

ing with himself whether he should inflict death upon himself, or should hasten to consult safety in flight, or having destroyed his Philippics should seek life from Antony. If anyone should congratulate Q. Curtius upon so grave and pious a mind, who placed his private safety after the safety of his country. If anyone should persuade the Delphic priests that they receive the bull of Phalaris. If anyone should dissuade from a voluntary death Lucrece defiled by force. If Jonathan, son of Saul, should console his friend David hiding and wandering for fear of the king, that he should fortify his mind in such troubled affairs by expectation of rule prophetically promised. If Plato should exhort King Dionysius to the study of philosophy. On the contrary, if someone else should dehort. If the Roman republic should implore the virtue of the exile Camillus, against the Gauls using their utmost endeavors. If Aristotle should prescribe a method for Callisthenes setting out to Alexander the Great by which he ought to use the custom of the king, teaching that with kings one should speak either as rarely or as pleasantly as possible, by which either in silence he might be the safer or in speaking the more pleasing. If Callisthenes should answer Aristotle that the advice would have been more worthy of a philosopher, if rather he had been the adviser of not going into the court of that kind of prince, in which a philosopher either had to keep servilely silent or basely adulative; that he would have greater care of what things are honest than of what are useful or safe. If Alcibiades should persuade Socrates that he thrust his quarrelsome and illtongued wife from the house. Or if Callicratidas that omitting his perennial study of philosophy, he betake himself to common manners and the administration of the republic. If Criton should persuade him that having escaped from prison he take thought for his life. A most copious supply of this kind of thing Valerius Maximus and other writers who have excerpted memorable things from the books of the historians have gathered together without the tedium of searching. Of a truth from some single story, as from the life of Cato, or of Antonius, or of Julius Caesar, many themes may be drawn. Wherefore we shall not pursue in more words a matter both infinite and evident to anyone. In this kind of thing it is best that youth be exercised variously and diligently, because besides the fruit of style, by this means they imbibe the old and memorable stories as if doing something else, and fix them deep in memory; they become accustomed to the names of men and places; moreover they learn especially the power of honesty and the nature of probity, the especial virtues of eloquence.

Wherefore, before he explains the form of an epistle, it will be the parts of a wise teacher to explain to the boys as accurately as possible the story whence necessarily it will be derived and how it should be done, indicating the moments of time and the proprieties of persons, and the remaining circumstances, lest in writing they wander from decorum or say unsuitable things. Finally, that there shall be fountains prepared, whence they may draw either arguments or confirmations of arguments, to which thing a knowledge of the circumstances not a little aids. Then he will point out a few places where these are treated in authors, that they themselves may thence either collect or imitate the force of words and sentiments, inferring