

## ARTICLE VI.

## CICERO, AND REMARKS ON THE CICERONIAN STYLE.

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WE come, in the present lecture, to look at the eloquence of the great Roman orator and the class of speakers who bear similar characteristics.

For the sake of definiteness and despatch we will turn to one of his orations and describe, as briefly as practicable, both its *argument* and its *rhetoric*. I select for this purpose the orator's plea for Milo; all considering it one of the best specimens (some the best) of skilful oratorical structure which Cicero has furnished us.

In order to appreciate the argument in the case, it is necessary to survey some of the principal facts. The main fact is, that Milo on his way to Lanuvium, and Clodius returning to Rome, met with their respective trains at Bovillae, and the latter was slain by the former. Clodius is represented as a vile and profligate character, a contemner of the gods, and a scourge to the community. He became the enemy of Cicero, and procured his banishment, because the orator testified against him when on trial for a most flagrant offence, and otherwise opposed him in his flagitious designs. Milo, as the champion of Cicero, and the most daring and efficient of the tribunes in bringing about his restoration, came in for a share of Clodius's malignant hatred.

In the year of Rome 701, Milo was a candidate for the consulship against two influential competitors; and at the same time Clodius was a candidate for the pretorship. The friends of Milo were exerting themselves to the utmost to procure, and those of Clodius to resist, his election. While

everything was working advantageously for Milo, and the prospect of his election was very fair, all was suddenly clouded by that disastrous meeting in the Appian Way. Here Clodius, on horse-back, attended by three companions and thirty servants armed, and Milo, with his wife and a female companion and a company of gladiators, came together, and in the fatal affray which followed Clodius was slain. His body was left in the road, where it fell, till found by a senator named Sextius Tediis, who took it to Rome, covered with blood and wounds, and thus exposed it to the populace. In the midst of the factions and tumults that ensued, Cneus Pompey was created sole consul, and immediately published three laws, in one of which he specially noticed the circumstances of Clodius's death. Under these Milo was impeached *de Vi*, *de Ambitu*, and *de Sodâlitibus* before a tribunal constituted of men of distinguished abilities and integrity, and headed by an extraordinary president. Pompey was also present, with a strong body of troops, to prevent violence from either side. Cicero conducted the defence alone, and not at the time with his usual ability, being disconcerted, when he commenced, by the rude clamor of the Clodian faction. The oration or plea we have is not so much what he did say as what he meant to say. It was afterward written out by the orator, and then received all the beauty and force his masterly hand could give it. The result of the trial was the condemnation and banishment of Milo; only thirteen of the tribunal being for acquittal and thirty-eight for conviction. It is very manifest that Cicero had a difficult cause to manage, inasmuch as the main facts were against him. The meeting between Milo and Clodius was probably accidental and the slaying a sudden act of revenge. It could not have been in self-defense because Milo was completely master of the field, his adversary having fled to a house, and been dragged out thence to be slain. It was a rash act; probably regretted soon after it was done. Another difficulty arose from the attitude and power of Pompey, who while he was heartily glad that Clodius was thus despatched, determined to take advantage

of the occurrence to put Milo, whose influence he dreaded, also out of the way.

Let us turn now to the oration, and see its structure and argument, and how the orator undertook to dispose of the difficulties in the case. We find in the oration the main parts of a judicial address, or plea, in due order, viz. exordium, proposition, narration, confirmation, peroration. The object of the exordium is to conciliate the good will of the judges, bespeak their attention, and render them favorable to his cause. He makes an apology for the agitation he manifested; pays a compliment to Pompey whose presence greatly refreshes him; intimates to the soldiers and the people that their own dear interests were involved in the fate of Milo. He alludes to the crimes and meditated outrages of the Clodian faction; touches upon the misfortunes of his client, who had failed of the honors just within his grasp, and was now agitated with fear of exile. The exordium ended, he takes his ground of defense. He was advised by some to take this ground: namely, to acknowledge the fact and the intention. We did kill Clodius, and we meant to, and we did it for the public good. But this ground he deemed too bold to be politic. As the other side took the ground that Milo waylaid Clodius, Cicero decided to meet them by confessing the fact that Milo killed Clodius and maintaining that he did it in self-defence, as Clodius was the assailant. This he promises to make clear as the light of day. But before proceeding to the argument, he disposes of a prejudice: namely, that it is never right to take the life of a fellow-man except through the forms of law. He shows that it is right in certain circumstances. He proves the right both from the law of nature and from written laws. Two other false impressions he removes: namely, that Milo had been condemned by the senate, and virtually by Pompey. Having disposed of these prejudgments, the orator proceeds to the main proposition that Clodius waylaid Milo. He has an advantage in taking this ground, by the concession on the other side that one or the other did waylay. This

is the point that Cicero lays himself out to prove; and, while laboring to confirm it, all along artfully insinuates that if Milo had plotted the death of Clodius, he deserves, not condemnation, but thanks for removing so terrible a pest from the community. Cicero's argument to confirm this main position, that Clodius was the assailant, is both artfully and artistically constructed. We first have the argument as occurring in the narration, which embodies and contains all the material of it. He begins with stating facts before the fatal departures: In the case of Clodius, there was the fear that Milo might be consul, while he was pretor; the threat of death to Milo, fixing the day in which he should perish; Clodius's knowledge of the very day Milo must leave Rome on official duty, and his consequent preparations. In the case of Milo there were none of these. Cicero next states the circumstances of each as they went on this fatal journey: Clodius was on horse-back with a well armed company. He had no impediments whatever — chariot, wife, Greek attendants — as he always had. Milo had his wife; was in his chariot, bound up in his cloak, with every common impediment, and a large train of boys and girls. When they came together the party of Clodius made the attack, from ground well chosen, slew the charioteer of Milo, and when in the ensuing contest Clodius was slain, it was without the presence, command, or knowledge of Milo. This is the narration. The question is then constituted, and the orator draws out his conjectural argument, as it was called. In other words, he turns his narration into strong presumptive proofs that Clodius was the assassin. The whole is brought to the test of these three topics: namely, the will, the power, the signs. So far as the will or disposition is concerned, Clodius is presumed to be the assassin. Under this head he affirms: first, it was for the advantage of Milo to have Clodius live, his success in running for the consulship depending greatly upon the life of Clodius; his prospects being utterly blasted by his death occurring as it did. Second, Clodius ever manifested a deadly hostility to Milo, as the friend and defender

of Cicero, and as restricting himself in his career of violence: Milo could look upon Clodius only as the instrument or occasion of his own glory. Third, the orator adduces the nature of each: that of Clodius, violent, blood-thirsty; that of Milo calm, virtuous, benevolent. Thus it is shown, that the will to slay was altogether with Clodius; the will not to slay, with Milo.

Then follows the argument from the signs, which, in this case, is chiefly the manifestation of the will in word; or that Clodius repeatedly threatened the life of Milo in general, and, at length, declared specifically that in three days he would perish, as was exactly accomplished. And secondly the promptness with which Milo returned to Rome after the fact; the calmness of his speech; his whole appearance of conscious integrity and security; and the readiness with which he surrendered himself to the authorities.

The third topic is the power of doing the deed. This the orator shows, was with Clodius. Clodius had a previous knowledge of Milo's journey; and thus could make, and did make, every arrangement. He picked and armed his men; he chose his place, one favorable to Clodius, unfavorable to Milo. Milo had every impediment — chariot, wife, clothing, companions. Clodius was free from all these impediments. Now, is met the question which comes up against this argument: How did it come to pass that Clodius, and not Milo, was killed? Something is attributed to fortune; but more to the intrepidity and energy of Milo, as against the unskilled, gluttonous, drunken, vacillating Clodius. Here the argument upon the proposition really ends; but there is added to the argumentative part an address to Pompey, containing a little censure and much flattery; and one to the judges, assuring them of safety in doing right; then a recurrence to the great topic, or point, that Clodius was justly slain, with citations to sustain it by the authority of Grecian and Roman precedents where slayers of public pests and enemies have not only been justified, but honored and rewarded. In his peroration the orator assumes a beseeching attitude,

or tone, and implores the compassion of the judges for his client.

Closing up here this so imperfect analysis of the oration, I pass on to remark upon its argument, stating and answering these two questions: First, What is the nature of this argument? Second, what the marks of skill in the management? First, as to the nature of the argument. It is the argument *a priori*. The great fact admitted, then the main business is to account for it. Admitting that Milo slew Clodius, the orator reasons from certain causes to account for this fact, supposing, or assuming, in the argument, that Clodius waylaid Milo, intending to assassinate him. Thus the fact conceded is, that Milo slew Clodius. The fact assumed is, Clodius meant to assassinate Milo. This fact assumed, the great fact to be proved. The causes reasoned from are mainly those which have been named: First, the violent hatred Clodius bore against Milo—a hatred whose strength and deadliness and purpose are proved from his repeated declarations that he would be the death of Milo. Secondly, the great interest he had in the death of Milo. These constitute the gist and strength of the argument. Without them it would be contemptible—would, indeed, be no argument. These are the causes which naturally operated to lead Clodius to pick and arm his men, to choose his ground, to be there at the time he was for the purpose of assassinating Milo. In most cases, I think, the circumstantial argument is in its leading features *a priori*, that is, the search is for causes which will account for the effect. As in the case of a wretched man in Vermont, who, some time ago, lay convicted of the murder of his wife. She hangs suspended by his handkerchief in their chamber at dead of night. He rouses his neighbors with the report that his wife has hung herself. But he is arrested, tried, convicted; the evidence being his evident desire for his wife's death, arising from a notorious and most guilty attachment, and his having said to this other person that this obstacle should be removed. The argument here,

the same as in the case of Clodius — the cause existing in himself, and declared by himself, which would lead to that effect, as accounting for the effect. And when there is no other way of accounting for the effect, the argument is complete, conclusive.

The argument *a priori* and *a posteriori* may meet in the same case, as thus: The accused was known to have such feeling as would lead to the crime; this a consideration *a priori*. A knife such as would inflict the wound is found on his premises with gore upon it; — this last circumstance operating as an argument on the *posteriori* principle. In the terms of Whately, the murder is the condition of that bloody knife's being found in his possession. In other words, but for the murder that gory blade would not have been in his keeping. When the two kinds of argument fairly meet, they create, often, the assurance of certainty in conclusions from the fact.

But I pass to the next point, and designate some of the marks of skill in the structure and management of the argument. For the most part, there is a fine logical arrangement. The arguments are well put. Our orator is very skilful as to the time and place of answering the objections, or removing the prejudgments which stood in his way; because his argument, in face of those prejudgments, must have been wholly unavailing.

When he had thus cleared the way to his proposition, or the point on which the whole was to hinge, he is careful to state this with great skill and precision; and he repeats it and summons attention to it in such a way that no one can miss or mistake it. This is an admirable feature, and should always be attended to. Let every word in the proposition be well weighed and rightly chosen; let the whole be apprehensible, and *make* it to be understood.

The orator's skill in supporting the ground he took is very manifest. His cause, we must bear in mind, was not a good one. His ground of defence, though, as he thought, the best he could take, was very questionable. He doubtless

knew this. Hence his art in not resting his cause wholly on this ground. He really, but slyly, supplies this deficiency — shores up this weakness by another proposition; not formally stated, for he dare not thus state it, lest it should produce a revulsion; it comes in by the way, and yet it is prominent throughout the argument, namely, that Milo is justified in slaying Clodius, as thereby he removed from the state a most dangerous enemy. This point is argued indirectly, but with a good stomach, all through the plea. The strong facts in the case are made much of. They come up again and again and again; particularly Clodius's deadly hatred of Milo, his great interest in his death, the declaration that he would take him out of the way; above all, that in three days he would despatch him. These, in connection with the circumstances of the journey, the time, and place, are wielded with great effect. Here the reason is addressed — the *argumentum ad rationem*. The orator tries to corroborate the impression or conviction by the *argumentum ad invidiam*. He takes every opportunity to prejudice Clodius in the minds of the judges and of Pompey. His base deeds, his violence, especially his attempt on the life of Pompey, — these are constantly cropping out. So, also, our orator's examples and precedents are most significantly chosen for this object. As many are brought in as possible in which Clodius has figured infamously. Thus the same instances are made to do the double service of *argumentum ad rationem, et ad invidiam*.

Decided skill is seen in the progress, the climacteric structure of the argument. The orator gets on higher ground, and becomes bolder as he advances. He begins by proving that Milo ought to be cleared; he ends by showing that he ought to be praised and rewarded. When the object was to remove prejudice, at the opening of the argument, he only says it was right for Milo to kill Clodius. When near the close, and the object is more rhetorical, more to move by the vehemence of his argument, he shows that the deed was noble in Milo; by it he has become the saviour of his

country. Greece, Rome, have always honored those who have put out of the way such pests.

The recapitulation is very clearly, concisely, and rapidly stated, in the form of concentrated accumulation. Managed with the Roman orator's skill, there is great force in it. It is a sort of gathering and twisting of the several threads and strands of the argument into one hard and tough cord. It is thrown at the opponent's feet, with the challenge: "Break that rope, if you can."

In speaking of the *style* of Cicero, it is saying what everybody knows, that he took the greatest pains with it. He meant to gather into his own, the excellences of all styles, and thus furnish the world a specimen of perfection in this particular. And it is the opinion of Quintilian that there is found in his style the strength of Demosthenes, the copiousness of Plato, and the sweetness of Isocrates. Two thirds of this is probably true. "Copiam Platonis, and jucunditatem Isocratis" are found in the Roman orator's style, but not "vim Demosthenis." Strength cannot be claimed as a characteristic of Cicero's style; nor can simplicity. Copiousness, fulness, roundness, no one will deny to it. These stand out everywhere. There are a great many verbs, a great many nouns, a great many adjectives. Verbs, nouns, adjectives nearly synonymous, are often used in order to make out the fulness or swell, the rhythm or balance of the sentence. The style is therefore epithetical. The following pleonasms we opened to, all in the same vicinity: "et imploro et exposco"; Milo's address is: "stabilem ac non mutatam." Again, we have: "fortes et animosos." This fulness, amounting to redundancy, is everywhere seen. The style is not only full, flowing, copious; it is highly sonorous when spoken. Our orator manifestly loved noisy words. Hence the frequency of the gerundive. He loved the thunder of the gerundive: "Ad lacerandam rempublicam"; three lines further on: "ad evertendam rempublicam, occidendum Milonem." The superlative form, as helping this swell and sound, is often resorted to. This, with the roll and roar of

the genitive plural, doubtless made rapturous music to the Roman orator's ear. "Qui spe amplissimorum premiorum"; "Metu crudelissimorum, cavere non possumus." Everybody and everything is "issimus" or "issimorum," at one end of the scale or the other. It is said that in printing a work of Chateaubriand, the workmen throughout the office exhausted the letters *a*, *n*, and *t*, which was a mystery to them, till a critical friend pointed out the cause in that author's exorbitant partiality to the participial termination "ant," which he constantly used instead of the pronoun and the verb. We think the printer of Cicero's works would be obliged to prepare himself especially, or come short in his ability to set up all his favorite, high-sounding combinations. But, while there is sound, there is harmony. This is a grand characteristic in his style. He studied rhythm in every part. This was a matter of more importance in the Latin than in our language, because more practicable. The Roman loves a more frequent recurrence of long syllables. The Greek loved more of the short. We find this constant balancing of long and short in our Ciceronian-English writers and speakers. The following is an example: "Soon the laurels of yonder hero will have withered; those venerable senators will be incapable of legislating; those erudite judges, of presiding; the tongue of that resistless advocate will falter as he pleads; the persuasive accents of yonder pulpit orator will die away, and be heard no more; and all that active and successful talent which adorns the age will disappear; and its honored possessors, conducted in succession to their graves, will moulder amid sepulchral ashes, forgotten, or remembered only by the monuments of glory they shall have during their transitory life erected." Here, now, the rhythm is produced by the predominance of feet of two syllables, long and short, short and long. The following, from Mr. Grattan's peroration on the declaration of Irish rights, in which feet of three and four syllables preponderate, moves, as any ear will detect, very differently from the preceding: "Though he who utters this should die, yet the immortal fire shall outlast

the humble organ who conveys it, and the breath of liberty, like the word of the holy man, will not die with the prophet, but survive him."

No Ciceronian ear would be satisfied with this simple close. The Roman orator commonly constructed a more ambitious ending; and we should say that he has too much of the same style of ending. He loved to close with the pæan, that is, three short syllables and a long. His celebrated "esse videatur" is of this measure. The same movement is very oft occurring at the close of the period: "esse fateretur"; "nullam haberemus"; "justa repetenda"; "silentium pollicentur"; "omnes concidissent"; "confere audeamus"; "certe non debeo." This will do better for the Roman than for us. A sharp critic tells us that it is not English, not idiomatic in our tongue, to be ever bringing about this balanced and swelling close to our sentences. It is evidence of an immature writer. Such an one will take care so to husband his more dignified words, and to plan their disposition that, instead of having some little word to end with, he may be possessed of a mighty expression with which to conclude.

The faults of the Roman orator's style are that the copiousness sometimes runs into verbosity; the sound sometimes exceeds the sense; that it is too artificial in the whole structure, the art being very manifest, even obtrusive; a too bold and unblushing display of the speaker's power, sacrificing the subject in hand to the vanity of the orator. The excellences of the style are its wealth of language; its brilliance and beauty, often, its harmony everywhere; its graphic, accumulative sketching; its lucid clearness; its solid argument and pregnant sententiousness, now and then, and, occasionally, deep pathos. All these are high excellences of style; and they belonged to the Roman, and to all the true members of the Ciceronian school.

What the effect of the Roman orator's eloquence? What the power? Though the effect of this type or style could not be so general and great as that of the Grecian school,

on some minds, for some occasions, it would probably be greater; but in all cases very different. There was nothing forceful, coercive, overbearing, in the power of the Roman orator. The secret of his power, was, perhaps, here. He would attract attention by the elegance and harmony of his periods, the frequent splendor of his figures. He would bear his hearers along on an obvious, straight line of discourse. He would have a respectable amount of argument for the reason, and intersperse striking philosophical sentiments to feed the intellect; he would utter fervid declamation, and, now and then, pour out a torrent of concise vehemence; but especially, and through the whole, would insinuate himself into the minds of his hearers, win their favor, captivate their affections; would touch all the feelings — flatter their vanity, rouse their selfishness, stir their hopes and fears, bespeak their pity; and thus, more by the force of persuasion than of conviction, would he carry his points.

The logic and rhetoric of Cicero may be further illustrated as we proceed to compare for a little the Roman with the Grecian orator.<sup>1</sup> Cicero and Demosthenes, we have said, stand at the head of two somewhat contrasted schools of eloquence. In some respects they were alike; in more they were different; in a few they were opposite to each other. They were alike in the pains they took to acquire the best oratorical gifts. They both sought the best masters, corrected every fault they could, and brought out every practicable excellence. They both perfected, according to their respective notions, their style and manner; were alike in vehemence and profusion of action. They were alike in the studied carefulness of their preparations; alike too, in skilful rhetorical repetitions; by both the strong points, facts, arguments, were presented again and again in different modes and connections.

Cicero has the advantage of Demosthenes, is superior to him, in clear methodical arrangement. The Roman has the

<sup>1</sup> This, which follows, constituted a separate lecture in Prof. Shepard's course.

*lucidus ordo*, the Grecian, not so perfectly. We can easily follow the former, tracing, as we proceed, the thread of discourse; not so easily, the latter. The discourse of Cicero was constructed more artistically, more according to rule; that of Demosthenes in a more free, untrammelled way. Demosthenes came, as it were, before rhetoric, and by a masterly practice suggested rules. Cicero came later, and availed himself of the precepts drawn from the antecedent masters.

Hence we have more nature in the Grecian, more art in the Roman. They were different in the feelings, under whose sway they spoke, and in the object held in view. Demosthenes had a single object and a rigid purpose; he spoke in a severe, intensely braced frame of mind; he meant, if possible, to do execution, accomplish something, make men act. Cicero was commonly in a less earnest, executive mood; was more relaxed, easy, sportive. While the aim of the one was to convince, and sweep away the hearer in the right direction, the aim of the other was in part to please, charm, and win admiration. The former forgets himself, except so far as he is personally linked with his cause; hides himself and puts forward his subject. The latter makes the orator prominent. Cicero, the man of so many noble deeds and brilliant honors, stands out boldly on the canvass.

The Grecian is abstemious in the use of language, figures, embellishments, rarely going abroad for them, or using them for their own sake. The Roman sought after beauties, worked up figures, and piled up language from a love, a strong relish, for such things. Hence the former was concise, strong, business-like, having nothing to be spared from any part. The latter was full, flowing, often redundant, or verbose. The Roman drew attention more to the costume; the Grecian more to the idea, the substance, the argument. Cicero has the most pathos; Demosthenes the most inwrought, intense, impelling passion. The former would coruscate, attract, and gain admiration by his union of splendor and harmony. The latter dealt more in the true electric

fire, and that not a flash in the horizon, but a living spark shot strait and hot into the minds of the people. They both had power; the Grecian far the most. They both had excellences; but all the authorities unite in saying that there are more things worthy to be copied, fewer to be avoided, in the Grecian than in the Roman model.

In proceeding to state a few rhetorical principles, or lessons, suggested by what has gone before, I remark:

1. The doctrine that rapidity is one of the great laws or conditions of eloquence, we derive both from the Roman and the Grecian orator. There is more of this in the Grecian than in the Roman; and for this the Grecian is the more powerful. And where the Roman attains to be truly effective he obeys this law. We here learn it from his success. We again learn it from his failure. He lingers in amplification upon his figures or his thoughts, till we are weary with standing still.

As to the gaining or securing of this rapidity, it is not, of course, gained by being in a hurry, not gained by quick enunciation, or violent gesture. One thing in the describing is: it is perpetual and manifest progress. We are getting consciously along all the while,—a very comfortable sensation when in the hearing of a discourse. Another, and the principal, thing is, that the speaker contrives to get out his effective things directly, without any circuitousness or lumber. The whole figure, thought, or scene, comes out with a suddenness and strength which thrills and electrifies often. The expanded, hard-ridden, long-ridden figure the orator repudiates. The poet may use it; the earnest speaker execrates it. Said Mr. Grattan, touching his connection with Irish independence: “I sat by her cradle; I followed her hearse.” This is the rapidity of conciseness. There is also the rapidity of enumeration and amplification. We are wafted, as on eagle’s wings, over a large field and see every object it contains. When this is well done it has at once beauty and force. The rapidity of the sketching increases, or it should, as the orator advances in the figure; as in this

instance from Cicero: "He has obtruded his lust upon the most hallowed rites of religion; he has broken the most solemn decrees of the senate; he has openly bribed the judges; harassed the senate in his tribuneship; has defeated measures adopted by all the orders for the safety of the republic; driven me from the country, plundered my goods, burned my house, vexed my wife and children, declared an atrocious war against Pompey; has slaughtered private citizens and public magistrates; has laid waste Etruria, ejected many from their seats and fortunes; has urged on his nefarious course till the city, Italy, provinces, kingdoms, could not hold his madness." In this sketching, amplifying movement, depending on its rapidity for its efficacy, Cicero abounds. He is, perhaps, the greatest ancient, as Dr. Chalmers is, probably, the greatest modern, master of it.

2. It is suggested to us by the combined example of the Roman and the Grecian orator, that the extreme of either copiousness or conciseness is faulty. The mingling of the two makes the truly effective oratorical style. The extreme of copiousness — this, of course, has always been condemned. But conciseness in eloquence has been praised so much, and, sometimes, in such a way as to give prevalence to the idea, the greater the conciseness, the more the power. There was a school holding this doctrine at Rome in the time of Cicero, and the disciples of it greatly censured his eloquence. "These men," says Middleton, "affected a minute and fastidious correctness; pointed sentences; short and concise periods, without a syllable to spare in them; as if perfection in oratory consisted in frugality of words, and in crowding our sentiments into the narrowest possible compass. These claimed to belong pre-eminently to the Attic school."

O'Connell, the Irish orator and agitator, has been set down as belonging to this extremely frugal, concise school. Mr. Shiel tells us, "that he flings, with the improvidence of his country, a brood of robust thoughts upon the world without a rag to cover them." There is certainly great conciseness in the Irish orator, but not to the extent here represented.

There is certainly great power in it, often, in the places, and for the purposes he speaks. — But to go back to the highest authority. The great Grecian orator has been thought by some to favor the extreme of conciseness. It is true that his practice teaches the beauty and power of conciseness as an element in oratory; but it does not by any means authorize the utmost conciseness. The extreme of conciseness would be fatal to any spoken discourse. There must be conciseness; and while this should have its place, copiousness also should have its place. We have the authority not only of the Roman orator, but also that of the Grecian, and of all the most effective speakers, for being, at times, copious in discourse. Demosthenes, for example, might have said: While the statesmen of Greece were all corrupted by Phillip, nothing ever prevailed on me to betray, in the least, the interests of my country. This gets out the idea clearly, fully, and in the fewest words. But the orator is not content thus to express himself, and the copiousness he resorts to gives far greater force to the sentiment, in the place, where it occurs. He says: “While the statesmen of Greece were all corrupted by Phillip, over me, neither opportunity, nor fair speeches, nor lavish promises, nor hopes, nor fears, nor favors, nor any other earthly consideration, ever prevailed, seducing, or driving me to betray, in any one particular, what I deemed the rights and interests of my country.” This is copiousness, Ciceronian, we might call it, but for the anachronism — a beautiful and an effective copiousness. Verbosity is altogether another thing. Copiousness, in its place, is picturesque and impressive. Verbosity is always unmeaning, heavy, frigid. Very strong feeling sometimes demands copiousness for its expression, sometimes, conciseness. When we wish to prolong attention to what most deeply interests us, we resort to copiousness, the cumulative enumeration. When we wish to drive a sentiment right into others, we resort to conciseness. Of this we find something in the Roman, more in the Grecian, orator. With his full, flowing utterance, the latter continually intersperses the brightest and sharpest sentences

and so frames the true, and cogent oratorical style. We find this intermixture in the best English orators. Mr. Grattan, for example, made his reply to Corry under a very fury, a whirlwind of excitement, and the speech as a whole is remarkable for its pithy, cutting, conciseness; and yet, we find in it, passages of amplifying copiousness. For instance, he says: "That language, if uttered out of the House, I should answer with a *blow*. I care not how high his situation, how low his character, how contemptible his speech; whether a privy councillor or a parasite, my answer would be a blow." A good ending; having none of the jingle of the *esse videatur*. I think all must have perceived, and sometimes felt that the very concise sentences, charged with meaning and uttered with struggling emotions, are the mightiest that are ever uttered. The most thrilling parts of Patrick Henry's greatest speech, were the phrases, "*We must fight*," "*Let it come*." The most eloquent and electric thing in a speech of Mr. Webster's which I once heard in Faneuil Hall, was the place and the manner in which he uttered the words "I know it." While, then, we concede the importance, and even necessity of copiousness, — and it is necessary to set off the conciseness, — we still say, if a man has not also the power of a pregnant conciseness, if he cannot, when occasion requires, condense a great meaning into a little language, and let it off with the true intensity and impulse, then he has not made his last attainment in oratory.

I wish, in the next place, to make a few remarks upon the subject of rhythm, measure, and sound in oratory. The Roman orator paid, as we have seen, great attention to these. Are we in the main to disregard these outward things? By no means. Eloquence consists, to some extent, in the movement, the balance, the sound. Indeed, much in this respect, even in our language, depends upon the structure that will please the ear. And let me remark, right here it is that many have made their fatal mistake. They have sought to please the ear all the time. This rightly done is well enough, but they have misjudged as to the mode. They

attain the one movement which to their ear yields the most music, and give us that all through. That precise measure and admirable balance appear in every sentence. That same beautiful cadence sets us sweetly down at the close of every period. This monotony of structure, no matter how melodious, we do not wish to hear it. We want nothing like the even, Johnsonian balance, made up of a stately beginning and a stately ending: a style which an English critic somewhat humorously compares to "that article of dress, which the French had then lately made peace with, a pair of pantaloons, divided into two parts, equal in length, breadth, and substance, with a protuberance before and behind." This is not the true rhythm in eloquence. One protuberance is usually quite enough for one sentence; and often it is better with none. The true movement admits variety. It is not all rhythm, nor all flow, but rhythms and ruggednesses succeeding and interchanging, some round, some sharp. If some are artificial and stately, more are natural, flexible, easy. The effect of harmony is promoted by occasional discords; so the fine rhythm in sentences, is set off, and even made more productive of pleasure by something which now and then strikes harshly on the ear. And here I make the remark distinctly, that this whole matter must be left with the ear. The end is to be gained not by formal rule, but through the dictates of the ear at the time. It is important that the ear be right, because the ear really governs us in our style, is higher in authority than the mouth. Perhaps I err in giving the ear too much pre-eminence. I am not quite sure that there is not something, sometimes, in the very build of the mouth which modifies the style of the person; a certain roundness, or capacity of organ which demands, in order to fill it, a full and sonorous emission. This, evidently, was the opinion of the individual, who, having to prepare for the Lord Mayor a speech, desired, first, to take the dimensions of his Lordship's mouth. But to return to the ear, which doubtless, will have the precedence. We say, it is as safe, in rhetoric, to follow the ear, properly enlightened and

trained, as it is in morals, to follow the conscience. And for this service which the ear renders to the orator, it has a right to demand something for its own sake. A word may sometimes be put in, not so much to aid the sense, as to please the ear, to give a fulness and harmony to the combination.

.Intimately connected with this subject of rhythm and the ear, is that of models. The utility of them under the right conditions, I think, is unquestionable. They contribute greatly, not altogether, to make every man what he is in style. Cicero took to the Asiatic models, rather than to the Greek, and the result was an extreme of the copious and flowing. It is all-important that the orator select right models. Right models are, as it were, to the ear, what the Bible is to the conscience. I assume that every one will have some model, or models. Indeed, there is no way to avoid this. The cry against models sometimes raised, as making men artificial, mere imitators, is perfectly nonsensical. As they will be had, those had, ought to be the right ones. How, then, is a person to select them? He should proceed, in the premises, not altogether according to his liking, but also according to his judgment. Let him know what are the faults of his style, what the false reports of his ear; then let him proceed somewhat on the principle of contrast, somewhat against predilection it may be. If too much given to sound and redundance, let him select from the barren school, the severely Attic. If bareness, dryness, barrenness is the fault, let him take more to the prolific school. There are some men who would do well to read<sup>d</sup> Jeremy Taylor. There are others who ought never to touch him. While correction is going on in any particular, there should be a preponderance in that class of models which stand over against our fault. If we are down in the ditch, the man who lifts us out must be above, on the dry, hard ground. If we are high up, the man who helps us down must, ordinarily, be beneath.

In what I have said of models, I wish to be understood only so far as consistent with another remark which I regard

as true and important, viz. that every person should, to some extent, consult his own idiosyncrasy, constitutional peculiarity, in the style he adopts. It is in the nature of some to be copious, wordy, of others to be close, stringent; these can never change places to advantage; of the constitutionally stringent man you can never make a Cicero; he may be better for being relaxed; but you can never relax him into a Cicero. Let him abide in his place. Nor of the constitutionally copious man, can you ever make a Demosthenes. He may be better for being braced and compressed; but you can never compress him into a Demosthenes. Let him abide in his place. The one may acquire from models, freeness and grace, the other, closeness and force. I remark again, that in pronouncing upon the Ciceronian style, we must concede, that in skilful hands, it is a good style; for some purposes, and some occasions, it is the best, the most effective. Where the object is to soothe, or please, or attract, or persuade, the fulness and the melody of the Roman are wanted. The Ciceronian is a more popular style of oratory than the opposite; I know not but it has ten admirers where the other has one. It is also far more easily caught than the other; far more successfully imitated. The consequence is, we have much more in English writing and oratory of the Ciceronian structure and movement than of the Demosthenian. We find, indeed, many admirable masters of this style. Edmund Burke is a pre-eminent example. Though Demosthenes was his favorite in the closet, yet, in his practice the predominance of the Ciceronian appears; the Ciceronian chastened and perfected. The two Pitts were, on the whole, Ciceronian; the younger decidedly so. The father was marked by a streak of the Grecian fire. Sir James Mackintosh was altogether of the amplifying school, and a very fine instance of it, too. Perhaps, the most finished and beautiful specimen of the Ciceronian eloquence is Robert Hall. We have in him the excellences of this style with none of its faults. He is a perfect model of it, whom we can commend without any qualification; one who will show us all the harmony the

English language is capable of. Though Burke and Hall are both of the school of Cicero, they are far less imitable than Cicero himself. We have fine specimens of this style in our own country. Mr. Wirt was decidedly of this school, and few men could give sounder sense in richer music. Colonel Hayne who participated in the great debate in the United States Senate in the winter of 1830, is splendidly, rather pompously, Ciceronian. And Mr. Webster in the opening of his reply to Mr. Hayne has not a little of the Roman's fulness, though, commonly, he is rather characterized by simplicity, verging toward severity. Mr. Clay, perhaps, is one of the most accomplished amplifiers of our country. The Southern speaker is expected to be warmed into more luxuriance than the Northern. John Randolph, at times, had great power, and might have fallen into the Ciceronian class; but he was commonly, when he rose too cross to speak in long and flowing periods. He seemed, often, to have so much of the cur about him, particularly in his later days, that he could only spit out his sentences, incoherently, in a sort of quick and snappish brevity.

One of the infelicities attending this style is, that its peculiarities are apt to be pressed to far. It is very easily abused; its music changed to mere jingle; its fulness blown up into disgusting bombast. We need not look long nor far for specimens, so strong is the tendency to excess, to an amplifying, overloaded luxuriance. If we go to what is called the Irish school, we shall find this abuse of the Ciceronian characteristics, legitimately run out, and existing in their most bloated perfection. We hear of "wreathing the immortal shamrock round the brow of painting, poetry and eloquence;" "of souls swelling with the energies, and stamped with the patent of the Deity;" of one "whose prayers are curses, whose communion is death, whose vengeance is eternity; in form a fury, in act a demon; her heart festered with the fires of hell; her hands clotted with the gore of earth; her path apparent by the print of blood; her pause denoted by the expanse of desolation." We may

well say, in the words of Burnett, "that this is a gibberish kind of language, which sounds like somewhat that is sublime, but, really, has nothing under it." Yet this is exceedingly taking in some quarters, and the admirers will read and praise, and then soar and sing in like strain. It is insisted that this is eloquence in its finest form and garb. If it be eloquence, then the clowns and the peacocks have it; the Grecian, the great Roman even, had it not. It would be eloquence, were the people made all ear and no brains. But considerable numbers happen not to have been so made. Some *thought, substance*, then, must go into the article. Whatever it is, in its perfect structure, eloquence is a noble combination, and noble, too, and wonderful often in its achievements. It has held spell-bound the minds and hearts of assembled thousands; it has made them tremble and made them weep; it has melted all hearts into one, beating with his who spoke; it has stirred the depths of passion, and fixed the stern resolve, and strung every arm to high endeavors. That one mind and voice has swayed his peers; swept onward the multitude; reached, as by an electric power, distant nations; changed the destinies of the world; and affected, widely, the immeasurable interests of the eternal scene.