conquestionem, feminis plangore et capitis ictu, nonnumquam sedato et constanti gestu, maesto et conturbato vultu uti oportebit.

Non sum nescius quantum susceperim negotii qui motus corporis exprimere verbis et imitari scriptura conatus sim voces. Verum nec hoc confisus sum posse fieri ut de his rebus satis commode scribi posset, nec, si id fieri non posset, hoc quod feci fore inutile putabam, propterea quod hic admonere voluimus quid oporteret; reliqua trademus exercitationi. Hoc tamen scire oportet, pronuntiationem bonam id proficere,[1] ut res ex animo agi videatur.

28 XVI. Nunc ad thesaurum inventorum atque ad omnium partium rhetoricae custodem, memoriam, transeamus.

Memoria utrum habeat quiddam artificiosi, an omnis ab natura proficiscatur, aliud dicendi tempus magis idoneum dabitur. Nunc proinde atque constet in hac re multum valere artem et praeceptionem, ita de ea re loquemur. Placet enim nobis esse artificium

[1] proficere *M* : perficere *other MSS. Mx.*

---

[a] *Cf.* Quintilian, 11. 3. 123 : "Slapping the thigh, which, it is believed, Cleon [see Plutarch, *Nicias* 8] was the first to introduce at Athens, is in common use; it is becoming as a sign of indignation and also excites the hearer. Cicero [*Brutus* 80. 278] misses this in Calidius." In Lucian, *Rhetor. Praeceptor* 19, the young learner is satirically encouraged to make use of this gesture.

[b] On ancient mnemonics see Helga Hajdu, *Das mnemotechnische Schrifttum des Mittelalters* (Vienna, Amsterdam, and Leipzig, 1936), pp. 11–33, and L. A. Post, *Class. Weekly*

one ought to slap one's thigh [a] and beat one's head, and sometimes to use a calm and uniform gesticulation and a sad and disturbed expression.

I am not unaware how great a task I have undertaken in trying to express physical movements in words and portray vocal intonations in writing. True, I was not confident that it was possible to treat these matters adequately in writing. Yet neither did I suppose that, if such a treatment were impossible, it would follow that what I have done here would be useless, for it has been my purpose merely to suggest what ought to be done. The rest I shall leave to practice. This, nevertheless, one must remember: good delivery ensures that what the orator is saying seems to come from his heart.
28 XVI. Now let me turn to the treasure-house of the ideas supplied by Invention, to the guardian of all the parts of rhetoric, the Memory.[b]

The question whether memory has some artificial quality, or comes entirely from nature, we shall have another, more favourable, opportunity to discuss. At present I shall accept as proved that in this matter art and method are of great importance, and shall treat the subject accordingly. For my part, I am

25 (1932). 105–110; on Memory in oral literature, J. A. Notopoulos, *Trans. Am. Philol. Assn.* 69 (1938). 465–493. The rhetorical interest in *memoria* appears early, among the sophists, who valued its uses in the learning of commonplaces and for improvisation. Our author's mnemonic system is the oldest extant. Whether such pictorial methods were widely used by the orators we do not know, but the theory persists to this day. See also Longinus, in Spengel-Hammer 1 (2). 197–206; Cicero, *De Oratore* 2. 85. 350–88. 360; and esp. Quintilian's historical and critical treatment, 11. 2. 1–51.

memoriae—quare placeat alias ostendemus; in praesentia cuiusmodi sit ea aperiemus.

Sunt igitur duae memoriae: una naturalis, altera artificiosa. Naturalis est ea quae nostris animis insita est et simul cum cogitatione nata; artificiosa est ea quam confirmat inductio quaedam et ratio praeceptionis. Sed qua via in ceteris rebus ingenii bonitas imitatur saepe doctrinam, ars porro naturae commoda confirmat et auget, item fit in hac re ut nonnumquam naturalis memoria, si cui data est
29 egregia, similis sit huic artificiosae, porro haec artificiosa naturae commoda retineat et amplificet ratione doctrinae. Quapropter et naturalis memoria praeceptione confirmanda est ut sit egregia, et haec quae doctrina datur indiget ingenii. Nec hoc magis aut minus in hac re quam in ceteris artibus fit, ut ingenio doctrina, praeceptione natura nitescat. Quare et illis qui natura memores sunt utilis haec erit institutio, quod tute paulo post poteris intellegere; et si illi, freti ingenio, nostri non indigerent, tamen iusta causa daretur quare iis qui minus ingenii habent adiumento velimus esse. Nunc de artificiosa memoria loquemur.

---

[a] Whether our author ever published such an explanation we do not know. See notes on 3. ii. 3 and 4. xii. 17.

[b] For the commonplace *cf.* Isocrates, *Adv. Soph.* 14 ff., *Antid.* 189 ff.; Plato, *Phaedrus* 269 D; Cicero, *Pro Archia* 7. 15, *Tusc. Disp.* 2. 13, Crassus in *De Oratore* 1. 25. 113 ff.; Horace, *Ars Poet.* 408–11; the comic (?) poet Simylus, in Stobaeus, 4. 18 *a* 4; Longinus, *De Sublim.* 36. 4; Quintilian, 2. 19. 1 ff., and (on Delivery) 11. 3. 11 ff.; and for its applica-

satisfied that there is an art of memory—the grounds of my belief I shall explain elsewhere.[a] For the present I shall disclose what sort of thing memory is.

There are, then, two kinds of memory: one natural, and the other the product of art. The natural memory is that memory which is imbedded in our minds, born simultaneously with thought. The artificial memory is that memory which is strengthened by a kind of training and system of discipline. But just as in everything else the merit of natural excellence often rivals acquired learning, and art, in its turn, reinforces and develops the natural advantages,[b] so does it happen in this instance. The natural memory, if a person is
29 endowed with an exceptional one, is often like this artificial memory, and this artificial memory, in its turn, retains and develops the natural advantages by a method of discipline. Thus the natural memory must be strengthened by discipline so as to become exceptional, and, on the other hand, this memory provided by discipline requires natural ability. It is neither more nor less true in this instance than in the other arts that science thrives by the aid of innate ability, and nature by the aid of the rules of art. The training here offered will therefore also be useful to those who by nature have a good memory, as you will yourself soon come to understand.[c] But even if these, relying on their natural talent, did not need our help, we should still be justified in wishing to aid the less well-endowed. Now I shall discuss the artificial memory.

tion to *memoria* Antonius in Cicero, *De Oratore* 2. 88. 360, and Longinus, in Spengel-Hammer 1 (2). 204.

[c] *Cf.* 3. xxii. 36 below.

Constat igitur artificiosa memoria ex locis et[1] imaginibus. Locos appellamus eos qui breviter, perfecte, insignite aut natura aut manu sunt absoluti, ut eos facile naturali memoria conprehendere et amplecti queamus: ut aedes, intercolumnium, angulum, fornicem, et alia quae his similia sunt. Imagines sunt formae quaedam et notae et simulacra eius rei quam meminisse volumus; quod genus equi, leonis, aquilae memoriam si volemus habere, imagines
30 eorum locis certis conlocare oportebit. Nunc cuiusmodi locos invenire et quo pacto reperire et in locis imagines constituere oporteat ostendemus.

XVII. Quemadmodum igitur qui litteras sciunt possunt id quod dictatur eis scribere, et recitare quod scripserunt, item qui mnemonica[2] didicerunt possunt quod audierunt in locis conlocare et ex his memoriter pronuntiare. Nam loci cerae aut chartae simillimi sunt, imagines litteris, dispositio et conlocatio imaginum scripturae, pronuntiatio lectioni. Oportet igitur, si volumus multa meminisse, multos nos nobis locos conparare, uti multis locis multas imagines conlocare possimus. Item putamus oportere ex ordine hos locos habere, ne quando perturbatione ordinis

[1] ex locis *M* : locis et *E Mx*.
[2] qui mnemonica *Aldus* : qui nemonica *Mx* : quinimmodica *P* : qui inmodica *Hb* : qui immodica Π*B C l d*.

---

[a] *Cf.* "the table of my memory," Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 1. 5. 98. For the analogy with wax *cf.* Socrates in Plato, *Theaet.* 191 CD; Cicero, *Part. Orat.* 6. 26, and in *De Oratore* 2. 88. 360, Charmadas (*fl.* 107 B.C.) and Metrodorus (born *c.* 150 B.C.); and the seal-ring in Aristotle, *De Mem. et Recollect.*

The artificial memory includes backgrounds and images. By backgrounds I mean such scenes as are naturally or artificially set off on a small scale, complete and conspicuous, so that we can grasp and embrace them easily by the natural memory—for example, a house, an intercolumnar space, a recess, an arch, or the like. An image is, as it were, a figure, mark, or portrait of the object we wish to remember; for example, if we wish to recall a horse, a lion, or an eagle, we must place its image in a definite back-
30 ground. Now I shall show what kind of backgrounds we should invent and how we should discover the images and set them therein.

XVII. Those who know the letters of the alphabet can thereby write out what is dictated to them and read aloud what they have written. Likewise, those who have learned mnemonics can set in backgrounds what they have heard, and from these backgrounds deliver it by memory. For the backgrounds are very much like wax tablets [a] or papyrus, the images like the letters, the arrangement and disposition of the images like the script, and the delivery is like the reading. We should therefore, if we desire to memorize a large number of items, equip ourselves with a large number of backgrounds, so that in these we may set a large number of images. I likewise think it obligatory to have these backgrounds in a series, so that we may never by confusion in their order be prevented from following the images—

450 ab. *Cf.* also, in Theophrastus, *De Sens.* 51–2, Democritus' theory that in vision the air is moulded like wax, and see the interpretation of this passage by Paul Friedländer, *Die platonischen Schriften*, Berlin and Leipzig, 1930, p. 448, note 1.

inpediamur quo setius quoto quoque loco[1] libebit, vel ab superiore vel ab inferiore parte, imagines sequi, et ea quae mandata locis erunt edere possimus;
XVIII. nam ut, si in ordine stantes notos complures viderimus, nihil nostra intersit utrum ab summo an ab imo an ab medio nomina eorum dicere incipiamus, item in locis ex ordine conlocatis eveniet ut in quamlibebit partem quoque loco libebit, imaginibus commoniti, dicere possimus id quod locis manda-
31 verimus. Quare placet et ex ordine locos conparare.

Locos quos sumpserimus egregie commeditari oportebit, ut perpetuo nobis haerere possint; nam imagines, sicuti litterae, delentur ubi nihil utimur; loci, tamquam cera, remanere debent. Et ne forte in numero locorum falli possimus, quintum quemque placet notari; quod genus si in quinto loco manum auream conlocemus, si in decimo aliquem notum cui praenomen sit Decimo, deinde facile erit deinceps[2] similis notas quinto quoque[3] loco conlocare.
XIX. Item commodius est in derelicta quam in celebri regione locos conparare, propterea quod frequentia et obambulatio hominum conturbat et infirmat imaginum notas, solitudo conservat integras simulacrorum figuras. Praeterea dissimiles forma atque natura loci conparandi sunt, ut distincti interlucere

[1] quoq(ue) loco *l*: loco quoque *H*: quoq(ue) *P* Π: quidq(ue) loco *C*: quidq(ue) *B*: quoquo loco *E Mx*.
[2] deinceps P^2ΠB^2CE: inceps *HPB Mx*.
[3] quoque *M*: quoquo *E Mx*.

proceeding from any background we wish, whatsoever its place in the series, and whether we go forwards or backwards—nor from delivering orally what has been committed to the backgrounds. XVIII. For example, if we should see a great number of our acquaintances standing in a certain order, it would not make any difference to us whether we should tell their names beginning with the person standing at the head of the line or at the foot or in the middle. So with respect to the backgrounds. If these have been arranged in order, the result will be that, reminded by the images, we can repeat orally what we have committed to the backgrounds, pro-
31 ceeding in either direction from any background we please. That is why it also seems best to arrange the backgrounds in a series.

We shall need to study with special care the backgrounds we have adopted so that they may cling lastingly in our memory, for the images, like letters, are effaced when we make no use of them, but the backgrounds, like wax tablets, should abide. And that we may by no chance err in the number of backgrounds, each fifth background should be marked. For example, if in the fifth we should set a golden hand, and in the tenth some acquaintance whose first name is Decimus, it will then be easy to station like marks in each successive fifth background. XIX. Again, it will be more advantageous to obtain backgrounds in a deserted than in a populous region, because the crowding and passing to and fro of people confuse and weaken the impress of the images, while solitude keeps their outlines sharp. Further, backgrounds differing in form and nature must be secured, so that, thus distinguished, they

possint; nam si qui multa intercolumnia sumpserit, conturbabitur similitudine ut ignoret quid in quoque [1] loco conlocarit. Et magnitudine modica et mediocres locos habere oportet; nam et praeter modum ampli vagas imagines reddunt, et nimis angusti saepe non videntur posse capere imaginum con-
32 locationem. Tum nec nimis inlustres nec vehementer obscuros locos habere oportet, ne aut obcaecentur tenebris imagines aut splendore praefulgeant. Intervalla locorum mediocria placet esse, fere paulo plus aut minus pedum tricenum; nam ut aspectus item cogitatio minus valet sive nimis procul removeris sive vehementer prope admoveris id quod oportet videri.

Sed quamquam facile est ei qui paulo plura noverit quamvis multos et idoneos locos conparare, tamen si qui satis idoneos invenire se non putabit, ipse sibi constituat quam volet multos licebit. Cogitatio enim quamvis regionem potest amplecti, et in ea situm loci cuiusdam ad suum arbitrium fabricari et architectari. Quare licebit, si hac prompta copia contenti non erimus, nosmet ipsos nobis cogitatione nostra regionem constituere, et idoneorum locorum commodissimam distinctionem conparare.

De locis satis dictum est; nunc ad imaginum rationem transeamus.

33 XX. Quoniam ergo rerum similes imagines esse oportet, ex omnibus rebus nosmet nobis similitudines eligere debemus. Duplices igitur similitudines esse

[1] quoque *Ml*: uno quoque *d*: quoquo *bMx*.

may be clearly visible; for if a person has adopted many intercolumnar spaces, their resemblance to one another will so confuse him that he will no longer know what he has set in each background. And these backgrounds ought to be of moderate size and medium extent, for when excessively large they render the images vague, and when too small often seem incapable of receiving an arrangement of
32 images. Then the backgrounds ought to be neither too bright nor too dim, so that the shadows may not obscure the images nor the lustre make them glitter. I believe that the intervals between backgrounds should be of moderate extent, approximately thirty feet; for, like the external eye, so the inner eye of thought is less powerful when you have moved the object of sight too near or too far away.

Although it is easy for a person with a relatively large experience to equip himself with as many and as suitable backgrounds as he may desire, even a person who believes that he finds no store of backgrounds that are good enough, may succeed in fashioning as many such as he wishes. For the imagination can embrace any region whatsoever and in it at will fashion and construct the setting of some background. Hence, if we are not content with our ready-made supply of backgrounds, we may in our imagination create a region for ourselves and obtain a most serviceable distribution of appropriate backgrounds.

On the subject of backgrounds enough has been said; let me now turn to the theory of images.

33 XX. Since, then, images must resemble objects, we ought ourselves to choose from all objects likenesses for our use. Hence likenesses are bound to

debent, unae rerum, alterae verborum. Rerum similitudines exprimuntur cum summatim ipsorum negotiorum imagines conparamus; verborum similitudines constituuntur cum unius cuiusque nominis et vocabuli memoria imagine notatur.

Rei totius memoriam saepe una nota et imagine simplici conprehendimus; hoc modo, ut si accusator dixerit ab reo hominem veneno necatum et hereditatis causa factum arguerit et eius rei multos dixerit testes et conscios esse. Si hoc primum, ut ad defendendum nobis expeditum sit, meminisse volemus, in primo loco rei totius imaginem conformabimus; aegrotum in lecto cubantem faciemus ipsum illum de quo agetur, si formam eius detinebimus; si eum non agnoverimus,[1] at aliquem aegrotum non de minimo loco sumemus, ut cito in mentem venire possit. Et reum ad lectum eius adstituemus, dextera poculum, sinistra tabulas, medico testiculos arietinos tenentem. Hoc modo et testium et hereditatis et
34 veneno necati memoriam habere poterimus. Item deinceps cetera crimina ex ordine in locis ponemus et quotienscumque rem meminisse volemus, si formarum dispositione et imaginum diligenti notatione utemur, facile ea quae volemus memoria consequemur.

[1] agnoverimus *E*: *other MSS. Mx omit.*

---

[a] Thus *memoria* embraces the speaker's command of his material as well as of the words.

[b] According to Macrobius, *Sat.* 7. 13. 7–8, the anatomists spoke of a nerve which extends from the heart to the fourth finger of the left hand (the *digitus medicinalis*), where it interlaces into the other nerves of that finger; the finger was therefore ringed, as with a crown. *Testiculi* suggests *testes*

be of two kinds, one of subject-matter,[a] the other of words. Likenesses of matter are formed when we enlist images that present a general view of the matter with which we are dealing; likenesses of words are established when the record of each single noun or appellative is kept by an image.

Often we encompass the record of an entire matter by one notation, a single image. For example, the prosecutor has said that the defendant killed a man by poison, has charged that the motive for the crime was an inheritance, and declared that there are many witnesses and accessories to this act. If in order to facilitate our defence we wish to remember this first point, we shall in our first background form an image of the whole matter. We shall picture the man in question as lying ill in bed, if we know his person. If we do not know him, we shall yet take some one to be our invalid, but not a man of the lowest class, so that he may come to mind at once. And we shall place the defendant at the bedside, holding in his right hand a cup, and in his left tablets, and on the fourth finger [b] a ram's testicles. In this way we can record the man who was poisoned, the inheritance, and
34 the witnesses. In like fashion we shall set the other counts of the charge in backgrounds successively, following their order, and whenever we wish to remember a point, by properly arranging the patterns of the backgrounds [c] and carefully imprinting the images, we shall easily succeed in calling back to mind what we wish.

(witnesses). Of the scrotum of the ram purses were made; thus the money used for bribing the witnesses may perhaps also be suggested.

[c] At 3. xvi. 29 above *formae* is used to describe the images.

XXI. Cum verborum similitudines imaginibus exprimere volemus, plus negotii suscipiemus et magis ingenium nostrum exercebimus. Id nos hoc modo facere oportebit :

Iam domum itionem reges Atridae parant.

Hunc versum meminisse si volemus, conveniet primo[1] in loco constituere manus ad caelum tollentem Domitium cum a Regibus Marciis loris caedatur—hoc erit " Iam domum itionem reges ; " in altero loco Aesopum et Cimbrum subornari ut ad Iphigeniam[2] in Agamemnonem et Menelaum—hoc erit " Atridae parant." Hoc modo omnia verba erunt expressa. Sed haec imaginum conformatio tum valet si naturalem memoriam exsuscitaverimus hac notatione, ut versu posito ipsi nobiscum primum transeamus bis aut ter eum versum, deinde tum imaginibus verba exprimamus. Hoc modo naturae suppeditabitur doctrina. Nam utraque altera separata minus erit firma, ita tamen ut multo plus in doctrina atque arte praesidii sit. Quod docere non gravaremur, ni

[1] *lac.*; hunc versum meminisse si volemus conveniet primo *sugg. Mx.*
[2] Ephigeniam *MSS. Mx.*

---

[a] An iambic senarius, whether our author's own creation or from a tragedy by an unknown author (the *Iphigenia* mentioned below ?) is uncertain. Note that here the play is upon the form of the word, not its meaning, and that no special provision is made for the adverb *iam*. Quintilian, 11. 2. 25, doubts the efficacy of symbols to record a series of connected words : " I do not mention the fact that some things, certainly conjunctions, for example, cannot be represented by images."

XXI. When we wish to represent by images the likenesses of words, we shall be undertaking a greater task and exercising our ingenuity the more. This we ought to effect in the following way:

Iam domum itionem reges Atridae parant.[a]

"And now their home-coming the kings, the sons of Atreus, are making ready."

If we wish to remember this verse, in our first background we should put Domitius, raising hands to heaven while he is lashed by the Marcii Reges[b]—that will represent "Iam domum itionem reges" ("And now their home-coming the kings,"); in the second background, Aesopus and Cimber,[c] being dressed as for the rôles of Agamemnon and Menelaüs in *Iphigenia*—that will represent "Atridae parant" ("the sons of Atreus, are making ready"). By this method all the words will be represented. But such an arrangement of images succeeds only if we use our notation to stimulate the natural memory, so that we first go over a given verse twice or three times to ourselves and then represent the words by means of images. In this way art will supplement nature. For neither by itself will be strong enough, though we must note that theory and technique are much the more reliable. I should not hesitate to

[b] The scene is doubtless our author's own creation. Rex was the name of one of the most distinguished families of the Marcian *gens*; the Domitian (of plebeian origin) was likewise a celebrated *gens*.

[c] Clodius Aesopus (a friend of Cicero) was the greatest tragic actor of the first half of the first century B.C.; Cimber, mentioned only here, was no doubt also a favourite of the day. See Otto Ribbeck, *Die römische Tragödie im Zeitalter der Republik*, Leipzig, 1875, pp. 674–6.

metueremus ne, cum ab instituto nostro recessissemus, minus commode servaretur haec dilucida brevitas praeceptionis.

35 Nunc, quoniam solet accidere ut imagines partim firmae et acres et ad monendum idoneae sint, partim inbecillae et infirmae quae vix memoriam possint excitare, qua de causa utrumque fiat considerandum est, ut, cognita causa, quas vitemus et quas sequamur imagines scire possimus.

XXII. Docet igitur nos ipsa natura quid oporteat fieri. Nam si quas res in vita videmus parvas, usitatas, cotidianas, meminisse non solemus, propterea quod nulla nova nec admirabili re commovetur animus; at si quid videmus aut audimus egregie turpe, inhonestum, inusitatum, magnum, incredibile, ridiculum, id diu meminisse consuevimus. Itaque quas res ante ora videmus aut audimus obliviscimur plerumque; quae acciderunt in pueritia meminimus optime saepe; nec hoc alia de causa potest accidere nisi quod usitatae res facile e memoria elabuntur, in-
36 signes et novae diutius manent in animo. Solis exortus, cursus, occasus nemo admiratur propterea quia cotidie fiunt; at eclipses [1] solis mirantur quia raro accidunt, et solis eclipses [2] magis mirantur quam lunae propterea quod hae [3] crebriores sunt. Docet ergo se natura vulgari et usitata re non exsuscitari, novitate et insigni quodam negotio commoveri. Imitetur ars igitur naturam, et quod ea desiderat id

[1] eclipsis Π *b d Mx*: eclypsis *HBCl*: aeglypsis *P*.
[2] eclipses *b*: eclipsis Π *d Mx*: eclypsis *HB l*: aeclipsis *C*: aeglypsis *P*.
[3] hae P^2B *C b d*: haec *l Mx*.

---

[a] *Cf.* Jerome, *Apol. adv. libr. Rufini* 1. 30.

demonstrate this in detail, did I not fear that, once having departed from my plan, I should not so well preserve the clear conciseness of my instruction.

35 Now, since in normal cases some images are strong and sharp and suitable for awakening recollection, and others so weak and feeble as hardly to succeed in stimulating memory, we must therefore consider the cause of these differences, so that, by knowing the cause, we may know which images to avoid and which to seek.

XXII. Now nature herself teaches us what we should do. When we see in everyday life things that are petty, ordinary, and banal, we generally fail to remember them, because the mind is not being stirred by anything novel or marvellous. But if we see or hear something exceptionally base, dishonourable, extraordinary, great, unbelievable, or laughable, that we are likely to remember a long time. Accordingly, things immediate to our eye or ear we commonly forget; incidents of our childhood we often remember best.[a] Nor could this be so for any other reason than that ordinary things easily slip from the memory while the striking and novel stay longer in
36 mind. A sunrise, the sun's course, a sunset, are marvellous to no one because they occur daily.[b] But solar eclipses are a source of wonder because they occur seldom, and indeed are more marvellous than lunar eclipses, because these are more frequent. Thus nature shows that she is not aroused by the common, ordinary event, but is moved by a new or

[b] *Cf.* Lucretius 2. 1037–8: "So wondrous would this sight have been. Yet, wearied as all are with satiety of seeing, how truly no one now deigns to gaze up at the bright quarters of heaven!"

inveniat, quod ostendit sequatur. Nihil est enim quod aut natura extremum invenerit aut doctrina primum; sed rerum principia ab ingenio profecta sunt, exitus disciplina conparantur.

37 Imagines igitur nos in eo genere constituere oportebit quod genus in memoria diutissime potest haerere. Id accidet si quam maxime notatas similitudines constituemus; si non multas nec vagas, sed aliquid agentes imagines ponemus; si egregiam pulcritudinem aut unicam turpitudinem eis adtribuemus; si aliquas exornabimus, ut si coronis aut veste purpurea, quo nobis notatior sit similitudo; aut si qua re deformabimus, ut si cruentam aut caeno oblitam aut rubrica delibutam inducamus, quo magis insignita sit forma, aut ridiculas res aliquas imaginibus adtribuamus, nam ea res quoque faciet ut facilius meminisse valeamus. Nam quas res veras facile meminimus,[1] easdem fictas et diligenter notatas meminisse non difficile est. Sed illud facere oportebit, ut identidem primos quosque locos imaginum renovandarum causa celeriter animo pervagemus.

38 XXIII. Scio plerosque Graecos qui de memoria scripserunt fecisse ut multorum verborum imagines conscriberent, uti qui ediscere vellent paratas haberent, ne quid in quaerendo consumerent operae. Quorum rationem aliquot de causis inprobamus:

[1] meminimus $P^2BC\Pi d$: minus HP: meminerimus $blMx$.

---

[a] The idea is a commonplace in a variety of schools of thought: *e.g.*, Democritus, fragm. 154, in Diels-Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th ed., 2. 173, and Lucretius 5. 1102, 1354, 1361 ff., 1379; Aristotle, *Physica* 2. 2(194 a) and 2. 8 (199 a), *Meteor.* 4. 3 (381 b), *De mundo* 5 (396 b, in Diels-Kranz 1. 153); Theophrastus, *De Caus. Plant.* 2. 18. 2; Dionysius Halic., *Isaeus*, ch. 16; Seneca, *Epist.* 65. 3; Marcus

striking occurrence. Let art, then, imitate nature,[a] find what she desires, and follow as she directs. For in invention nature is never last, education never first; rather the beginnings of things arise from natural talent, and the ends are reached by discipline.

37 We ought, then, to set up images of a kind that can adhere longest in the memory. And we shall do so if we establish likenesses as striking as possible; if we set up images that are not many or vague, but doing something; if we assign to them exceptional beauty or singular ugliness; if we dress some of them with crowns or purple cloaks, for example, so that the likeness may be more distinct to us; or if we somehow disfigure them, as by introducing one stained with blood or soiled with mud or smeared with red paint, so that its form is more striking, or by assigning certain comic effects to our images, for that, too, will ensure our remembering them more readily. The things we easily remember when they are real we likewise remember without difficulty when they are figments, if they have been carefully delineated. But this will be essential—again and again to run over rapidly in the mind all the original backgrounds in order to refresh the images.

38 XXIII. I know that most of the Greeks who have written on the memory[b] have taken the course of listing images that correspond to a great many words, so that persons who wished to learn these images by heart would have them ready without expending effort on a search for them. I disapprove of their method on several grounds. First, among the

Aurelius, *Medit.* 11. 10; Plotinus, *Enn.* 5. 8. 1; Cicero, *Orator* 18. 58; Quintilian, 8. 3. 71; Dante, *Inferno* 11. 97 ff.

[b] Precisely who these predecessors were we do not know.

primum, quod in verborum innumerabili multitudine ridiculumst mille verborum imagines conparare. Quantulum enim poterunt haec valere, cum ex infinita verborum copia modo aliud modo aliud nos verbum meminisse oportebit? Deinde, cur volumus ab industria quemquam removere, ut, ne quid ipse quaerat, nos illi omnia parata quaesita tradamus? Praeterea, similitudine alia alius magis commovetur. Nam ut saepe, formam si quam similem cuipiam dixerimus esse, non omnes habemus adsensores, quod alii videtur aliud, item fit in imaginibus ut quae nobis diligenter notata sit, ea parum videatur insignis aliis.
39 Quare sibi quemque suo commodo convenit imagines conparare. Postremo, praeceptoris est docere quemadmodum quaeri quidque conveniat, et unum aliquod aut alterum, non omnia quae eius generis erunt exempli causa subicere, quo res possit esse dilucidior; ut cum de prooemiis [1] quaerendis disputamus, rationem damus quaerendi, non mille prooemiorum [2] genera conscribimus, item arbitramur de imaginibus fieri convenire.

XXIV. Nunc, ne forte verborum memoriam aut nimis difficilem aut parum utilem arbitrere, rerum ipsarum memoria contentus sis, quod et utilior sit et plus habeat facultatis, admonendus es quare verborum memoriam non inprobemus. Nam putamus oportere eos qui velint res faciliores sine labore et molestia facere in rebus difficilioribus esse ante exercitatos. Nec nos hanc verborum memoriam inducimus ut versus

[1] prohemiis *PΠBC Mx*: proemiis C^2E: praemiis *H*.
[2] prohemiorum *PΠBC Mx*: proemiorum C^2E: premiorum *H*.

innumerable multitude of words it is ridiculous to collect images for a thousand. How meagre is the value these can have, when out of the infinite store of words we shall need to remember now one, and now another? Secondly, why do we wish to rob anybody of his initiative, so that, to save him from making any search himself, we deliver to him everything searched out and ready? Then again, one person is more struck by one likeness, and another more by another. Often in fact when we declare that some one form resembles another, we fail to receive universal assent, because things seem different to different persons. The same is true with respect to images: one that is well-defined to us appears relatively
39 inconspicuous to others. Everybody, therefore, should in equipping himself with images suit his own convenience. Finally, it is the instructor's duty to teach the proper method of search in each case, and, for the sake of greater clarity, to add in illustration some one or two examples of its kind, but not all. For instance, when I discuss the search for Introductions, I give a method of search and do not draught a thousand kinds of Introductions. The same procedure I believe should be followed with respect to images.

XXIV. Now, lest you should perchance regard the memorizing of words either as too difficult or as of too little use, and so rest content with the memorizing of matter, as being easier and more useful, I must advise you why I do not disapprove of memorizing words. I believe that they who wish to do easy things without trouble and toil must previously have been trained in more difficult things. Nor have I included memorization of words to enable us to get

meminisse possimus, sed ut hac exercitatione illa rerum memoria quae pertinet ad utilitatem confirmetur, ut ab hac difficili consuetudine sine labore ad
40 illam facultatem transire possimus. Sed cum in omni disciplina infirma est artis praeceptio sine summa adsiduitate exercitationis, tum vero in mnemonicis [1] minimum valet doctrina, nisi industria, studio, labore, diligentia conprobatur. Quam plurimos locos ut habeas et quam maxime ad praecepta adcommodatos curare poteris; in imaginibus conlocandis exerceri cotidie convenit. Non enim, sicut a ceteris studiis abducimur nonnumquam occupatione, item ab hac re nos potest causa deducere aliqua. Numquam est enim quin aliquid memoriae tradere velimus, et tum maxime cum aliquo maiore negotio detinemur. Quare, cum sit utile facile meminisse, non te fallit quod tantopere utile sit quanto labore sit appetendum; quod poteris existimare utilitate cognita. Pluribus verbis ad eam te hortari non est sententia, ne aut tuo studio diffisi aut minus quam res postulat dixisse videamur.

De quinta parte rhetoricae deinceps dicemus. Tu primas quasque partes in animo frequenta et, quod maxime necesse est, exercitatione confirma.

[1] mnemonicis *Aldus*: nemonicis *HP* II *B Mx*: memoriis P^2CE.

verse by rote, but rather as an exercise whereby to strengthen that other kind of memory, the memory of matter, which is of practical use. Thus we may without effort pass from this difficult training to ease
40 in that other memory. In every discipline artistic theory is of little avail without unremitting exercise, but especially in mnemonics theory is almost valueless unless made good by industry, devotion, toil, and care. You can make sure that you have as many backgrounds as possible and that these conform as much as possible to the rules; in placing the images you should exercise every day. While an engrossing preoccupation may often distract us from our other pursuits, from this activity nothing whatever can divert us. Indeed there is never a moment when we do not wish to commit something to memory, and we wish it most of all when our attention is held by business of special importance. So, since a ready memory is a useful thing, you see clearly with what great pains we must strive to acquire so useful a faculty. Once you know its uses you will be able to appreciate this advice. To exhort you further in the matter of memory is not my intention, for I should appear either to have lacked confidence in your zeal or to have discussed the subject less fully than it demands.

I shall next discuss the fifth part of rhetoric. You might rehearse in your mind each of the first four divisions, and—what is especially necessary—fortify your knowledge of them with exercise.