scandal, he appeals to your kind heart,
Aquilius, for decision! View him not

As a delinquent, but an injur'd man ;
And grant him all the pity he deserves,
For 'tis indeed a moving spectacle !
Reduc'd to poverty, and overwhelm'd
With undeserv'd reproach and calumny—
Ejected from his heritage and left
Without provision for himself and child,
His maiden daughter ! Oh ! it is a case
Should melt the hearts of all ! He only begs,
By your authority, to go in peace ;
With name untarnish'd, as he came to us,
To weep his troubles o'er in distant lands ;
After a life of three score years, esteem'd
By all the good and virtuous ! not a stain
In his escutcheon ! Thus he will be spared
A world of grief—the insults of his foes,
Of Nevius chief—and carry to the grave,
The well earned honours of a lengthened age,
And live, as he deserves, in all our hearts,
As well as in the tablet of renown ! "

Here, it is obvious, that th' orator
Pronounc'd his words with a submissive voice,
And great humility, to win upon
The kindest feelings of the judge's heart ;
With whom the honour, life, estate, and all
The hopes of his friend Quintius repos'd :
And yet he doubtless spake with energy,
But temper'd with great tenderness and care,
And deep commiseration of his wrongs,
T' excite a corresponding sympathy
Throughout the court, which could not but be mov'd,
If there was ought of man within their breasts

To the same purpose Cicero remark'd
The general burst of pity in a play,
At seeing on the stage a youth's remains
Neglected, uninterr'd, beyond the time
When funeral rites are usually perform'd,

Which seem'd to upbraid the sleeping parent thus—
"Mother, awake! thy careless rest defer;
Think on thy son, and his poor bones inter:
Before wild birds and beasts, for prey that roar,
My scatter'd limbs and mangled corpse devour!"

To do this well, the Orator must note
The various modes of softening the voice,
The quality of ev'ry word he speaks,
And character of things in his address;
All which is easier learnt from off the lip,
Than by the nicest precepts we can give.

But to proceed, suppose he wish to paint
The character of some brave warrior,
And testify his own esteem of him;
Why, he must do it with a lofty tone,
And voice as noble as his subject's high;
As Tully spake for the Manilian law.—
"Now there is none in all the world but he,
Pompey, I mean, who by his noble acts,
Immortal deeds, eclipses every name
Yet living, and the records of the dead!
Why hesitate a moment what to do;
Or the commission of our hopes delay?
He has, in my opinion, all the gifts
Of military greatness—discipline.
Fame, valour, fortune—Who was ever yet
As skilful in the art of making war
And where so fit a general as he
That left his play and pastime at the school,
And sallied forth, with youthful ardour fir'd,
Against Rome's proudest enemies, to learn
The feats of war within his father's camp?
One of the noblest chieftains of his age!!
Pompey was born for arms, and could command
Whole fields of soldiers from his infancy!
Has fought more battles than most men have read;
Conquer'd more provinces than heart could wish:

Attain'd the highest military rank
By his own conduct in the ensanguin'd plain—
And not through influential friends at home;
By triumphs, not misfortunes—Victory,
His Patron, rather than Experience,
Or time, or service! Pompey has not serv'd
As many years as he has made Campaignes!!
Tell me, in short, what dangers were too great
For his encounter, when the Commonwealth
Breath'd but a wish to have him take the field?
In Africa, beyond the Alps, in Spain;
Against strong towns, and kingdoms, civil wars,
In feuds with slaves, in servile and sea fights:
All, in succession, have engag'd his arm!
Now let me ask, what are these battles wag'd,
These wars begun, concluded by the sword
Of Pompey, but so many tests of skill,
Of wisdom, and of virtue? What are all
These enterprises, vict'ries he has won
But heralds of his glory, and his fame?
What are his heaps of slain, but as it were
So many pyramids to speak his praise?"

These sentiments if utter'd with a low,
And feeble voice, lose all their energy;
And bring dishonour on the eloquence
Of Tully, and a slur on Pompey's name!
But on the other hand, if spoken well
With accent, tone, and gesture, they convey
Correct ideas of each character,
And raise the same emotions in our minds,
As in the audience which heard them first;
Though near two thousand years have interven'd!

Instead of admiration or esteem,
The Orator, if he would shew Contempt—
Must do it with a scornful tone of voice,
But without a passion, or a vehemence;
See an example of it in the Plea
Of Cicero against Cœcilius.

"Pray let us see, good sir, your splendid gifts,
The comprehensive mind, of which you boast;
When, and on what occasion, hath this Court
Rung with its acclamations and applause?
Nay, when did you attempt the Barrister,
But to expose your imbecility,
And run your baseless reputation down?
Weigh well the difficulties of the state;
Nor undertake the maintenance of peace,
Its name and honour—the unravelling
The motive of a man from first to last;
Not only by assisting to expose
His arts before the Judges, but the world!
The safety and the welfare of allies,
The interest of provinces, the weight
Of Laws, and the authority of Courts!
Believe me, sir, you ought to feel rejoic'd
At such an opportunity as this,
Of learning from your betters how to Plead!
For you have yet a thousand things to learn
Before you venture upon such a course.
Reflect upon your incapacity,
Weigh well the matter, ponder what you are,
And what you can, and what you cannot do!
Say, are you able to clear off the wrongs
From our Confed'rates and the Commonwealth?
Protect the peoples' rights, the Roman name
The judgments and decrees of Senators?
Ah, sir, such topics are above your reach;
You lack the nerve, the voice, the memory,
The wit, and learning for such business!
Pray, be advised, and never think of it,
But be content to steal some olden plea,
Nor beat your empty brains in fruitless toil;
And torture it until it seem your own,
By learning it by heart,—perhaps you then
By courtesy, may hobble to the bar;
And, if no one of the same faculty
Appear against you, to confuse your mind,
May blunder through an undisputed suit!

Surely you would not venture to confront
Hortensius, the most learn'd of orators,
The most sagacious of our disputants!
Why you must needs be eloquence itself,
Or else be driven from your arguments,
Bewildered in your reason, and abash'd
As never poor unhappy man before!
Cœcilius 'gainst Hortensius! most insane!
Methinks I witness your confusion, sir,
How all your little sense beclouded flies
Like mists before the sun, confus'd and pos'd
At ev'ry turn, and point at which you touch!
Alas! the sad mistakes you're sure to make;
In what a tumult, and ferment, your mind:
In what disorder, shame, and ridicule!
Besides all which, remember you are not
The most accomplish'd gentleman in Rome!"

Here there is much of slight and a contempt
At the pretensions of Cœcilius,
Who wish'd to take the brief from Cicero;
The object of the speech to run him down;
And prove his utter inability,
For such a task as that which he desired.
But if he had evinc'd a great concern,
Or pleaded with an over anxious tone;
Or seem'd to fear his rival, he had fail'd
To influence the Judges on his side.
In words he would have shewn his great contempt,
But by his manner, that he fear'd him too;
And therefore, thought it call'd forth all his ire,
And artifice, to set his claims aside.
A prudent orator must carefully
Avoid this error, when he would degrade,
Expose, or baffle an antagonist;
Nor in replying to weak arguments
Use heat, or violence, or much of wit;
Which were to wield the club of Hercules
To crush the worm that crawls beneath his feet,
And make his puny adversary brave!

But if a speaker should allege a deed
Of barbarous injustice by his foe,
Analagous to that of Midias
Against Demosthenes, at Saturn's feast—
Another, and an elevated voice,
Will best express his grievance and distress:
Proportioning his passion to his wrongs.
For certainly he could not otherwise
Do justice to himself, or move the court
To sympathize and grant him damages;
For what would not appear to give him pain,
If all unmov'd he furnish'd the details!

This was the reason why Demosthenes
Reprov'd a client under an assault;
Who came for his advice, but stated it
With so much calmness, unconcern, and ease,
That he quite doubted its reality;
And said, 'Why, sir, this cannot be all true,
Your manner indicates the contrary.'
But when another told him the same thing,
With indignation glowing in his eyes,
And with impassioned language—he exclaim'd,
"Well, I believe you, for your very tone
Denotes the truth of it." The Orator
May hence perceive when fire and fury serve
To gain the Suit, by being 'natural.'

Thus Cicero against Callidius
Adopts this very line of argument
In his defence of Gallus, where he says,
"If what you state, Callidius, were fact,
Would you be mov'd no more than you appear?
Where is your wonted indignation, Sir,
With which you have related other wrongs,
And argu'd other suits? Where is the grief
The fervour and affliction of your soul,
Which has distress'd and melted us to tears,
Till children e'en, have wrung their little hands?

Further, for this inflection of the voice
Upon the Passions, it is clear as noon,
That when the speaker will relax the tone
Of his displeasure, he must drop at once
Almost into a whisper, for effect,
As Tully is an instance, where he says
In his judicious plea for Celius—
"But I must now return to the offence,
Although, in speaking of so great a man,
Grief almost stifles utt'rance, and debars
That exercise of thought which I could wish!"

The readiest way, by which you may attain
All the variety of voice, is this,—
Study the Passions, read the Tragedies,
And Comedies of Shakespear; or the Plays,
Or classic Dialogues of Greece or Rome;
And that 'aloud,' in order to adjust
The voice to each successive character,
And in a little time, you must excel.

CHAP. IX.

Of varying the voice according to the different parts of a Discourse.

The sev'ral parts of one Discourse require
A change of voice to give it due effect,
According to the character of each.
Th' Opening or Exordium must be 'mild,'
In rather a subdu'd and humble style,
As deferential to the audience,
And wisest for the Orator himself,
Who should not, all at once, put forth his pow'r,
But by degrees attain his altitude;
Or he will be exhausted ere he come
To the important part of his address,
Where weight and emphasis will be requir'd;
And yet too low a voice were quite as bad;
Let him speak up, then, so distinct and clear,
That all within the church may understand.

A certain Minister, some time ago,
Had this egregious fault.—Began, at first,
So low, that none, at all remote, could hear!
And, in a little while, up went his voice
Full bolt against the ceiling, driving all
His much offended people to the door,
Like pealing thunder through the vaulted sky!
Whereas the Exordium should be courteous,
Soft, graceful, easy, in a gentler tone,
Than all the other parts of the Discourse.

Not but this rule admits, as others do,
Of an exception in some instances,
When the Preamble may be term'd abrupt,
Or unexpected; as with Cicero,
In his Oration against Cataline:

"Pray how much longer will you, Cataline,
Insult our patience?—Madly thus impose
Your falsehoods, and abuses on the Court?
Where will your fiery temper hurry you?"

So in the speech of St. John Chrysostom,
(As Socrates relates,) against the Queen
Eudoxia, who had him once deprived,
And banish'd from the Empire; and again
Was plotting for his ruin, in her rage
Against a Sermon, chiefly aim'd at her.
Th' occasion was a kind of public ball,
Or dance, she gave in honour of her god,
Before the temple, on the very day
That St. Sophia's statue was set up:
His words were these,—"Herodias is incens'd
Once more at John the Baptist! see her dance,
And in a charger long to have his head!"

The same exception in his homily,
At Antioch, appears, when they destroyed
The statues of the Queen and Emperor.—
"What shall I say? how speak at such a time,
When tears, not words, are fittest vehicles
Of our distress! No season this to preach,
But to lament and pray!" So afterwards,
Upon a panic on the Christian's minds,
For want of heathen government support
In their religious meetings, he begins—
"Truly, I cannot but commend the care
And conduct of the governor, who saw
The city in a tumult and dismay,

And hither came, to cheer your spirits up
By his authority and give you hope!
But for yourselves, I blush with deepest shame;
After the many sermons you have heard
To teach you better things—That, you should need
To be inspir'd with courage, by a man
Without the Church, a Pagan! Oh! I'm shock'd
And could have wish'd the earth had open'd wide
Her mouth, and in a moment swallowed me;
Ere I had heard a heathen comfort you,
And chide your distrust of the sacred cause!
Oh! what a stain upon the Christian Church,
When infidels have need to teach it faith!
Oh! with what face shall we endure their gaze,
How venture to reprove them for their sins,
Or give them consolation in distress,
Thus crippled as we are by cowardice,
More fearful than the timid hare herself?"

"Why we are men, (you say,) aye, men indeed!
But without ought of man except the name!
Or would the rustling of a leaf, destroy
Your self-possession, and excite alarm,
As if you had no heart, like senseless things
Which start at every gentle foot they hear!!"

Exordia like these, require a burst
Of indignation, but are very rare,
And never us'd, except emergencies
Occur, that call for more than wonted zeal.

In the next place, the speaker should observe
That no great vehemence, or energy
Is needful in the proposition of a suit;
His object being simply to narrate
The circumstances or particulars,
With conspicuity before the court.
In doing which, if his delivery
Be one degree, or so, above the tone
Of th' exordium, 'twill be enough.
Only (because the basement of the whole,

Whence all his inferences must be drawn,)
It cannot be too clear, distinct, and plain ;
As when the architect intends to raise
A noble structure, all his diligence,
His skill and his contrivance are absorb'd
In laying the foundation stone aright.

There will be some variety of voice,
And gesture in this part of a discourse,
Or plea, according as the characters may change
In the events and actions he narrates ;
But this is not the place for all his warmth,
And passion, which he carefully reserves
To bear upon the centre of the foe,
When in the confirmation of his speech.

Here, he sets forth his ablest arguments ;
Confutes, repels his adversary's plea,
And brings his heavy cannon to the field ;
His voice extended to the utmost pitch,
His hands uplifted and his eyes on fire!
Whatever skill he has in Rhetorick,
Its figures, and its beauties, now's the time
For his resources, this the happy hour,
For all the talent of the Orator!!

Before the Peroration, he must pause
A moment, and begin it with a Voice
And Action quite distinct from the above ;
Mild in his accents in comparison—
Then suddenly assume a confidence,
A tone and manner of great sprightliness,
With triumph in his brow, as well assured
Both that his cause is just, and that the hearts
Of all his auditors accord with him ;
And draw to a conclusion, like a ship,
Long toss'd at sea, with adverse dang'rous winds,
Mid Scylla and Charybdis, but at length,
Come joyful in, full sail, all hands on deck,
Whose deaf'ning acclamations shake the strand.

CHAP. X.

How to vary the Voice according to the Figures of Rhetorick.

Figures occurring ever and anon
Throughout a speech, impart variety,
And light and beauty to the argument,
So they be spoken diff'rent from the plain,
Unfigur'd portion of the said discourse,

First for an Exclamation. Here the term
Explains its nature; nothing can appear
So flat and ludicrous as for a man
To use this figure with no other voice
Than usual; instead of raising it
To an impassioned tone, as Cicero
In his oration for Cluentus did,
When he adverted to vile Sassia,
Who had inveigled her own son-in-law,
Got him divorc'd and married him herself!
"O the vile wretch, (said he) what wickedness
A crime unheard of yet, in all the world.
Abominable woman! hateful lust!
Ungovernable passion! impudence
Unparalell'd! lasciviousness extreme
Neither to stand in awe of God or man!
Did she relent, or tremble, ere the night
Approach'd, and Hymen's flick'ring torch
Led on her guilty footsteps to his door?
Or did her daughter's injur'd bed, or walls
Of her apartment, drive her from the deed!!

To speak these words in ordinary style,
Without an elevation of the voice
Were to deprive them of their elegance,
And force—and better 'twere to say,
In simple language, she was base and vile,
To think of marrying her son-in-law.
Because, in this plain statement, figureless,
No passion is required, whilst the above
Demands both grace and emphasis, to please.

This mode of speaking, is the same in forms
Of Invocation; and especially
When something more than common is the cause;
As when Demosthenes, so much admir'd
In this particular, for Ctesiphon
Exclaims aloud, "You have not fail'd herein
No, Gentlemen, by all our ancestors
Who fought and conquered at proud Marathon!
By those who at Platœa won the day!
At Salamis by sea! By those enshrin'd
At Artemissium! the gallant men,
Whose glory, honour, and immortal names,
On more than weeping marble are engrav'd,
By ev'ry noble warrior I plead!"

No doubt he spake these words with vehemence,
Extended arm, and most courageous tone,
That corresponding ardour might be felt!

But in the figure Prosopœia,
(Which is the feigning of another man,)
We learn from nature, first to change the voice,
That so another may appear to speak,
Though in reality, it is not so.
And secondly, a due variety;
According as the person or the thing,

Thus introduced behind the scenes requires.
We have two instances in Cicero,
Which serve us for a model, in his speech
For Celius; where a venerable man,
Old Appius; and the wretched debauchee,
Degraded Clodius, take several parts;
And half an eye sees with what difference
He needs must represent these characters:
In one, his manner solemn, as becomes
The gravity of age! The other loose,
Effeminate and thoughtless in th' extreme!
Requiring voice and action similar.

If it should be our wish to represent
A person in soliloquy, apart,
As reasoning a question with himself
The tone must almost to a whisper drop,
As not intending to be overheard.
Take the oration for Cluentius
Against Stalenus, who was fond of bribes.—

Perfidious Senator, a purse of gold
Put him upon the rack with all his brains
For ways and means by which he might pervert
And wrest just judgment, talking with himself

"If I should let the other judges know
And take their share of this delicious bait,
What were my gain, but hazard and disgrace.
Stop—let me think! some plan must be devis'd,
Oppianicus must be charg'd with it.
Conscience avaunt! and let me shut my eyes!
Yes! and what then? I hope I shall succeed!

So versus Nœvius, in the same style,
For persecuted Quintius he cries —

"You have not ask'd of conscience or of fame
What they will think, nor conn'd the matter o'er;
Now do it pray you sir, but let none hear!

"What am I doing, that for two short hours,
Now past and gone, I seek to ruin him,
Shall he, for failing an appointment die!"

The Orator must carefully observe
To speak the words, "You have not ask'd yourself
Of conscience, or of fame, what they will think!"
In such a tone as an Apostrophe
Or sudden change in the discourse demands,
Whilst the soliloquy that follows it,
Must almost in a whisper be pronounc'd.

In an Apostrophe, 'tis requisite
To ponder well the character to which
He makes appeal, and wherefore it is done,
In order to adopt the proper style.

Thus if it be to things inanimate
He must exert his voice, as when we speak
To people who are deaf, as Cicero
Undoubtedly would do in that fine speech
For Milo, where he says, "Ye little hills
Bear witness! and ye shady Alban groves,
With all your altars, and your sacred rites,
Made venerable by antiquity,
As those of Rome, which Clodius with hand
Of horrid sacrilege, and thirst for gold
Has levell'd to the ground, and on your site
Erected his own gorgeous palaces!"

The same remark holds good if he address
The sacred Deity; for as we raise,
Above the common pitch, our voice to reach
A person at a distance, or the ear
Of an extensive meeting; even so,
When we address the great Divinity,
Who sits upon his throne above the skies,
We ought to do it with a lofty tone,
As speaking not to beings like ourselves,

On the same globe, poor mortals, but to God!
Yet not as if we thought that we were heard
For our loud speaking, but for Majesty!

This elevated accent is requir'd
Upon a Dialogue or Conference,
Where two are represented in discourse,
Opponent and Respondent: Change your voice
Alternately, as in a real case.
Tully has an example of this style,
In the defence he made for Plancius;
Where Laterensis first is introduc'd
Making complaint because the Edileship
Was voted otherwise than he could wish!
Then comes in Plancius to defend himself
And justify the choice. They thus proceed,

"The people, Plancius, have not judg'd aright."
"Yes, Laterensis, but I say they have."
"No, Plancius, they have not acted well."
"But, Laterensis, being done, 'tis done."
"I cannot, Plancius, bear the thought of it."
"But, Laterensis, many better men,
Wiser, and more illustrious than thou,
Have borne as much, or more; so be content!"

Another specimen of this we have
When in his Plea for Flaccus he proceeds
To cross-examine Asclepiades. Let now
Sextilius tell us what he has to say.

"I have not brought him with me into court."
"Produce his Papers then that we may see."
"They are not with me either," he rejoins.
"Where are his brothers, to examine them?"
"They have not been subpœn'd for witnesses."

Why then, proceeds the Orator, should we
Take that for the conviction of a crime
Which stands alone with Asclepiades?
A man of character, most infamous!
Shall he, forsooth, affix what stain he please
Upon the innocent, and think that Rome,
Or Roman Senates will approve the deed?
Observe, in all these Dialogues, the change
Of tone and voice, as if another spake!

The Greek Epimone, which we may term
Insistance; when the advocate would run
His adversary to a strait, and urge
An argument upon him, till asham'd,
And lost as in a labyrinth; requires
A brisk, a pressing, and insulting tone.
See the oration for Ligarius,
Where Tully poses the poor Tubero.

"Where was your valour at Pharsalia?
With whom did you encounter hand to hand?
What was the temper of the steel you drew?
The terror of your warlike countenance?
What meant those flashing eyes, that mighty rage.
That conq'ring sword, empurpl'd to the hilt?
But I refrain—and spare his feelings! See,
He blushes in confusion whilst I speak!

Another model of th' Epimone
We find in Crassus in his plea against
Licentious Brutus, who, with a parade
Of hypocritical regret, it seems,
Was at that moment going to the grave,
With his poor mothers, widow'd Junia's bones!
Whom thus he took occasion to accost.

"What do you there, vile Brutus? Will the dead
Have ought to carry of intelligence,
To that bright world whereto she now is gone,
Of credit to yourself, or sainted sire?

What can she say to your illustrious race
Of ancestors, except to your reproach?
What say, especially, to Lucius,
The guardian of the commonwealth, the foe
Of Tyranny, no less than friend of Rome?
What honours in the literary world,
Or field of battle, or in virtue's cause?
Perhaps you have improv'd their vast estates?
No! that were foreign to your character!
And far beneath your dignity! But stop—
Have you a foot of land unmortgaged yet?
No; 'tis all wasted in debauchery,
Extravagance and vice! Perhaps the law
Is your pursuit? which were to imitate
Your father's wisdom, and deserve his praise!
But, or I'm much mistaken, she will tell
That e'en the chair in which he us'd to sit
Was sold; oh shame! with every thing he had!
And as to arms, you never saw a field,
Except on paper, and that struck you pale!
Perhaps 'tis Rhetorick which you admire
Alas! you know not its first rudiments!
If you can speak at all, 'tis in the praise
Of vice, of slander, of licentious scenes,
Like those in which your useless life is spent!
Degraded creature! dare you walk abroad
Or shew your face to any honest man?
Is not your conscience, hardened as it is,
Fill'd with remorse, to follow to that grave,
And gaze upon the weeping statues there?"

This mode of speech, that famous Orator
Employ'd with inconceivable success;
And with a grave and paralyzing look,
As Cicero, who witness'd it, declares.

The figure that denotes the boldest style
Or liberty to say whate'er we like,
Is call'd Parrhesia. Here the loudest voice
Consistent with its government is us'd.
As in that passage for Ligarius—

" O admirable clemency, the praise
The honour and the memory of which
Shall never perish! Cicero avows
Before Augustus, with full confidence
That he alone, is guilty of the fault,
For which no other man shall be arraign'd
Nor does he fear his judge's private ear!
See how undaunted is my confidence
In your esteem, your wisdom and your grace,
Which beam upon me even whilst I speak!
I'll raise my voice above its utmost pitch,
That Rome, through all her avenues may hear!
The war begun and almost ended, sir,
I hasten'd over to the hostile camp,
To give the final blow, all unimpell'd
Save by the zeal and ardour of this breast!!"

The orator must speak as frank and full
Though in a smaller place, so be, that all
He says, for truth, might come before the world.
As in the speech of a learn'd counsellor,
In the French Parliament, some time ago—

" This Chamber either will deliver France
From upstart monsters ready to devour!
Or else, if all their cunning policies,
Their tricks of slight, and artifice proceed;
And their insidious reports be spread;
(I say it quite aloud) however they,
Most sad! have found a way to close the gates!
My voice shall, notwithstanding, reach the ear
Of all within the kingdom! and appeal
To future ages more unprejudic'd,
And unafraid of any living soul,
To say who are the truest citizens,
And friends of liberty, ourselves or they?
I tell this House, and would that all the land
Might hear it too, these wretches will effect
More mischief, than most fearful heart forbodes

The Climax or Gradation will repay
Our utmost study. Here the speech ascends
As by a ladder to the period.
And hence the voice must obviously rise
In an exact proportion to each clause;
Till step by step, it reach its utmost height.
As against Verres, Cicero inveighs—

"To floor and chain a citizen of Rome
Were bold indeed! To scourge him, a dread crime!
To punish him with death were parricide!
What shall I say then of the cross itself?
Whereon the vilest slaves are doomed to die!
T'inflict this torture were to raise the ire
Of Rome en masse, t'avenge the horrid deed!"

Similar to this was an address
In our metropolis, upon the death
Of our third Henry.

"Thou couldst not endure
So excellent a King! Endure him! nay—
Far worse than so, you drove him from his town,
His palace, bed! What, banish'd him? far worse
Pursu'd him! yes, pursu'd him to his grave!
And as if murder were a little thing,
You canoniz'd th' assassin for his pains!
And that all Paris might be witnesses,
Made bonfires and rejoicings at the deed!!"

The Aposiopesis is a Grace,
The figure of Restraint; as when we leave
Unsaid what we were going to advance.
The Orator must introduce this turn,
With a more elevated voice; then drop
A tone or two; as in Demosthenes
For Ctetiphon—"I might myself allege—
But hold! let nothing so severe escape
My lips at the beginning; though his aim
Be, to accuse me of a want of thought,
Inconstancy, and hastiness of speech!"

In a Subjection or a Consequence
Of questions, with their answers—we must put
The former in one voice, and the reply
In quite another; either high or low;
Or vice versa, as the Orator
May deem expedient. See in Cicero
For Flaccus, a fine specimen of this.

"Say what alternative, resource besides,
Or other aid, but yours can I implore?
Where is there influence in all the world,
If not in this assembly? Shall I ask
The Senator's assistance? They crave your's!
And know that you alone have power to give
To ratify or to repeal their own!
Shall I address the Roman Knights? You know
Their sentiments, and are, in fact, their head!
Shall I consult the Commons? They have given
The absolute control into your hands!

The same occurs in his apology
For Sylla—"When the plot grew high, and all
Was in a state of readiness, (he asks)
Where then was Sylla, was he by in Rome?
Nay, but a way great off! Was he in arms,
Or with the forces Catiline had rais'd?
No, farther yet remov'd! Was he a field
In Gaul, Camertium, or Picenum? No!
Where then, I pray, did his foul treason lurk?
What regions and what people did he taint?
None! false the charge! he was in Italy,
At Naples, for its loyalty renown'd!

But if the figure be Antithesis,
The speaker then must mark the Contraries
With voice distinct, observing that the last
Must be the loudest, as in bold relief.
Thus in the war with Catiline, he says

"We need but to compare both parties, Sir,
And weigh with justice and with equity
The one against the other, to discern
The insignificance of all our foes;
And with what ease our arms may put them down.
For on our side is modesty! On theirs—
Boldness and impudence! Our conduct pure?
Their's stain'd with vice! Fidelity with us!
With them, see fraud and treachery combin'd!
Here piety! There wickedness! True valour our's
Their's but foolhardiness! Here honour's palm,
And virtue's recompense alone are sought!
There infamy, incontinence, and lust,
Are the sure fruits of this their mad campaign!
In fine, on our side, justice, temperance,
Prudence and magnanimity preside,
With all the virtues in the closest league,
Array'd against injustice, luxury,
Temerity and cowardice extreme,
And all the shocking vices of mankind!"

"Our freedom, as it were, involves our arms
In needful war; and reason and good sense,
Dispute with madness in proud folly's field!
'Tis certain hope against a fell despair!
Assur'd success against uncertainty!
And if the hearts of men should fail them now,
In such a hallow'd cause; approving heav'n
Would take it up and vindicate our arms,
Against the horrid crimes and perfidy
Of this conspirator, and give the field
To your heroic virtues and to Rome!!"

Anadiplosis is a figure known
By the reduplication of the terms.

"It was, it was, a virtue formerly,
The Senate well know this, the Consul too!
Yet Catiline still lives, not only lives,
But comes into the Senate! Yes he lives
And lives, not to abandon, but confirm

His high pretensions and effrontery?
Already three and twenty years he reigns,
And still reigns on with growing insolence,
As if he felt he had a right to reign.!"

Observe to give the words repeated here,
A diff'rent sound whenever they return.

In an Anaphora, where one word stands
At the beginning of the sentences
Successively arranged; or in each clause
Within one sentence; let the orator
Pronounce the word repeated in one tone,
But with a manner different from the rest,
To give the figure its due emphasis,
And full effect upon the audience.
Thus in the plea for the Manilian law—

"A Witness of it see in Italy,
Which as the conqueror himself confess'd,
Owed its deliverance to Pompey's skill,
And Pompey's mind! A Witness, Sicily!
Which he has rescu'd now a thousand times,
From dangers which begirt it on all sides
Without a sacrifice of human blood,
By his advice! A Witness Africa,
Oppress'd with numerous armies in the field,
O'erwhelmed and slain by him! A Witness France!
Again in his Philippics, where he says--

"My Consulship does not please Antony!
But here is consolation, it has pleas'd
All honest men! It pleas'd Servilius,
Whom I must mention first as senior
To all the Consuls, and the last that died!
It pleas'd Luctatius Catulus, whose name
Is held in honour by the commonwealth!
It pleas'd the two Luculli; and it pleas'd

Murœna, Crassus, and Hortensius,
All Consuls in their time, with many more
Held in the highest possible esteem !"

So in an Epizeuxis where the word
Repeated, stands the last within the clause.
The orator must speak in the same tone,
But give it as much humour as he can.
Thus in the same Phillipic—"You lament
That three whole regions should to ruin fall,
And who hath ruin'd them but Antony ?
You justly would resent the cruel death
Of these illustrious citizens destroy'd,
And who destroy'd them but this Antony ?
The Senatorial authority
Is much disgrac'd and weaken'd : Antony
Hath done it this disgrace, thus weaken'd it !

Sometimes the orator repeats the clause
Verbatim, thus—"What, sirs, when you decreed
Such great and just distinctions to be shewn
To the young Cæsar for his services
In raising forces against Antony,
What was in fact, your language, if not this—
'Mark Antony's the enemy of Rome !'

And when you order'd that a vote of thanks
Should be presented to those gallant men
Who volunteer'd to follow Cæsar's flag.
Sure this was what, you really meant to say,
'Mark Antony's the enemy of Rome !'

So when you promis'd a reward to those
Who left the self created consul's flag,
To join our own, what was the sense but this—
'Mark Antony's the enemy of Rome !'

CHAP. XI.

Of the Pronunciation of Words and Sentences

Sentences consist in general
Of two chief parts conjoin'd by particles,
Call'd by grammarians, causals, cop'latives,
Conditions and comparatives, besides
Adversatives and relatives, but all
These sentences are not of the same length,
For some, as simple ones, are very short
Consisting only of one sentiment ;
As those of Malherbe may suffice to shew.

"He died indeed quite young, but truly blest."

"His friends are soon depriv'd of their sweet child !
But his removal is the greatest grief
They ever had to feel on his account."

"He had enjoy'd the sweets a little while,
Without the bitters of this tearful world."

"His walk was short, but all the way on flowers !"

"Whatever pains and trials might have come ;
His early death prevented the effect."

These periods must be spoken in one breath,
Or, otherwise, sustain much injury.

Some Sentences are longer as we find
In the same author—" Look upon the world,
As on a place where something will be lost
Day after day, till all at last is gone ;
And let these meditations fill your soul,
That having its original from heaven,
'Twill there return to crown its happiness."

These may be spoken also in a breath,
Provided that the voice be pretty good :
At any rate the effort must be made,
Because a period is rounder far,
And much more graceful spoken all at once,
Than with an intermission of the voice :
You therefore should endeavour all you can,
By exercise and study to attain
This habit, though, perhaps, a work of time ;
The organs of the voice must needs be good,
With which proviso, art will perfect it.
As Photius shews us in Demosthenes,
Who gave the Actor Neoptolemus
A thousand drachms for teaching him the art ;
Whereby he strengthen'd his to that degree,
That it became as strong, as it was weak,
And all his difficulties disappear'd.

But other periods of greater length,
And more extensive range, must be pronounc'd
With gentle respiration, once or twice ;
St. Bernard gives an instance of this sort—

" Like as the health is prejudic'd by food,
Uneasy of digestion, whence arise
Those vicious humours which destroy the tone,
And action of the stomach ; so, no less,
The memory or stomach of the soul,
Becomes impair'd by too much mental food,
If undigested into charity.
Unless diffus'd through all its arteries,

Into the life and conduct of the man.
Nay if it turn not to a good account
In acting on the heart to make it good ;
And transformation of the character ;
Does not this knowledge into sin decline,
As undigested meats into disease ?"

The first part, in one breath, may very well
Be spoken, but the second will require
A gentle pause though imperceptible :
The colon and the semicolon seem
The proper place to breathe, but oftener
Or at a shorter stop, is not allow'd.

Another sort there is call'd Spiritus,
Of the same order, composition, scope
With what are properly term'd periods ;
And differ only, in that they contain
A greater number of the articles,
Although propounded in the single form :
As the same author in the following :—

" Let then such prelates have your confidence
As make the Lord their fear, and none beside ;
Who have no hope but God, and being sent
Into the provinces for noblest ends,
Seek not themselves, but you ; not gold, but Christ :
Whose object is to gather souls to him,
Not to provide a coffer for themselves !
Who are a John the Baptist to the court ;
A Moses to Egyptians ; Phineas
To fornicators in the christian camp ;
As an Elias to idolaters ;
Elisha to the perishing for food ;
A Peter to the Hypocrites ; a Paul
To the blasphemers ; and a Christ to all :
Who do not slight their people, but instruct ;

Who do not flatter, but rebuke the rich;
Do not oppress the poor, but comfort them;
Nor fear, but scorn the threats of wicked men,
Who with no perturbation meet their flocks,
Or leave them with displeasure in their heart;
Who do not rob the churches, but reform;
Nor pick the peoples pocket, but correct
Their vices, and console their consciences;
Who watch with jealousy their own repute,
Nor cast reflection upon other names;
Men of strict piety and fervent prayer;
Who judge that greater profit doth accrue
From prayer than an elaborate discourse;
Because hereby their lives become more just,
Their converse more improving to the world,
Their memories more blest when they are gone:
Who make themselves belov'd for deeds not words;
And venerable, not by pomp or state,
But by their actions of benevolence!
Who with the lowly have humility,
And with the pure the greatest purity:
But can rebuke the harden'd reprobate,
Reprove the wicked with authority,
And render to the proud as they deserve:
To whom the widow and the fatherless
Are far more dear than worldly relatives:
Who fain would take the little they should have;
Who freely give what freely they receiv'd,
And from a love of moral excellence,
Do right, and punish wrong:—and who, in fine,
Give evidence to all that they are taught
By the same Spirit as the seventy,
On whom his influences were bestow'd,
As Moses's coadjutors, or the twelve
Apostles on the Pentecostal day.
True prelates these, who present, absent, aim
To honour only God, and do you good;
And from their missions to their several homes
Return, not laden with unhallowed spoil,

Or the productions of the provinces,
But with an inward peace and holy joy,
Arising from the thought of good achiev'd;
To kingdoms by evangelizing them,
To heathens by enacting christian laws;
And discipline enforc'd in ev'ry church,
And turning sinners from the path to hell!!"

Such periods as these do not require
The speaker's strongest, or his longest breath;
But he may imperceptibly, respire,
At ev'ry sep'rate particle therein,
As all of equal value in the speech;
And let these few remarks suffice to shew
Both when, and where, the orator must pause;
Only what follows must be well observed.—

—Never to subdivide the sentences,
As if consisting of two periods,
Instead of one in each;—and yet bestow
Sufficient emphasis at every turn,
That all the clauses may be kept distinct.
And this is to be done especially
In longer periods, that so the mind
And mem'ry of the hearers, and his own,
May not be overburdened with the length.
Thus in his speech for the Manilian law,
Tully would doubtless bear in mind this rule—

"Sirs, what a shame it is that after all,
The barb'rous murder of our citizens,
Throughout all Asia in a single day,
And in so many cities; at a word,
And with one blow; the tyrant should elude
For three and twenty years his punishment;
And still reign on with growing insolence,
Which seeks no shelter in obscurity,
In Pontus, Cappadocia, or elsewhere;
But hectors in his ancestor's domain,
And braves it to your face in open day!"

At every sentence make a gentle pause,
If short, a short one ; long, a longer one ;
Not merely for the sake of emphasis,
And to assist the hearers, but yourself;
And reinforce the action of the lungs.
Observing also, that you drop your voice,
Or raise it softly, for variety,
According to the subject of discourse.

Another observation still remains,
Namely, that when a Period requires
A greater elevation of the voice,
You must economize its tone before,
And carry on the balance thus reserv'd,
T' increase its vigour in the proper place
Roscius and Esopus excell'd in this,
As Tully in his Orator remarks ;—

"Yes, the brave warrior's noble choice and shield
Is honour, not the booty of the field"!
(Said Roscius), but with less of vehemence,
And earnest action till he came at last
To this all stirring question—"What is it?
What is it that I see? He hither comes,
Arm'd, yes, in arms, into our temple gates"!

So Esopus would not pronounce these words,
"Where shall I find relief, or whither fly?
With all the energy within his grasp ;
But rather faintly, and with little shew
Of gesture, till he came upon that burst—
"But O my honoured father! O the land
Of my nativity! O Priam's house"!
Here all his animation was display'd.
Thus in a painting by the soften'd light
And distances, arrang'd with utmost skill,
The foreground objects such advantage gain
That we are ready to exclaim, 'Tis life!

From Periods, and perfect sentences,
I now proceed to words. Observe then, first,
That the best scholars and most polish'd men
Pronounce the words in ordinary use;
Avoiding all provincial idioms,
Syllabical, or otherwise, as coarse,
And prejudicial to an orator.
This may be learnt in the metropolis
Of England, or of France; as formerly
At Rome or Athens in the classic age.

Pausanius the sophister imbib'd
These vicious habits as Philiscus writes;
Contracting some, and eking others out,
Against all license or propriety,
And this, though eloquent and witty too,
And much admir'd for ready utterance,
Got him the nickname of a sorry cook,
Who, with the best provisions in the world,
Could make no dish for any one to eat!

To guard against this fault, converse with men
Who are above you in the learned ranks,
Make their expressions, and their style your own;
And never be asham'd to ask advice,
(Where you are quite at home) on doubtful points;
Till by degrees, your accent and your words,
Become as pure and elegant as their's.

Be careful next to lay great emphasis,
Or stress, upon emphatic words, as those
Of Affirmation.—Certainly. Indeed,
Assuredly, Expressly, and the like.
Of Commendation— as Illustrious,
Incomparable, Vast, Incredible,
Inestimable, Good, Ineffable,
August, Majestic, Pompous, Glittering,
Of Dispraise—Heinous, Bad, Detestable,

Monstrous and Wicked, Cruel, Infamous.
Of Lamentation—Sad, Unfortunate,
Deplorable, Distressing, Pitiful.
And mind besides the stress, to speak these last,
In plaintive, or a melancholy tone.

All words of Quantity, require still yet
A loftier accent—as Sublime, Profound,
Grand, High, Long, Large, Eternal and Immense.
As well as terms of Un'versality—
In all the world, For ever, Ev'ry where,
In general, No, never, and the like.
These must be spoken with a gravity,
And powerful accent to have due effect.
Terms of Extenuation and Contempt—
As feeble, insolent, mean, little, low,
With despicable, insignificant,
Require an abject, low, and less'ning voice,
And accent of disdain, and utter scorn ;
For instance, if in preaching, a divine
Should represent a sinner in distress
Lamenting his condition in these words—
" Upon examination of my faith,
I find it weak, imperfect, languishing ! "
To use an elevated tone, were here
Ridiculous indeed, and contrary
To all the rules of nature and of art ;
Because the words weak, languishing, require
A doleful accent, and complaining sound.
And this distinction of the mode of speech
Not only is agreeable to things,
But serves moreover for variety,
A leading object with the Orator.

I only add that he must not relax
But keep his voice at full the usual height,
Until the very close of his discourse ;
An observation to be borne in mind

Particularly when the Periods
Conclude as in the French, with words like these
"Ce n'est q'une figure, type, similitude."
How faint and poor were such a Period!
Because the letters 'e' and 'i' and 'u'
Have in themselves such little energy.
But if it should conclude with words like these
Incomparable, eclatante! although
The tone should not be rais'd to half the pitch,
The power syllabical would spread itself
Through all the room, by reason that the sounds,
Of 'a' and 'o' are mighty in themselves!
Which rule for the last words of sentences,
Deserves the more attention, from the fact,
That many in this point most sadly fail.

CHAP. XII.

Of Gesture, in general.

'Tis time that we proceed to action now;
Of vast importance to the Orator
To waken the emotions of the soul!
Which eloquence alone could not achieve.
To kindle in the minds and thoughts of those
Who hear and see him, all the glow he feels!
Hence in the Church a man desires to see
The Preacher's face, as well as hear his voice;
And if his pew preclude this privilege,
He reaps far less advantage to his mind,
Although the sermon be most excellent!
Both faculties may equally conduce
Alone, to our advantage, but combin'd,
Express to a perfection, what we wish
In all the intercourse of mind with mind.
For if by speech alone we converse hold
With the unhappy blind; by signs alone,
Or action, can we edify the deaf;
Who were, without this faculty, debarr'd
All conversation with their fellow men!

Another great advantage Gesture has
Above Pronunciation, if alone,
Is this, that whereas none can understand
Our words in any language but their own,
Gesture is grown familiar to the world,

In every age and clime beneath the sun ;
The common language of the universe,
Which strikes the understanding through the eyes !
Nor can we marvel at th'amazing power
Of action on the passions, when we feel
The eloquence of painting, strike so deep,
As to impress our hearts beyond all words !
The latter are the mainspring in the hands
Of those who understand them, but devoid
Of action are dispassionate and dead,
For this is all the life of a discourse.

Hence Pliny junior much disapprov'd
The reading of orations by ourselves
To others, or their reading them to us ;
As prejudicial to their eloquence,
Because the act of reading, chains the hands
And eyes, which should be free to give effect,
And rouse th' attention of an audience !
But on the contrary, when the harangue
Is aided, and enforc'd with eloquence,
And gesture elegant and a propos,
Th' effect is quite astounding, and the hold
The Orator obtains upon the mind,
The eyes, the ears, almost incredible !

And if engaged in argument with one
Who has no action he discomfits him,
And overcomes him with the greatest ease ;
As Cicero Cœcilius, in the suit
Hortensius versus Verres, when his pride
Far, far exceeded his capacity.

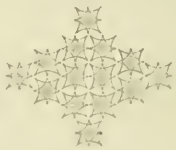
" Consider it, said he, and ponder well
The dreadful risk, which your pretensions run.
In my opinion, sir, a dozen words,
With his accustom'd wit and eloquence,
Would baffle and confuse your puny thoughts
Into a perfect stand, if stand you could
Before his powerful eye, and dazzling mien !

And when again he represents the case
Of Brutus foil'd by Crassus at the bar,
He says, "He spake the words in such a way,
With such an eye, at every turn he took,
As quite disabled and confounded him!"

But that this language of the face and hand
Be fully understood, adapt with care
The action to the subject in debate;
Or to the passion you desire to raise;
Condole not with a cheerful merry face!
Affirm not with the gesture of a man
Who, horrorstruck, repels a serious charge!
For this would be unseemly and unwise,
If you would gain applause or confidence.
Nor can you be too much upon your guard
Against a stiff, and an affected air,
Offensive in th' extreme!—a natural
Not artificial gesture, is the best,
The offspring and result of what you say!
In fine, the orator, if possible
Must manage it so well, that all may see,
And hear, with unmix'd pleasure, his address;
With a pronunciation clear and strong,
And consonant with all the rules above.

A graceful action is more difficult
To be attain'd than verbal eloquence:
Because a man by hearing his own voice,
May tune it, in a measure, to his ear;
But cannot regulate his hand, or eye,
Or gen'ral mien, because, not see himself;
Which was the reason why Demosthenes
Spake his Orations with a looking glass,
Wherein he saw himself, from head to foot;
And thus avoided the inelegant.
But with some little disadvantage too,
In that it represents upon the left,
The right hand gesture, awkwardly enough.

Unless we change the hands alternately,
As we may wish to witness the effect.
But what if this should make us substitute
One for the other in the Church or Court?
If then the mirror should not be approved,
Or thought desirable on this account,
Request some friend to give you his advice;
I mean, of course, a person of good taste
And judgment to direct you on this point.
But the best method to attain this art,
Is to select some finish'd orator
And perfect gentleman to be your guide
And model, as Hortensius formerly
To Esopus and Roscius, who were wont
To follow him about from place to place,
On purpose to acquire his elegance
Of gesture, and of language for the stage!



CHAP. XIII.

Particular Rules for Gesture

To give you all the choicest rules I can
For Action, let me notice first of all
The government and order of the frame,
Or human body, as it is entire.
And in the next place, how the head and eyes,
The eyebrows and the face must move themselves.
And thirdly of the action of the hands,
For the right management of which more rules
Are requisite, than all the other parts.

First for the body as a whole, observe,
It must not every moment change its place
Or posture, which were painful to the eye,
And might give rise to a comparison
Like that of Junius against Curion,
Whom he resembled to a man at sea
In a cockboat, for tossing here and there,
To right and left without a moment's ease!
But then no less, avoid the lifeless stand,
Like stock or maypole, which is quite as bad;
For this is most unnatural, because
It contradicts the great Creator's aim,
Who in his wisdom made the human form
On locomotive principles, to move
(We speak with rev'rence) as the case requires.

Besides, the straight line, school boy attitude,
Unbending at the turn of a discourse,
Defeats the object of the orator
Which is, by its variety to please.

As to the head, 'tis needless here to state
All it can do by gestures and by signs,
The hints, and intimations it can give,
As of refusing, granting—to confirm
Admire, or reprehend: for this is known
By ev'ry one: I only would remark
Two things of chief importance on this point.
The first is that the head must not be held
Too high, or lean too forward when we speak
Which were a show of pride and consequence;
Nor yet be bent or lower'd to the breast,
A prejudice not only to the eye
But voice, thus rendered far less audible,
Distinct, and proper: neither must it turn
Towards the shoulders, which would indicate
Indifference and languor of the mind.
But keep it always modestly erect,
According to its natural design,
And the becoming dignity of man!

The other observation I would make,
Is this—That it is most inelegant
To keep the head as of a statue, or
A gentleman in tapestry, quite still!
And yet, it should not move, or throw itself
Incessantly about at every turn
Of the address, or as the orator
Advances to the climax of his speech.
But, to avoid extremes, should always turn
With smoothness on the neck, as circumstance,
Or subject in debate may make it meet,
Not only to enable him to see
The countenances of the audience
Seated just opposite, but likewise those
On either side, to whom he should direct

Alternately, a kind discerning eye,
And then resume his posture as before,
So that his voice may be distinctly heard
By all who are assembled in the place.
To this it must be added, that the head
Should always wait upon the eye or hand,
On this side or on that ; except alone
When we reject, refuse, repel, discard,
Disown, abhor, or disavow a thing.
As when the poet says, "I think myself
Unworthy of such praise." Or thus exclaims—
"The gods divert from us so great a plague!"
Here we must use the right hand whilst the face
Is turn'd, as in abhorrence, to the left.
But above all the face gives most effect
And life and animation to a speech.
Hence Crassus well remarks in Cicero
The ancients disapprov'd of Roscius'mask
Because it hid his face, and all the traits
Of varied character upon the stage ;
So that we ought to take the greatest pains
Before, and when we meet the public gaze,
That there be nothing of repulsion there,
Unkind, or apathetic, or morose,
Except as we would set the passions forth,
Or personate the character of such ;
And then return to our own countenance—
Whose smiles will shew affection, love and joy ;
Its mildness mark our pity—our reproof
Or reprehension, its severity ;
Its condescending dignity of look
Shews our concern for our inferiors ;
Whilst a submissive countenance, bespeaks
Profound respect for all above ourselves.

As for the speaker's eyes they ought to fall
On some or other of his audience
With mark'd regard, throughout the whole address ;
Yet not with fix'd attention, to annoy

But to awaken and retain the ear,
For nothing in the world can be so dull
As an harangue like those of Tamarisque,
Who us'd to turn his face upon the stage
From those to whom he spake, and fix his eyes
On some one object near him, 'silly man,'
As Theophrastus calls him, for his pains!

But if your anger kindle, then your eye
Will sparkle in their eyelids like the stars,
So that a foreigner, or one quite deaf
Who could not hear nor understand the words,
Would easily perceive that you were wrath;
Whilst all who understood and felt the cause
Of your resentment, would respond thereto,
By sympathetic anger in their own.

This power in all the passions is alike,
Thus if from violent distress you weep,
Or at your own or others misery,
'Twill presently dissolve them into tears;
Which made the old Tragedians imitate,
As far as possible upon the stage
This tenderness of nature, till at times
They brought the counterfeit to such a pitch,
That all the Theatre was fill'd with tears.
And this was one among the methods us'd
To call their own and public feeling forth;
They pondered o'er some real case of woe,
Some great affliction preying on their minds,
Amid their actings on the lifeless boards,
And perfectly distinct from rhapsody
Of bygone tales which touch'd them not at all.
Two notable examples may be seen
In history—Comedian Polus one,
Who after being absent for a time,
Occasion'd by the death of his own son;
Return'd upon the stage in such distress,

That when he came to act Electra's part
In Sophocles, who carries out the urn
Wherein Orestes' bones should be enshrin'd,
To do it to the life, he took his child's
Instead thereof, and brought them in his arms!
And now indeed his eyes affect his heart
To a degree beyond all precedent;
That all the Theatre was fill'd with woe!

The other instance is of Esopus,
Who had a boundless love for Cicero,
And felt the deepest sorrow for his friend,
At his departure into banishment,
Hence he resolv'd upon one effort more,
Besides all those his noble friends had made
To rouse the pity of his enemies;
The tragedy of Accius seem'd to him
Most suited for this purpose, where we find
That true pathetic strain of Telamon
The exile, and the dread calamities
Of Priam's house—see Tully's Tusculan,
And the oration made for Sextius;
But in those verses sure his thoughts would run,
Not on the fable, but the real woes
Of his lov'd friend, and so indeed they did,
Until his agony became so great,
That e'en the most insensible were mov'd
To bitter tears, and all his enemies
Lamented the affliction they had brought
Upon his friend, and begg'd he might return
And be restored to all his dignities,
As Cicero, with heartfelt gratitude
To that most famous actor, has declar'd.

Now if the sympathy of hearts be such,
And that in Theatres where people go
For pleasure and amusement, how much more
Where all is sacred, serious, at church,

Where God and our Salvation are the theme?
Things of the highest consequence to man!
Sure we may here expect to move the heart,
If first by grace, our own be deeply touch'd!
What must have been the wonderful effect
Of Paul's emotion and the tears he shed
Amongst Christ's chosen flock at Ephesus,
In that most melting exhortation there,
Recorded in the Acts?—"Remember all,
That for the space of three revolving years
I have not fail'd to caution ev'ry one
Both night and day with earnestness and tears!"
And when he thus had spoken, kneeling down
Pray'd with them all, who wept upon his neck
And kiss'd him, as their father in the Lord,
And follow'd him with weeping to the ship!

The sacred orator should first excite
Within himself as far as in him lies,
A deep conviction of the guilt of sin;
E'en till his heart dissolves in real grief,
And thence 'twill issue in affecting tears,
And move the audience to like distress;
Who sooner with such eloquence relent,
Than all the studied logic of the schools.

For an example in these modern times—
A minister of greatest eminence,
As he discours'd upon the awful spread
Of sin within the limits of his cure,
And faithfully admonish'd them to look
For corresponding judgments, added thus—
'God will forsake us!' here his utterance
Entirely fail'd him, through his tears and sobs.
But in a little afterwards, he cried
With a most piteous and distressing voice
"And if thou God forsake us, what are we!
"Lost beyond hope, undone eternally!"

This burst of agony o'ercame them all!
So that with overwhelming grief they wept
For all their sins, and afterwards, no doubt.
Their life and conversation would be chang'd.

As to the proper movement of the eyes,
Downcast or rais'd, the sentiment alone
Must influence their action. If you speak
Of heav'n or heav'nly things, then lift them up,
But if of earth, or sublunary things
Then cast them down; for otherwise, it were
A solecism of the faculty,
And merit what Philostratus observes
Upon that silly sophister, who cast
His eyes upon the ground, as he exclaim'd,
"O heavens hear!" And rais'd them to the skies
(Absurd enough) when he cried out "O earth!"
And you must study likewise to adapt
Your eyes to all the passions of the mind,
And cast them down to intimate disdain;
And raise them with the utmost confidence,
When virtuous deeds and honour are your theme;
But more especially if you should call
On heaven and earth to witness your complaint,
Direct your eyes to each accordingly,
And raise your hands, to give it due effect.

Your eyebrows must not always be relax'd
And knit but seldom when you mark contempt!
Some speakers lift them up at ev'ry turn,
If they are earnest and impassionate;
Or which is worse, as Piso did of old,
Most ludicrously, draw one eyelid up,
And drop the other nearly to the chin,
As Cicero relates. Both should be kept
In the same posture and equality,
As nature plainly teaches us they ought;
Allowing them, however, to contract,
Dilate or bend, as modesty, or joy,

Regret, or sorrow, make it requisite.
Never distort or screw the mouth at all,
For this is most offensive to the eye.
"Sextus Penarius was once rebuff'd
For this and other habits of that kind
As if he had a walnut in his teeth,
Crack sir, your walnut first, and then proceed."
Nor must you bite your lips or moisten them,
As some through inadvertency may do,
Most unbecoming in the gentleman.
Then for the shoulders, do not shrug them up
At every word, as did the witnesses
From Greece, whom Cicero derides
In pleading for Rabirius Posthumus,
Whose gestures were confin'd to these alone!
Demosthenes at first had this great fault.
But by reciting in a narrow place,
And with a dagger at his shoulder's top,
As often as he felt the point thereof
He knew that he had err'd and master'd it.
Others again there are who throw their heads
Quite back, and consequently shock the eye
With rounded waist; or lean upon the arm,
And only make their action with the hand
In this position, from the elbow joint!
This, and all other vices of the sort,
An orator should carefully avoid.

As to the hands the chiefest instruments
Of action, these we want at every turn,
According to the subject of discourse.
We use them to accuse, acquit, entreat,
Or when we promise, threaten or admire,
In fact at almost ev'ry word we say,
Or passion we depict! Quintilian
Has well observ'd in reference to their use,
That all the other parts assist to speak,
But for the hands, they speak as 'twere themselves.
And Marshall, in the stead of 'tout le geste',

Writes 'tout la main,' because, says he, the hands
Are all in Action, or the greatest part,
If gracefully adapted to the theme!
Let then the Orator observe these rules,—
First, not to use them in th' Exordium,
At least with any show, unless obliged,
As Ajax, 'gainst Ulysses, where th' address
Is altogether sudden or abrupt.

"With wrath impatient his stern eyes survey
Sigœum, and the Navy which there lay:
Then holding up his hands, O heav'n! he said,
Before the Fleet must we our title plead?
And is Ulysses my competitor?
Whose flightful fear did Hector's flames abhor,
Those I sustain'd, from those this Navy freed."

Th' extension of the Hands was here no doubt
Most proper at the opening of the Speech,
As if toward the Fleet, and it had been
A blemish if omitted. Otherwise
Exordia, for the most part, must be mild
And without Gesture, but distinct and clear:
You must not clap the hands, nor strike the desks
Nor beat your breast like public Mountebanks,
But make the Action chiefly with one hand,
And that the Right, or should you use the Left,
Let it be only to accompany,
Not supersede it: nor must it be rais'd
As high as the right hand, except indeed
The subject shall require it otherwise
As indispensable. For instance, where
The Sov'reign Judge arranges all his Sheep
Upon his right, and on his left the Goats.
Here let each hand alternately be rais'd,
As also where our blessed Lord commands,
If our right hand should cause us to offend,
To cut it off! Were I reciting this
I should perform the Action with the left,
Because the right could not destroy itself;

Note, likewise, that whenever we refer
To ought within ourselves, our faculties,
Our conscience, or our passions, heart or soul,
The right hand should, with gentleness, be laid
Upon the breast but not with violence.

Never make use of the left hand alone ;
Some men, left handed, cannot well avoid
This fault, through habit from their infancy.
Under these circumstances use them both
As less offensive to the public view.

Make all your Action from the left to right,
And terminate it there, (your hand I mean)
And let it fall with elegance and ease.
The Action must commence with your Address,
And end with it no less—accompany
And not anticipate, nor lag behind;
The movement of the hand must correspond
With Nature in the things of which you speak;
Thus, how absurd, if we should say, 'Come in,'
With an extended hand! or, 'Go away,'
Withdrawing it! Or, 'Separate yourselves,'
Joining our hands together all the time!
Or, 'Open,' close! or, 'Up,' and drop them down ;
This were to contradict both common sense
And Nature, and become ridiculous.

But to proceed. Upon emergencies
The Action of the hand is requisite
To indicate the ardour of the mind,
As in that fine Apostrophe before
The Princes of the Blood not long ago
In France, by one of the first Barristers.

"Gen'rous and noble Princes, ye whose Sire
Was so distinguish'd for his excellence,
Why not, O why not, strangle with your hands
Those vile impostors who would fix a stain
Upon your guiltless foreheads! Yes, a stain
Of infamy unheard of in the world!!"

Who sees not here that all his vehemence,
And language of the hands was in request
Upon that Figure of the Orator,
'Why not, O why not strangle with your hands
Those vile impostors?'
Never elevate
Your hand, in speaking, higher than your face,
But yet as high: Some raise it to the sky,
As if they had a quarrel with the stars!
The same proportion ought to be observ'd
In holding out the hand, and not as some,
Who whilst they speak, regardless of all taste,
Hang down their hand as if it were quite dead,
And they desir'd to make the ladies faint!
In fine your eyes must circumscribe the bounds
And limits of your hands, that when you speak
Your mouth, your hands and eyes may all concur
In one and the same statement, and convey
But one impression to the audience.

Never exceed, when you extend your arm,
Six inches from your side, or you will throw
Your Gesture out of sight, except you turn
Your head (which were grimace) to see yourself.

In forms of Adjuration raise your hand,
As most agreeable to Holy Writ,
Where God in promises or menaces
Is represented lifting up his hand,
That is to say, he swears that he will bless
In his compassion, or condemn in ire;
So in an Exclamation, raise your voice,
And hand as well, in order to effect.
You must not use such Action ev'ry-where,
For as the hands ought never to be chain'd,
But free to act, so never without cause,
Unless you wish to run into the vice
Denominated 'Babbling of the hands,'
A practice bord'ring on the pantomime
Of Greece or Rome, whose boards were fill'd alone,
With Mimicry without a syllable.

Some Actions you must never represent,
As fencing, shooting, with the gun or bow,
Nor playing on the virginal or harp,
Piano, flute, or other instrument,
Nor handicrafts, and such like characters.

Again, for Gestures, innocent enough,
But not important in their influence,
We ought to make them with less frequency,
And in the mildest manner possible,
For otherwise to use our vehemence
And unremitted Action of the Arms
At ev'ry trifle were to meet the scorn
Of Curion, as Quintilian relates,
Who, in discoursing with Octavius,
Perfum'd from head to foot, kept off the flies,
By the perpetual motion of his hands;
Observing which, Sicinius jeered him thus,—
"Your obligations, dear Octavius,
To this good gentleman, are infinite,
For had he not been close upon the spot,
The flies had certainly devour'd you up!"
But what is noble in appearance, great,
And worthy of mankind, we ought to shew,
E'en to the life with Action's pleasing aid.

When a Prosopopœia is employ'd,
Or second person as it were brought in,
You must adopt the gesture consonant
To him in the condition you describe;
Thus, if it be of Jesus on the cross,
Transfix'd thereon, and his most bitter plaint,
My God, my God, hast thou forsaken me!
Or his affecting pray'r, Forgive, I pray,
Forgive them, for they know not what they do!
You must not, though correct at other times,
Here clasp your hands, as if in pray'r to heav'n,
Or in an agony of pain and grief,
Nor in allusion to his confidence

In his belov'd disciple, where he says,
'Woman, behold thy Son! must you pronounce
The words with any movement of the hands,
Although 'twere natural at other times,
Because the hands of the dear Sufferer
Were not, and could not be, extended thus!!

As to the other rules set down by some,
Relating to the hand or part thereof,
All men are not agreed; Hortensius
And Cicero may carry it too far;
Nor does it seem at all desirable
To subdivide the Action of the hand,
Neither is any thing insisted here,
Upon its influence in distress and grief,
Accordant with the Greek and Latin Schools,
Where they were wont to beat their head, or brow,
Or breast; or smite upon the thigh,
All which were unbecoming in our day;
Nor have I touch'd upon the sundry rules
For the direction of the feet and knees,
Because they spake upon a platform rais'd
Above the audience, with room enough
To walk, as many did, in their address,
Which gave occasion, in a banter once,
For Flavius Virginius to ask,
"How many miles the speaker had declaim'd!"
Neither the Bar or Pulpit are expos'd
To this description of his pleasantry,
The posture being fix'd: and hence we waive
Precepts irrevalent in modern times,
And may, perchance have overlook'd some few,
Essential deem'd by others: but the chief,
Most useful, and important have been giv'n.

CHAP. XIV.

Instructions for putting all the above-mentioned Precepts into Practice.

Ere we conclude, a little must be said
Upon the Modulation, and the turns
Of Voice and gen'ral mien, which we adopt,
Especially as it regards the face
And eye, though difficult with pen,
If not impossible, to make it clear.
The Student will, by dint of practice, best
Attain this art, assisted by some friend,
Or well-selected Elocutionist,
To speak, and hear him speak alternately,
In order to correct, or to improve.
What is amiss, or might be better done,
And hence Augustine begg'd to be excus'd,
Upon a noble passage in St. Paul,
Giving his friend Paulinus any view,
Save viva voce of pronouncing it,
Under the wing of which apology
We well may plead indulgence for ourselves.

What has been here advanc'd will well repay
The diligent practitioner for all
His pains and study, and insure success,
As far, at least, as mediocrity.
Therefore I only add, before I close
This humble Essay, some few gen'ral hints,
Which may be useful to an Orator.
And first, observe the Precepts of this art,
In Cicero's words, are less attractive far
In theory, than practice—in the book

They cannot but appear quite flat and dry,
But carried to the Hand, the Lip, the Eye
Will add a grace and lustre to our speech,
Embellishing what in itself were else
Neither persuasive, elegant, nor great,
And make it far superior to the claims
Of the most classic, actionless discourse ;
However, in the book, replete with taste.
You must not, therefore, throw these rules away,
Though some appear beneath a man's regard,
Scarce worth perusal—yet, I do not mean
That either the Divine or Barrister
Should always pore upon them in the Church,
Or in the Court, for there quite other thoughts
Should occupy their minds, and theory,
(Well in its place,) be made to cede the chair
To such reflections, and rich sentiments,
As rise spontaneously in the mind,
Or from the Volume, or the house of God,
Or end of all our pleading, virtue's praise,
And its protection in this sinful world!
The very thought of rules at such a time
And care about them, would distract our mind,
Take off its warmth and spirit stirring power,
Disturb the mem'ry and perplex the brain.
For as St. Austin, most correctly says,
"Tis quite impossible a man should speak
With ease or clearness with his thoughts intent
Upon the precepts of an Orator,
Should he attempt to do so, probably
The most important things would be forgot."

Nor yet do I intend to intimate
That you should never venture to address
A Congregation, or to plead a Cause,
Without a strict preparatory course
Of Action in your study ; we are told
That Roscius never ventur'd to adopt
A gesture unexamin'd in the Glass !

Such strict attention were impossible
In a divine, whose time is occupied
With many Sermons, or a Barrister,
Whose reputation fills his hands with Briefs,
Their thoughts are better far bestow'd than thus,
In meditating on the weighty things
They have to say, and the important charge
Committed to their hands! Nor does the Court,
Or Congregation look for such a thing;
As Antony remark'd in Cicero,
"The auditors, he says, do not expect
The same exactness in an Orator
As in an Actor on the public boards,
Where all the dialogues are fabulous,
And Action all in all,—that is to say,
The elegancy, air, and grace of speech
Are ev'rything, and failing to produce
Effect by these, had better not appear;
But in a public speech, the audience
Are chiefly sway'd by the sound argument
And weighty truths alleg'd; and for the rest,
If the deportment be agreeable,
The manner chaste, the gesture suitable,
Though not so brilliant, they are satisfied.

All I would have (in short) a man observe,
Who wishes to excel in eloquence,
Is only to digest these rules of Art,
Before he venture on the public ear,
By care and constant exercise to speak
With mediocrity of taste at least;
Thus, for example, let him practise this
Of Cicero in the Manilian law,
To improve his breathing— See Page 43, Chap. XI.
Beginning "Shame 'tis, gentlemen, that he."

It may, indeed, be difficult at first
To say the whole within a single breath,
And, as I think, impossible for some,
But they may do it easily enough

By slightly breathing, first, at 'With one blow,
And then again at 'Growing insolence,'
Whence they may manage to the period;
But should a difficulty still be felt,
Let them breathe softly, no one seeing it,
Throughout the sentence, keeping up the voice,
As absolutely needful to the end.
And if thus imperceptibly to breathe
Be not sufficient, they should learn by heart
This Period of the same great Orator—

"Pleasure with all her fascinating charms
Cannot persuade him to participate,
Nor avarice provoke him to be rich,
Nor smiling beauty to forget himself
Within her bosom; no, nor civic fame
To court its honors; neither can fatigue
Induce him to recline upon the couch
Before the duties of the day are done."

Now let them try to say this in a breath,
Or two, or three, till they attain their point,
For, as I judge, 'tis exercise alone,
And resolution must accomplish it.
This practice also will facilitate
The acquisition of variety,
As well as other ornaments of speech,
And to assist him, I would strongly urge
The Student to select some passages
Of most acknowledg'd elegance and wit,
Ancient or modern, as he may prefer,
And keep them always at his finger's end
Till he acquire their style and ornament;
I say the finest passages, because
Most pleasing to the ear, and soonest learnt,
Also because such extracts store the mind
With rich materials for constant use,
And the more beauties we discover there,
So much the higher will ambition soar
To reach the standard of their excellence.

And nothing leave undone to make ourselves
Accomplish'd and agreeable to all.

THOMAS BALSHAW, PRINTER, ALTRINCHAM.