The arte of rhetorique for the vse of all suche as are studious of eloquence, sette forth in English, by Thomas Wilson.

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The Arte of Rhetorique, for the vse of all suche as are studious of Eloquence, sette forth in English, by THOMAS Wilson.

Anno Domini.

M.D.LIII.

Mense Ianuarij.

GVALTERVS HAD|ONVS D. IVRIS CIVILIS, ET OXO|niens[...]s Collegij Magdalensis Praese[...].

[...] soror, est affata sororem:
Quem d[...]dicit nuper, sermo Britannus erat.
[...] tacuit, magno perculsae dolore:
Nam nondum nostro nouerat ore loqu[...].
Audit haec, [...] Vu[...]sonus forte, magister
Qui fuerat, nostros addiderat{que} sonos:
[...] mutam, uerbis solatus am[...]cis
Se[...]ocat, & rogitat num esse Britanna uel[...]t.
though thei neuer knewe theim, or els neuer would vse them. And theryfore a certain learned man, & of muche excellencie, beeving asked what was suche a figure, and suche a trope in Rhetorique: I cannot tell ({quod} he) but I am assured, if you loke in the boke of myne oracie~s, you shall not faile but finde theim. So that though he knewe not the name of suche and suche figures, yet the nature of the~ was so familiar to his knowlege, that he had thuse of them, when soever he had nede. Nowe though this man could well thus doo, beeving of suche notable understaundyng, yet it were foly that all should folowe his waie, whiche want some good a wit. And I thinke euyn he himselfe, should not haue lost by it ne|ther, if he had seen that in aglasse, whiche he often vse to doe without knowlege. Man is forgetfull, and there is none so wise, but counsaill maie doe hym good. Yea, he shall dooe muche better, that knoweth what arte other me[...] haue vse, what inuencion thei haue folowed, what order thei haue kept, and how thei haue best doen in euery part. If he like not theirs, he may vse his awne, and yet none dooeth so euill (I thynke) but some good maie be got by hym. The wise therfor wil not refuse to heare: and the ignorant for want, had nede to seke a will.

¶Thende of the .ii. b[...]ke.

¶The third boke.

¶Of apte chusyng and framyng of wordes and sentences together, called Elocucion.

ANd now we are come to that parte of Rhetorique, the whiche aboue al other is moste beautifull, wherby not onely wordes are ap[...]ly vse, but also sentences are in right order fra|med. For whereas Inuencion, helpe|th to finde matter, and Disposition serueth to place argumentes: Elo|cution getteth wordes to set furthe inuencion, & with suche beautie commendeth the matter, that reason semeth to bee clad in purple, walkyng afoire, bothe bare and naked. Ther|efore Tullie saith, to finde out reason, & aptly to frame it, is the part of a wise man, but to commende it by wordes, and with gorgious talke to tell our conceipte, that is onely prope to an Orator. Many are wise, but fewe haue the gift to set furthe their wisedome. Many can tell their mynde in Englishe, but fewe can vse mete termes, and apt order: suche as all men should haue, and wise men will vse: suche as ne|des must be had, when matters should be vttered. Now then what is he, at whom all men wonder, and stande in a mase, at the viewe of his wit? Whose doynges are best estemed? who~ do we moste rude|rence, and compt halfe a God emong men? [Note: Eloquent men moste estemed. ] Euen suche a one assuredly, that can plainly, distinctly, ple~|tifully, and aptly vtter bothe wordes and matter, and in his talke can vse suche disposicion, that he maie appere to kepe an uniformitiee, and (as I might saie) a nomber in the vtte|ring of his sente~ce. Now an eloq|ue~t man beyng smally lea|ned, can do muche more good in perswading, by shift of wor|des, and mete placync of matter: then a greate learned clerce shalbe able with great store of learnyng, wantyng wordes to set furth his meanyng. Wherfore I muche maruaile that so many seke the only knowlege of thynge, without any mynd to commende or set furthe their entend[...]ment: seyng none can~ knowe either what thei are, or what thei haue, without the gift of vtterance. Yea, bryng the~ to speake their mynde, and [...]nter in talke with suche as are said to be learned, & you shal finde in the~ suche la[...]e of vtterance, that if you iudge theim 86 by their tongue, and expressynge of their mynde: you must ne|des saie thei haue no learnyng. Wherin me thinkes thei do, like some riche snudges, that hauyng great wealth, goe with their hose out at heelles, their shoes out at toes, and their co|tes out at bothe elbowes. For who can tell, if suche men are worth a grote, when their apparel is so homely, and at their behauior so base? I can
call the~ by none other name, but slo|uens, that maie haue good geare, and nether ca~

[Note: Barbarous clerkes, no bet+ter then sloue~s. ] What is a good thynge to a manne, if he

neither knowe thuses of it, nor yet (though he knowe it) is a|ble at all to use it? If we thinke it comelinesse, and

honestie to set furthe the body with handsome apparell, and thynke theim worthie to haue money, that bothe
can and will use it accordyngly: I cannot otherwise se, but that this part deser|ueth praise, whiche standeth

wholy in set[...])yng furthe the matter by apte wordes and sentences together, & beautifieth the ton|gue with
greathe chaunge of colours, and varietie of.

¶Foure partes belonging to Elocucion.

- j. Plainnesse.
- ij. Aptenesse.
- iiij. Composicion.
- iiijj. Exornacion.

EMong al other lessons, this should first be learned, y\textsuperscript{t} we neuer affect any strau~ge y[...])kehorne termes, but

so speake as is commonly receiued: neither sekyng to be ouer f[...])e, nor yet liuyng ouer carelesse, vsyng our

speache as most men do, & ordyng our wittes, as the fewest haue doen. [Note: Plaines what it is. ] Some

seke so farre for outla~dishe Englishe, that thei forget altogether their mothers la~guage. And I dare swere

this, if some of their mothers were alieue, thei were not able to tell, what thei say, & yet these fine Englishe

clerkes, will saie thei speake in their mother tongue, if a ma~ should charge the~ for cou~terfeityng the

tynges English. Some farre iorneid ien|tieme~ at their returne home, like as thei loue to go in forrein apparell,

so thei wil pouder their talke w\textsuperscript{t} oversea la~guage. He that cometh lately out of France, wil talke Fre~che

En|glish, & neuer blushe at the matter. Another choppes in with Angleso Italiano: the lawyer wil store his

stomack with the pratynge of Pedlers. The Auditour in makynge his accompt and rekenyng, cometh in with sise

sould, and cater de[...])ere, for vi. s iiij.d. The fiue Courtier wil talke nothyng but Chau|cer. The misticall wise

menne, and Poeticall Clerkes, will speake nothyng but quaint prouerbes, and blynd allegories, delityng mucbe in

their awne darkenesse, especially, when none can tell what thei doo saie. The vnlearned or foolish

phantastical, that smelles but of learnyng (suche felowes as haue seen learned men in their daies) will so latine

their tongues, that the simple cannot but wonder at their talke, and thynke surely thei speake by seme

Reuelacion. I knowe them that thynke Rhetorique, to stande wholly vpon darke worordes, and he that can

[...])atche an ynie horne terme by thee, talem thei compt to bee a fiue Englishe man, and a goode Rhetotician

And the rather to set out this folie, I will adde here speche a letter, as Willyam Sommer himself, could not make

a better for that purpose. Some will thinke & swere it to, that there was neuer any suche thyng writte~, well I

wil not f[...])rec any man to beleue it, but I will saie thus mucbe, and abide by it to, the like haue been made

heretofore, and praised aboue the Moo[...])e.

Ponderyng expe~dyng, and reuolutyng with my self your ingent affabilitee, and ingenious capacitie, for

munday aff|aires: I cannot but celebarte and extolle your magnificall dexteritee, aboue all other. For how

could you haue adequte suche illustre prerogatiue, and dominical superioritee, if the fecunditee of your

ingenie had not been so fertile, & wou~+derfull pregnaunt. [Note: An yinkehorne letter. ] Now therfore beeyng

accersit, to suche splendent renoume, & dignitee splendidious: I doubt not but you will adiuatate suche poore

adhichitate orphans, as whi|lome ware co~disciples with you, and of antique familiariite in Lincolne shire.

Emong whom I beeyng a Scholasticall panion, [...]btesiate your sublimitee to extoll myne infinimitee. There is a

sacerdottal dignitee in my natie countrye, con|tigueto me, where I now contemple: whiche your

wor|shipfull benigneitee, could sone impetrate for me, if it would like you to extend your scedules, and collaude

me in them to the right honorable lorde Chauncellor, or rather Archigra~|macian 87 of Englande. You knowe my

literature, you knowe the pastorall promocion, I obtestate your clemencie, to inui|gilate thus mu[...])he for me, accordyng to my confidence, and as you know my condigne merites, for suche a compendious li|uyng. But now I

relinquishe to fatigate your intelligence with any more frioulos peerboitie, and theryfore he that ru|les the

climates be euermore your beauteux, your fortesse, and your bulwarke. Amen.
What wise ma~ readyng this letter, will not take him for a very Caulife, that made it in good earnest, & thought by his ynkepot termes, to get a good personage. Doeth wit reste in straunge worde, or els standeth it in wholsome matter, and apt declaryng of a mannes mynd? Do we not speake, because we would haue other to vnderstande vs, or is not the tongue geue~ for this ende, that one might know what another mea|neth? And what vnlearned man can tell, what half this let|ter signifieth? Therfore, either we must make a difference of Englishe, and saie some is learned Englishe, and oth[...]r some is rude Englishe, or the one is courte talke, the other is cou~|trey speache, or els we must of necessitie, banishe al suche af|fected Rhetorique, and vse altogether one maner of l~gauge. When I was in Cambrige, and student in the kynges Col|lege, there came a man out of the toune, with a pinte of wine in a pottle pot, to welcome the proust of that house, that la|tely came from the courte. And because he would bestow his present like a clereke, dwell|yngh emong the schoole|s: he made humbly his thre curtesies, and said in this maner. Ch[...] good [...]uen my good lorde, and well might your lordship vare: Un|derstandyng that your lordship was come, & knowyng that you are a worshipfull Pilate, and kepes a bominable house: I thought it my duetie to come incantauante, & bryng you a pottell a wine, the whiche I beseche your lordship take in good worthe. Here the simple man beynng desirous to amend[...] his mothers tongue, shewed hymself not to bee the wisest manne, that euer spake with tongue. 

Another good felowe in the cou~trey, beynng an officer, and Maiour of a toune, and desirous to speake like a fine learned man, haungyst just occasion to rebuke a runnegate felow, saide after this wise in a greathe heathe. Thou yngram and vacaci|on knaue, if I take thee any more within the circumcision of my damnacion: I will so corrupte thee, that all vacacion knaue shall take ilsampe by thee. [Note: Roper[...]pe ch[...]ng. ] 

Another standyng in muche nede of money, and desirous to have some helpe at a gentlemanns hand, made his complaint in this wise. I praye you sir be so good vnto me, as forbeare this halfe yeres rent. For so helpe me God and halidome, we are so taken on with contrary Bishoppes, with reuiues, and with subsidies to the kyng, that al our money is cleane gone. These worde he spake for contribucion, relief, and subsidie. And thus we see that poore simple men are muche troubled, and talke of[...]ymes, thei knowe not what, for lacke of wit and want to Latine & Frenche, wherof many of our strau~ge worde, full often are deriued. Those therefore that will eschu[e] this folly, and acquaint themselves with the best kynd of speache, muste seke fro~ tyme to tyme, suche worde as are commonly receiued, and suche as properly maie expresse in plain maner, the whole conceipte of their mynde. And looke what wordees wee best vnderstande, and knowe what thei meane: thesame should sonest be spoken, and firste applied to the vetterance of our purpose.

Now whereas wordees be receiued, aswel Greke as La|tine, to set furthe our meanyng in thenglishe tongue, either for lacke of store, or els because wee would enriche the lan|guage: it is well doen to vse them, and no man therin can be charged for any afectacion, when all other are agreed to fo|lowe thesame waie. There is no man agreed, when he hea|reth (letters patentes) & yet patentes is latine, and signifie[...]open to all men. The Communion is a felowship, or a com|myng together, rather Latine then Englishe: the Kynges prerogatiue, declareth his power royall aboue all other, and yet I knowe no man greued for these termes, beeyng vseyd in their place, nor yet any one suspected for afectacion, when suche generall wordees are spoken. The folie is espyed, when either we will vse suche wordees, as fewe men doo vse, or vse theim out of place, when another might serue muche better. Therfore to auoyde suche folie, we maie learne of that most 88 excellent Orator Tullie, who in his thirde booke, where he speaketh of a perfect Oratoure, de lareth vnder the name of Crassus, that for the choysse of worde, foure things should [Note: Foure things obserued, for choyse of wor|des. ] chiefly be obserued. First, that suche wordees as we vse, shuld bee proper vnto the tongue, wherein wee speake, again, that thei be plain for all men to perceiue: thirdly, that thei be apt and mete, moeste properly to sette out the matter. Fourthly, that woordees translated from one signification to another, (called of the Grecians, Tropes) bee vseyd to beautifie the sentence, as precious stones are set in a ryng, to commende the golde.

¶Aptenesse what it is.

SUche are thought apt worde, that properly agre vn|to that thyng, whiche thei signifie, and plainly expresse
the nature of the same. Therefore, they that have regard of their estimacion, do warely speake, and with choyse, utter wordes moste apte for their purpose. In weightie causes, grave wordes are thought moste needfull, that the greatness of the matter, maie the rather appere in the vehem[...]ncie of their talke. [Note: Apntes. ] So likewise of other, like order muste be taken. Albeit some, not onely do not observe this kynde of aptnes, but also thei fall into muche fondnesse, by vsynge wordes out of place, and appl[...]yng them to diuere matters without all discretion. As thus. An ignorant felowe cowmyng to a jentle[mannes place, [Note: V[...] apte vysyng of apt wordes ] & seyng a greate flocke of shepe in his pastour saied to the owner of theim, now by my truthe sir, here is as goodely an audie~ce of shepe, as euuer I saw in all my life. Who will not take this felowe meter to talke with shepe, then to speake emong menne? Another likewise seyng a house faire buylded, saied to his felowe thus: good lorde, what a hande|some phrase of buildyng in this? Thus are good wordes euill vsed, when thei are not well applied, and spoke~ to good pur|pose. Therefore I wishe that suche vntoward speakingyng, maie geue vs a good lesson, to use our wordes warely, that our wordes and matter maie still agree together.

¶Of Composicion.

When we haue learned vsuall and accustomable wordes to set furthe our meanyng, we ought to loyne them together in apt order, that the eare maie delite, in hearyng the harmo|monie. I knowe some English men, that in this poynct haue suche a gift in the Englishe, as fewe in Latine haue the like and therfore, delite the wise and lerned so muche, with their pleasaut compositio: that many reioyce, when thei maie heare suche, and thynke muche learynyng is gotte, when thei maie talke with suche. Composicion [Note: Compositio what it is. ] therefore, is an apte ioyynge together of wordes in suche order, that neither the eare shaile espie any ierre, nor yet any man shalbe dulled with ouerlong drawing out of a sentence, nor yet muche confoun|ded with myngelyn of clauses, suche as are needesse, beying heaped together without reason, and vsed without number. For, by suche meanes the hearers will be forced, to forgette+full oft, what was saied first, before the sentence be halfe en|ded: or els bee bylynded with confoundynge of many thynges together. Some again will bee so shorte, and in suche wise curtall their Sentences, [Note: Faules in co~posicion. ] that thei had nede to make a com|mentarie immediatly of their meanyng, or els the moste that heare them, shalbe forced to kepe counsaill.

Some wil speake oracles, that a man cannot tell, whiche waie to take them, some will be so fine, & so Poeticall with all, that to their semyng, there shall not stande one heire a|misse, & yet euery body els shall thinke the~ meter for a ladies chamber, then for an earnest matter, in any open assemblie.

Some wil roue so muche, and bable so farre without or|der, that a manne would thynke, thei had a greate loue, to heare themselves speake.

Some repeate one woorde so often, that if suche wordes could be eaten, and choppte in so ofte, as thei are vittered out, thei would chike the widest throte in all England. As thus. If a man knewe, what a mans life wer, no man for any ma~nes sake, would kill any man, but one ma~ would rather help another man, considyng man is borne for man, to help ma~ , & no to hate man. What man would not be choked, if he chop[ ...] al these men at ones into his mouth, & neuer drooke after it? Some vse ouermuche repeticio~ of some one [...].letter, as pitiful pouertie praieth for a peny, but puffed presu~pio~ , passeth not a poynct, pa~peryng his panche, w[ [...] pestile~t pleasure, procuring 89 his passe porte to poste it to Hell pytte, there to be punished with paines perpetuall. Some will so sette their wordes that they muste be fayne to gape after euerie worde spoke~, endinge one worde with a vowell, and beginning the next wyth an other, whyche vndoubtably maketh the talke to some mooste vnpleasaunte. As thus Equirie assuredlye e][ayeri inyurey auoydeth. Some will set the carte before the horse, as thus. My mother and my father are both at home, even as though the good man of the house ware no brea|ches, or that the graye Mare were the better Horse. And what though it often so happeneth (God wotte the more pitye) yet in speakinge at the leaste, let vs kepe a natural or|der, and set the man before the woman for maners sake.

An other cominge home in haste after a long journey, sayeth to hys manne: Come hither sir knaue, helpe me of
with my boottes and my spurre. I praye you sir geue him leauue firste to plucke of youre spurre, ere he meddle wyth your bootes, or els your man is like to haue a madde pluc|kinge. Who is so folysh as to saye the counsayle and the kyng, but rather the Kinge and his counsayle, the father and the sonne, and not contrary. And so likewise in al other as they are in degree firste, euermore to set them formost.

The wise theryfore talkinge of diuers worthye menne to|gether, will firste name the worthiest, and kepe a decent or|der in reporthe of their tale. Some ende their sentences all alike, makyng their talke rather to appearre rimed meter then to semyne speache, the whiche as it muche del|teth beyng measurablye vsed, so it muche offendeth when no meane is regardeth. I hearde a preacher delityng much in thys kynd of composition, who vse|d so ofte~ to ende his sen|tence with wordes like vnto that whiche wente before, that in my judgemente, there was not a dosen sentences in hys whole sermon, but they ended all in ryme for the most part. Some not best disposed, wished the Preacher a Lute, that with his rimed sermon he myght vse some plea|saunt melo|dye, and so the people myghte take pleasure diuers wayes, and daunce if they liste. Certes there is a meane, & no rea|son to vse any one thinge at all times, seynge nothinge de|liteth (be it neuer so good) that is always vsed.

Quintilian likeneth the coloures of Rhetorique to a man[...]es eye sighte. And nowe (quod he) I woulde not haue all the bodye to be [...]ull of eyes, or nothinge but eyes: for the~ the other partes shoulde wante their due place and propor|cion. Some ouerthwartelye sette their woordes, playynge some one a myle from his felowe, not contented with a playne and ca[...]ye composition, but seke to sette wordes they can not tell howe, and therfore one not likyne to be called and by printe published Doctoure of Phisike, wolde nea|des be named of Phisike Doctour; wherin appeared a won|derfull straunge vndoubtedlye, but whether wise or no, lette the learned sitte in judgemente vpon that matter.

An other. As I rose in the mornynge (quod one) I mette a carte full of stones emptye. Belike the manne was fastinge, when the carte was full, and yet we see that throu|ughe straunge vndoubtedlye, this sentence appeareth darke.

Some will tell one thinge .xx. times, newe in, newe out, & when a man would thinke they had almost ended, they are ready to beginne againe as freshe as euer they were. Such vayne repetitions declare both wante of witte, and lacke of learninge. Some are so homely in all their dowynes, and so grosse for their inuention, that they vse altogether one ma|ner of trade, and seke no varietie to eschewe tediousnes. Some burden their talke with nedelese copye, and will seme plentifull, when they shoulde be shorte. An other is so curious and so fine of his tonge, that he can not tell in all the worlde what to speake. Euerie sentence semeth commune, and euerye worde generallye vsed, is thought to be folysh, in his wise judgemente. Some vse so manye in|terpositions bothe in their talke and in their writinge, that they make their sayinges as darke as hell. Thus wha~ faul|ties be knoen, they may be auoyded: and vertue the soner may take place, when vice is farsene, and eschewed as euill.

Of Exornation.

WHen wee haue learned apte woordes and vsuall Phrases to sette forthe our meanyng, and can orderlye place them without ofence to the eare, 90 we maye boldelye commende and beautifie our talke wy[...]h diuers goodlye coloures, and delitefull translations, that oure speache maye seme as bryghte and precious, as a ryche stone is fayre and orient.

EXornation [Note: Exornation. ] is a gorgiousse beautifuyng of the tong|ue with borowed wordes, and chaung of sentence or speache, with muche varietie. Firste theryfore (as Tullie saythe) an Oration is made to seme ryghte excellente by the kinde selfe, by the colour and luyce of spea|che. Ther are .iij. maner of styles or endi[...]inges, [Note: Thre mane[...] of stiles or endi[...]inges. ] the great or mighty kind, whe~ we vse great wordes, or vhemee~t figures:

The smal kinde, when we moderate our heate by meaner wordes, and vse not the most stirring sentences:

The lowe kinde, when we vse no Metaphores, nor tran|slated wordes, nor yet vse any amplificatio~s, but go plaine|lye to worke, and speake altogether in commune wordes.

Nowe in all these three kindes, the Oration is muche com|mended, and appeareth notable, when wee kepe vs styll to thatistyle, whiche wee firste professed, and vse suche worde|s as seme for that kinde of writinge most conuenient.

Yea, if we minde to encrease, or diminish: to be in a heate, or to vse moderatio~: to speake pleasauntly, or speake graue|lye: to be sharpe, or to be softe: to talke lordlye, or to speake finelie: to waxe auncient, or familiar (which al are compre|hended vnder one of the other three:) we muste euere make oure wordes apte and agreable to that kinde of stile, whiche we firste ganne to vse.

For as frenche hodes do not be|come Lordes: so Parliament Robes are vnsitting for La|dies. Comelines therfore must euere be vsed, and all thinges obserued that are most mete for euery cause, if we loke by at+temptes to haue our desire.

There is another kind of Exornacio~ [Note: Exorna[...]ion [...] by coloures of Rhetorique. ] y^t is not egua[...]ly spar|pled throughout y^e whole oratio~, but is so disseaured & par|ted, as starres stand in the firmament, or floures in a garde~, or prety deuised antiques in a clothe of Araise.

What a fygure is?

A Figure is a certaine kinde, either of sentence, oration, or worde, vsed after some new or straunge wise, muche vnlike to that, which men communely vse to speake.

The diuision of Fygures.

THere are thre kindes of figures, the one is when the nature of worde|s is chaunged from one significa|tion to an other called a Trope of the Grecians: The other serueth for woordes when they are not chau~ged by nature, but only altered by speaking, called of y^[...] Grecians a Scheme: The third is when by deuersity of in|uention, a sentence is manye wayes spoken, and also mat|ters are amplified by heapynge examples, by dilatynge ar|gumentes, by comparinge of thynges together, by similitu|des, by contraries, and by diuers other like, called by Tullie Exornacion of sentences, or coloures of Rhetorique.

By all whiche Figures, euerye Oration maye be muche beautified, and without the same, not one can attaine to be counted an Oratoure, thoughghe his learninge otherwise be neuer so greate.

Of the fyrste vse of Tropes.

WHen learned and wise menne gan firste to enlarge their tongue, [Note: Tropes how they wer fyrst [...]}ounded. ] and sought with greate vtteraunce of speache to commende causes: they founde full ofte muche wante of wordes to set out their meanynge. And therfore remembrynge thinges of like na|ture vnto those