

agency He has bestowed, and make our Columbia the bright exemplar for all the struggling sons of liberty around the globe!"—*Wirt*.

217. **13. Exclamation and Interrogation**, when they are used to adorn the style or move the heart; as:

"Has God rejected the beautiful in this temple of creation? . . . Who was the first painter that touched with his brush the flowers of the valley and tinged with deep azure the ocean? . . . Who was the first inspirer of music? Who was the first decorator that studded with gems the Milky Way, and spread his arch of splendor across the concave of this his temple?"—*Archbishop P. J. Ryan*.

218. **14. Allusions** hint at some fact sufficiently known, in illustration of the present subject. These, as well as **Maxims** and **Quotations**, are figures if they beautify the style; as:

"And why are these eternal gates thus lifted up? And why is this sublime spectacle revealed, if not that we may be induced to take the dove's wings and fly—fly from this earth, which the waters of bitterness and iniquity still cover, and bear the olive-branch of our reconciliation to this open ark, where alone our feet can rest?"—*Cardinal Wiseman*.

"Slowly as out of the heavens with apocalyptic splendors
Sank the city of God, in the vision of John the Apostle,
So with the cloudy walls of chrysolite, jasper, and sapphire
Sank the broad, red sun, and over its turrets uplifted
Glimmered the golden reed of the angel who measured the city."
—*Longfellow*.

219. **Exercise 1.** Collect elegant figures from the speeches of Webster, Calhoun, Clay, Burke, Pitt, Chatham, Cardinals Wiseman, Newman, Manning, Fathers Burke and Smarius; or from any selections in prose or verse—*e g.*, from your reader or hand-book of elocution.

220 **Exercise 2.** Write an address, full of figures, to stir up indolent students or to enkindle in an audience feelings of patriotism, generosity in behalf of a disabled soldier, or any other noble sentiment.

BOOK III.

STYLE IN LITERARY COMPOSITION.

221. We have so far considered the chief elements of literary composition; we now proceed to combine these elements, and to study the more complex subject of *style*.

Style (from *stylus*, the ancient instrument for writing) is the manner in which a person expresses his thoughts and feelings by means of any of the fine arts. We speak of different styles in music, painting, architecture, etc. In literature style is the manner of expressing one's thoughts and feelings by means of language. A man's thoughts and feelings are not, in themselves, perceptible to other men. Style sets them forth in a sensible form; it gives them body and shape, beauty to please, and power to influence others. We study style with a view to increase this beauty and power in our compositions.

222. For this purpose we are to consider in so many chapters: 1. Beauty in itself; 2. Sublimity, Wit, and Humor, which are species of beauty; 3. Taste, which directs the use of these sources of pleasure; 4. Different species of style; 5. Improvement of style.

CHAPTER I.

BEAUTY.

223. **Beauty** is the power which objects have of pleasing the beholder: beautiful objects please by merely being considered; *quæ visa placent*, says St. Thomas.

Whence comes this power of an object to please? From the perfection or excellence of the object itself. Is, then, the beauty of an object the same as its excellence? It is that excellence inasmuch as it is perceived, and thus made that excellence inasmuch as it is perceived; if hidden or obscured it could not please him. Beauty is "excellence perceived," or "striking excellence"—*splendor veri*, "the brightness of reality," as Plato puts it. Hence one point is evident, that nothing can be beautiful inasmuch as it is bad or imperfect: falsehood is not beautiful, sin is not beautiful, disorder is not beautiful.

224. How, then, can **works of fiction** please, since they are false? They do not please inasmuch as they are false, but inasmuch as they are true to nature and contain beautiful characters, beautiful scenery, a beautiful plot, beautiful language, etc. But may not a vicious character be beautiful? The description of it, done with skill and fidelity to nature, may be so, but not the character itself.

225. But does not **vice** please the vicious? The mere beholding of vice does not please the mind, but a vice may please by gratifying a passion of the heart; thus, doing wrong to another may please an angry man. But the beautiful pleases *by the mere fact that it is perceived*. What-

ever gratifies one of the passions pleases, and may, therefore, be mistaken for true beauty; but it is false or only apparent beauty. True beauty pleases because its perfection is perceived and approved by the intellect.

226. We must here notice the difference between the beautiful and **the good**: A thing is good when its possession pleases; beautiful, when its very perception gives pleasure. Thus a ragged, soiled one-hundred-dollar note may please the possessor, but not the beholder.

From our definition of the beautiful so far explained another consequence follows—namely, that those things which are most perfect in themselves are also most beautiful to those who clearly perceive them. Thus inanimate things contain, as a class, the lowest degree of perfection and are least beautiful; vegetation rises higher, animals higher still; man surpasses all other material beings in excellence and in beauty, because he is intelligent; angels are higher still; God is **the highest possible beauty** to those blessed beings that behold Him as He is. If He does not always seem so to us, it is because we know Him so little, and also because we let our lower nature obscure the light of our intellect. When, in a better world, God will stand revealed to our sight as He is, our purified souls will see in Him absolute beauty, which will make us supremely happy; therefore that sight is called the **Beatific Vision**.

227. The fact that man is more perfect and beautiful than all lower beings is the reason why literature delights in **personification**—that is, in attributing to lower objects the actions and feelings of living and intelligent beings. Yet even **lower objects** have their beauty: that *color* is more beautiful which is better proportioned or adapted to our organ of sight; *straight lines* and *figures* are beautiful, as suggestive of usefulness; *curves* and *waving lines*, as combining regularity with variety; the waving line is called