

and let us also, as the day is so far advanced, consult our health."<sup>1</sup> The proposal pleased the whole company. Scævola then said, "Indeed, I could wish that I had not made an appointment with Lælius to go to that part of the Tusculan territory to-day. I would willingly hear Antonius;" and, as he rose from his seat, he smiled and added, "for he did not offend me so much when he pulled our civil law to pieces, as he amused me when he professed himself ignorant of it."

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## BOOK II.

### THE ARGUMENT.

IN this book Antonius gives instructions respecting invention in oratory, and the arrangements of the different parts of a speech; departments in which he was thought to have attained great excellence, though his language was not always highly studied or elegant. See Cic. de Clar. Orat. c. 37. As humour in speaking was considered as a part of invention, Caius Julius Cæsar, who was called the most facetious man of his time, speaks copiously on that subject, c. 54—71.

I. THERE was, if you remember, brother Quintus, a strong persuasion in us when we were boys, that Lucius Crassus had acquired no more learning than he had been enabled to gain from instruction in his youth, and that Marcus Antonius was entirely destitute and ignorant of all erudition whatsoever; and there were many who, though they did not believe that such was really the case, yet, that they might more easily deter us from the pursuit of learning, when we were inflamed

defends himself by the example of their "god Plato," as he calls him, in his book *De Republicâ*; where the scene being laid in the house of an old gentleman, Cephalus, the old man, after bearing a part in the first conversation, excuses himself, saying, that he must go to prayers, and returns no more, Plato not thinking it suitable to his age to be detained in the company through so long a discourse. With greater reason, therefore, he says that he had used the same caution in the case of Scævola; since it was not to be supposed that a person of his dignity, extreme age, and infirm health, would spend several successive days in another man's house: that the first day's dialogue related to his particular profession, but the other two chiefly to the rules and precepts of the art, at which it was not proper for one of Scævola's temper and character to be present only as a hearer. Ad Attic. iv. 16. B.

<sup>1</sup> Retire from the heat, like Scævola, and take rest.

with a desire of attaining it, took a pleasure in reporting what I have said of those orators; so that, if men of no learning had acquired the greatest wisdom, and an incredible degree of eloquence, all our industry might seem vain, and the earnest perseverance of our father, one of the best and most sensible of men, in educating us, might appear to be folly. These reasoners we, as boys, used at that time to refute with the aid of witnesses whom we had at home, our father, Caius Aculeo our relative, and Lucius Cicero our uncle; for our father, Aculeo (who married our mother's sister, and whom Crassus esteemed the most of all his friends), and our own uncle (who went with Antonius into Cilicia, and quitted it at the same time with him), often told us many particulars about Crassus, relative to his studies and learning; and as we, with our cousins, Aculeo's sons, learned what Crassus approved, and were instructed by the masters whom he engaged, we had also frequent opportunities of observing (since, though boys,<sup>1</sup> we could understand this) that he spoke Greek so well that he might have been thought not to know any other language, and he put such questions to our masters, and discoursed upon such subjects in his conversation with them, that nothing appeared to be new or strange to him. But with regard to Antonius, although we had frequently heard from our uncle, a person of the greatest learning, how he had devoted himself, both at Athens and at Rhodes, to the conversation of the most learned men; yet I myself also, when quite a youth, often asked him many questions on the subject, as far as the bashfulness of my early years would permit. What I am writing will certainly not be new to you, (for at that very time you heard it from me,) namely, that from many and various conversations, he appeared to me neither ignorant nor unaccomplished in anything in those branches of knowledge of which I could form any opinion. But there was such peculiarity in each, that Crassus desired not so much to be thought unlearned as to hold learning in contempt, and to prefer, on every subject, the understanding of our countrymen to that of the Greeks; while Antonius thought that his oratory would be better received by the Roman people, if he were believed to have had no learning at

<sup>1</sup> The words *cum essemus ejusmodi* in this parenthesis, which all commentators regard as corrupt, are left untranslated.

all ; and thus the one imagined that he should have more authority if he appeared to despise the Greeks, and the other if he seemed to know nothing of them.

But what their object was, is certainly nothing to our present purpose. It is pertinent, however, to the treatise which I have commenced, and to this portion of it, to remark that no man could ever excel and reach eminence in eloquence, without learning, not only the art of oratory, but every branch of useful knowledge. II. For almost all other arts can support themselves independently, and by their own resources ; but to speak well, that is, to speak with learning, and skill, and elegance, has no definite province within the limits of which it is enclosed and restricted. Everything that can possibly fall under discussion among mankind, must be effectively treated by him who professes that he can practise this art, or he must relinquish all title to eloquence. For my own part, therefore, though I confess that both in our own country and in Greece itself, which always held this art in the highest estimation, there have arisen many men of extraordinary powers, and of the highest excellence in speaking,<sup>1</sup> without this absolute knowledge of everything ; yet I affirm that such a degree of eloquence as was in Crassus and Antonius, could not exist without a knowledge of all subjects that contribute to form that wisdom and that force of oratory which were seen in them. On this account, I had the greater satisfaction in committing to writing that dialogue which they formerly held on these subjects ; both that the notion which had always prevailed, that the one had no great learning, and that the other was wholly unlearned, might be eradicated, and that I might preserve, in the records of literature, the opinions which I thought divinely delivered by those consummate orators concerning eloquence, if I could by any means learn and fully register them ; and also, indeed, that I might, as far as I should be able, rescue their fame, now upon the decline, from silence and oblivion. If they could have been known from writings of their own, I should, perhaps, have thought it less

<sup>1</sup> *Multos et ingeniiis et magnâ laude dicendi.* This passage, as Ellendt observes, is manifestly corrupt. He proposes *ingeniis magnos et laude dicendi* ; but this seems hardly Ciceronian. Aldus Manutius noticed that an adjective was apparently wanting to *ingeniis*, but other editors have passed the passage in silence.

necessary for me to be thus elaborate; but as one left but little in writing, (at least, there is little extant,) and that he wrote in his youth,<sup>1</sup> the other almost nothing, I thought it due from me to men of such genius, while we still retain a lively remembrance of them, to render their fame, if I could, imperishable. I enter upon this undertaking with the greater hopes of effecting my object,<sup>2</sup> because I am not writing of the eloquence of Servius Galba or Caius Carbo, concerning which I should be at liberty to invent whatever I pleased, as no one now living could confute me; but I publish an account to be read by those who have frequently heard the men themselves of whom I am speaking, that I may commend those two illustrious men to such as have never seen either of them, from the recollection, as a testimony, of those to whom both those orators were known, and who are now alive and present among us.

III. Nor do I now aim at instructing you, dearest and best of brothers, by means of rhetorical treatises, which you regard as unpolished; (for what can be more refined or graceful than your own language?) but though, whether it be, as you use to say, from judgment, or, as Isocrates, the father of eloquence, has written of himself, from a sort of bashfulness and ingenuous timidity, that you have shrunk from speaking in public, or whether, as you sometimes jocosely remark, you thought one orator sufficient, not only for one family, but almost for a whole community, I yet think that these books will not appear to you of that kind which may deservedly be ridiculed on account of the deficiency in elegant learning in those who have discussed the art of speaking; for nothing seems to me to be wanting in the conversation of Crassus and Antonius, that any one could imagine possible to be known or understood by men of the greatest genius, the keenest application, the most consummate learning, and the utmost experience; as you will very easily be able to judge, who have been pleased to acquire the knowledge and theory of oratory through your own exertions, and to observe the practice of it in mine. But that we may the sooner accomplish the task which we have undertaken, and which is no

<sup>1</sup> See Brut. c. 43, 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Spe aggredior majore ad probandum.* That *ad probandum* is to be joined with *spe*, not with *aggredior*, is shown by Ellendt on b. i. c. 4.

ordinary one, let us leave our exordium, and proceed to the conversation and arguments of the characters whom I have offered to your notice.

The next day, then, after the former conversation had taken place, about the second hour,<sup>1</sup> while Crassus was yet in bed, and Sulpicius sitting by him, and Antonius walking with Cotta in the portico, on a sudden Quintus Catulus<sup>2</sup> the elder, with his brother Caius Julius,<sup>3</sup> arrived there; and when Crassus heard of their coming, he arose in some haste, and they were all in a state of wonder, suspecting that the occasion of their arrival was of more than common importance. The parties having greeted each other with most friendly salutations, as their intimacy required, "What has brought you hither at last?" said Crassus; "is it anything new?" "Nothing, indeed," said Catulus; "for you know it is the time of the public games. But (you may think us, if you please," added he, "either foolish or impertinent) when Cæsar came yesterday in the evening to my Tusculan villa, from his own, he told me that he had met Scævola going from hence; from whom he said that he had heard a wonderful account, namely, that you, whom I could never entice into such conversation, though I endeavoured to prevail on you in every way, had held long dissertations with Antonius on eloquence, and had disputed, as in the schools, almost in the manner of the Greeks; and my brother, therefore, entreated me, not being of myself, indeed, averse to hear you, but, at the same time, afraid we might make a troublesome visit to you, to come hither with him; for he said that Scævola had told him that a great part of the discourse was postponed till to-day. If you think we have acted too forwardly, you will lay the blame upon Cæsar, if too familiarly, upon both of us; for we are rejoiced to have come, if we do not give you

<sup>1</sup> The second hour of the morning, answering to our eight o'clock.

<sup>2</sup> The same that was consul with Caius Marius, when they obtained, in conjunction, the famous victory over the Cimbri.

<sup>3</sup> He was the brother of Quintus Catulus, by the mother's side, and about twenty years his junior. Their mother's name was Popilia. *Ellendt*. See c. 11. He was remarkable for wit, but his oratory is said to have wanted nerve. *Brut.* c. 48. Cicero with great propriety makes Sulpicius sit with Crassus, and Cotta walk with Antonius; for Sulpicius wished to resemble Crassus in his style of oratory; Cotta preferred the manner of Antonius. *Brutus*, c. 55.

trouble by our visit." IV. Crassus replied, "Whatever object had brought you hither, I should rejoice to see at my house men for whom I have so much affection and friendship; but yet, (to say the truth,) I had rather it had been any other object than that which you mention. For I, (to speak as I think,) was never less satisfied with myself than yesterday; though this happened more through my own good nature than any other fault of mine; for, while I complied with the request of these youths, I forgot that I was an old man, and did that which I had never done even when young; I spoke on subjects that depended on a certain degree of learning. But it has happened very fortunately for me, that as my part is finished, you have come to hear Antonius." "For my part, Crassus," returned Cæsar, "I am indeed desirous to hear you in that kind of fuller and continuous discussion, yet so that, if I cannot have that happiness, I can be contented with your ordinary conversation. I will therefore endeavour that neither my friend Sulpicius, nor Cotta, may seem to have more influence with you than myself; and will certainly entreat you to show some of your good nature even to Catulus and me. But if you are not so inclined, I will not press you, nor cause you, while you are afraid of appearing impertinent yourself, to think me impertinent." "Indeed, Cæsar," replied Crassus, "I have always thought of all Latin words there was the greatest significance in that which you have just used; for he whom we call *impertinent*, seems to me to bear an appellation derived from *not being pertinent*; and that appellation, according to our mode of speaking, is of very extensive meaning; for whoever either does not discern what occasion requires, or talks too much, or is ostentatious of himself, or is forgetful either of the dignity or convenience of those in whose presence he is, or is in any respect awkward or presuming, is called *impertinent*. With this fault that most learned nation of the Greeks abounds; and, consequently, because the Greeks do not feel the influence of this evil, they have not even found a name for the foible; for though you make the most diligent inquiry, you will not find out how the Greeks designate an *impertinent* person. But of all their other impertinences, which are innumerable, I do not know whether there be any greater than their custom of raising the most subtle disputations on the most difficult or

unnecessary points, in whatever place, and before whatever persons they think proper. This we were compelled to do by these youths yesterday, though against our will, and though we at first declined."

V. "The Greeks, however, Crassus," rejoined Catulus, "who were eminent and illustrious in their respective states, as you are, and as we all desire to be, in our own republic, bore no resemblance to those Greeks who force themselves on our ears; yet they did not in their leisure avoid this kind of discourse and disputation. And if they seem to you, as they ought to seem, impertinent, who have no regard to times, places, or persons, does this place, I pray, seem ill adapted to our purpose, in which the very portico where we are walking, and this field of exercise, and the seats in so many directions, revive in some degree the remembrance of the Greek gymnasia and disputations? Or is the time unseasonable, during so much leisure as is seldom afforded us, and is now afforded at a season when it is most desirable? Or are the company unsuited to this kind of discussion, when we are all of such a character as to think that life is nothing without these studies?" "I contemplate all these things," said Crassus, "in a quite different light; for I think that even the Greeks themselves originally contrived their palaestrae, and seats, and porticoes, for exercise and amusement, not for disputation; since their gymnasia were invented many generations before the philosophers began to prate in them; and at this very day, when the philosophers occupy all the gymnasia, their audience would still rather hear the discus than a philosopher; and as soon as it begins to sound, they all desert the philosopher in the middle of his discourse, though discussing matters of the utmost weight and consequence, to anoint themselves for exercise; thus preferring the lightest amusement to what the philosophers represent to be of the utmost utility. As to the leisure which you say we have, I agree with you; but the enjoyment of leisure is not exertion of mind, but relaxation. VI. I have often heard from my father-in-law, in conversation, that his father-in-law Laelius was almost always accustomed to go into the country with Scipio, and that they used to grow incredibly boyish again when they had escaped out of town, as if from a prison, into the open fields. I scarcely dare to say it of such eminent

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