

**ELEGANTIÆ LATINÆ, OR
RULES AND
EXERCISES ILLUSTRATIVE
OF ELEGANT LATIN STYLE**

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Elegantiae Latinae, or Rules and Exercises Illustrative of Elegant Latin Style by Edward Valpy

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EDWARD VALPY

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ELEGANTIÆ LATINÆ;

OR,

RULES AND EXERCISES

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

ELEGANT LATIN STYLE:

INTENDED FOR

THE USE OF THE MIDDLE AND HIGHER CLASSES OF
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE ORIGINAL LATIN OF THE MOST DIFFICULT PHRASES.

~~~~~  
Ipsa Oratio conformanda non solum electione, sed etiam  
constructione verborum.—Cic.  
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ELEVENTH EDITION,

CORRECTED, AND ASSIMILATED THROUGHOUT WITH THE KEY.

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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE THIRD EDITION.

It has been my principal care to simplify, or wholly to remove from this edition, those difficulties, which, notwithstanding the general approbation with which this work has been received, must be acknowledged to have existed in the former editions. When the Scholar is first introduced into this book of exercises, he should be allowed to omit the sentences which are marked with an asterisk, and confine himself to the easier and less intricate examples. The second time he travels over the same field, he will be equal to the more difficult passages, to which the asterisk is prefixed, and to the whole range of Latin composition. When a boy has gone through these exercises a second time, he may be safely presumed to have made no small proficiency in writing Latin. I have witnessed the most pleasing proofs of this assertion. It is presumed that this edition embraces every thing within the scope of research, which was likely to contribute to the elegant formation of style, every thing by which a sentence *spargatur, irrigetur, perfundatur*. As the rules for the structure of a regular Period, which is so essential to good Latinity, could not be so easily reduced to practical illustration, an acquaintance with them will chiefly rest on the scholar's own study and observation, aided by the master's direction and superintendence; but a close examination of the rules and the few examples which accompany them, will be sufficient to imprint them on his mind.

E. V.

P R E F A C E.

DURING the many years in which I have been engaged in the arduous but important task of teaching the Classics, it has never failed to excite my wonder and concern, that in the many attempts, which have been made to smooth the difficulties with which the road to classical excellence is attended, no method tending to facilitate Latin composition has been successively pursued from the first introduction of Youth into the Elementary Exercises, to his arrival into the higher departments of correct elegance and dignity of style. The greatest care is usually taken in conducting him to a certain point : when he understands the plain application of his rules of Syntax, he is then thrown on the wide world of elegant Latinity, in which the range he is to take, though stripped of the thorns of grammatical analysis, is still very precarious ; his progress is still *ascensu difficilis*. For unless the Master is at liberty to point out very minutely the particular words or arrangement of words which constitute elegance, he must greatly depend on his own judgment and observation for the knowlege of them. And there is as great a difference between the mere grammatical structure of a sentence, and the elegant usage and collocation of words, as between the rude sketch of an imperfect outline, and the fine coloring of a finished painting.

Numerous are the books, both in this and other countries, which have been published on the elegance of Latin style ; but none do I know at all calculated to be put into the hands of Youth. Philologists have displayed much critical knowlege in their learned dissertations on the style and the beauties of the Latin Language ; but that knowlege and those researches were neither intended, nor calculated, to be useful to young beginners. A pleasant little book (*Les Délices de la Langue Latine*) was published many years ago ; and in imitation of it, or rather compiled from it, appeared one or two in this country by De Barcy and others : but besides their incorrectness and too great conciseness, their inutility will immediately appear, when it is considered that the Examples, being all in Latin, and that not of the purest, can neither exercise the labor nor excite the industry of the scholar. This observation may be applied, with equal propriety, to Walker's Phrases, and especially to Willymott's Particles, which, though very useful and valuable, yet as they give the Latin of

the English idiom, thus preclude the necessity of research; and as they give no general rules for the use or the application of them, the advantage which the Scholar is to derive from them, must rest wholly on his memory and mechanical retention.—The perusal of Scheller's valuable work upon the elegance of Latin style first suggested the idea that something might be attempted, which, with care and attention, might be adapted to the use of our Classical Schools. Heineccius, though so severely lashed by his countryman, contains much sterling sense, and was also instrumental both in the origination and in the execution of this work. With what degree of accuracy and judgment it has been performed, it now rests with the public to determine. If I have been mistaken in some points, I shall hope to have the error candidly pointed out: "*Nihil enim mihi suavius est, quàm corrigi; omnis enim correctio, à magnis viris profecta, est via ad discendum; nec is ego profectò sum qui vituperari nolim, modò vituperatio sit justa.*"

Some of the practical observations, those that relate to the structure of the Period for instance, may at first appear intricate and not so necessary as others: to a young beginner perhaps they might. It would be as difficult a task, and might retard him as much in his acquisition of a pure Latin style, if he bestowed too minute a labor on them, as if he attempted to collect the scattered limbs of the dissected *Abayrtus*. But, as it is presumed the Scholar has already made some progress in Latin, before he is introduced to these Exercises, the study of those rules, as the knowledge of anatomy to a proficient in surgery, which makes him admire the more the wonderful structure of the body, will make the proficient Scholar see and taste the beauty and order of the style the more, from the dissection of the several parts. Some rules, especially those that relate to the use of *quì, quæ, quod*, may carry the appearance of a repetition; but as they come in illustration of different heads, they only tend to show in how extensive and various a manner the same may be used. It may likewise be observed, that the particular method, which the rule points out, is not always more elegant than another, but it is often merely to show the variation and the manner in which one phrase or expression may be changed into another.

EDWARD VALPY.

ELEGANTIÆ LATINÆ.

CHAP. I.

OF THE CHOICE AND ELEGANCE OF PARTICULAR WORDS.

Quinam igitur dicendi est modus melior, quàm ut Latinè, ut planè, ut ornatè, ut ad id, quodcumque agetur, aptè congruenterque dicamus?—*Cicero*.

ELEGANCE, according to its derivation from *eligere*, consists in the choice of the most appropriate words and expressions, and in their composition and clear and perspicuous order. It depends chiefly on the usage of the best Latin writers. When therefore the scholar has selected those words, which are appropriate in their meaning to the sense of the subject, the next thing will be to consider whether they have been used by the best writers of antiquity.

But let it be premised that no word can be elegant or beautiful in itself, in its disjointed state, but merely as far as it strengthens, connects, or illustrates the subject; or at least as far as the Latin word conveys in its true meaning the full force of the English expression. It would be absurd, therefore, to use at random the first word which presents itself, without considering whether it is appropriate to the sense: as in

saying that "the good man is cheerful and *resigned* at the hour of death;" though *traditus* signifies *resigned*, that is, *delivered up*, it does by no means express the English meaning; and therefore it would be necessary to search till a proper word offers itself for *resigned*, in the sense it bears in this sentence, which is, *tranquil* or *contented*.

In investigating then the true and proper signification of words, it will be necessary to understand each different sense, in which they are used; and if the scholar acquaints himself as much as he can with their etymology and original meaning, he will be enabled to write purer Latin, and to avoid many Grecisms, obsolete and barbarous words, and those which have too great an affinity to the English, introduced into use by several modern and inelegant writers, as *impossibilis*, *impossible*, &c.

Should the Latin however not furnish a word sufficiently elegant, or fully expressive of the English idea, or if the force or dignity of the subject requires it, it may be necessary to vary an expression by means of a short periphrasis, or of a phrase, instead of a simple word. But in the choice of phrases care must be taken that they do not convey more meaning than we wish to express. Thus in saying that mothers embrace their infants, though *ruere in amplexum* is sometimes a very good phrase for *amplecti*, yet who would say, *matres solent in amplexum infantium ruere*, when the simple word expresses the idea so much better? And though *inflammatum esse irá* is often used for *irasci*, yet it implies much

more ; and it would be absurd to say *scripsit ei pater paulùm irâ inflammatus*, for *paulò iratior*, rather angry. Again, though *utor* is sometimes elegantly used for the verb *habeo*, yet in its meaning it must include the *use* as well as the *possession* of any thing. We should not say therefore *avarus utitur magnis opibus*, if we wished merely to say *avarus habet magnas opes*. In short, the sense or the context must be considered very minutely and accurately before the scholar is enabled to judge of the propriety or the elegance of the corresponding expressions. These few preliminary observations will be sufficient to show the necessity of selecting such Latin words and expressions as convey in their full force and meaning the true sense of the English.

Nothing indeed is more conducive to the purity and elegance of the Latin language, than a happy contexture of elegant Roman phrases, or forms of speaking, used by the best and purest writers. With these, therefore, the learner should be directed to store his memory, and be taught how to use them in his own composition. For effecting this essential purpose, which certainly requires time, diligence, and observation, it is advisable that the scholar should write down daily whatever Latin phrase and elegant form of speaking he may occasionally meet with in his lessons, and give a weekly account of them to the master. That excellent little book, *Valpy's Dialogues*, should also be put early into his hands: these should be thoroughly learnt, and well imprinted on the memory, as the phrases