In continuous and flowing passages a most becoming gesture is slightly to extend the arm with shoulders well thrown back and the fingers opening as the hand moves forward. But when we have to speak in specially rich or impressive style, as, for example, in the passage *saxa atque solitudines voci respondent*, the arm will be thrown out in a stately sidelong sweep and the words will, as it were, expand in unison with the gesture. As for the hands, without which all action would be crippled and enfeebled, it is scarcely possible to describe the variety of their motions, since they are almost as expressive as words. For other portions of the body may help the speaker, whereas the hands may almost be said to speak.

Do we not use them to demand, promise, summon, dismiss, threaten, supplicate, express aversion or fear, question or deny? Do we not employ them to indicate joy, sorrow, hesitation, confession, penitence, measure, quantity, number and time? Have they not power to excite and prohibit, to express approval, wonder or shame? Do they not take the place of adverbs and pronouns when we point at places and things? In fact, though the peoples and nations of the earth speak a multitude of tongues, they share in common the universal language of the hands.

The gestures of which I have thus far spoken are such as naturally proceed from us simultaneously with our words. But there are others which indicate things by means of mimicry. For example, you may suggest a sick man by mimicking the gesture of a doctor feeling the pulse, or a harpist by a movement of the hands as though they were plucking the strings. But this is a type of gesture which should be rigorously avoided in pleading. For the orator should be as unlike a dancer as possible, and his gesture should be adapted rather to his thought than to his actual words, a practice which was indeed once upon a time even adopted by the more dignified performers on the stage. I should, therefore, permit him to direct his hand towards his body to indicate that he is speaking of himself, or to point it at some one else to whom he is alluding, together with other similar gestures which I need not mention. But, on the other hand, I would not allow him to use his hands to imitate attitudes or to illustrate anything he may chance to say. And this rule applies not merely to the hands, but to all gesture and to the voice as well. For in delivering the period *stetit soleatus praetor populi Romani,* it would be wrong to imitate Verres leaning on his mistress, or in uttering the phrase *caedebatur in medio foro Messanae* to make the side writhe, as it does when quivering beneath the lash, or to utter shrieks, such as are extorted by pain.
For even comic actors seem to me to commit a gross offence against the canons of their art when, if they have in the course of some narrative to quote either the words of an old man (as, for example, in the prologue to the *Hydria*), or of a woman (as in the *Georgus*), they utter them in a tremulous or a treble voice, notwithstanding the fact that they are playing the part of a young man. So true is it that certain forms of imitation may be a blemish even in those whose art consists in imitation. One of the commonest of all the gestures consists in placing the middle finger against the thumb and extending the remaining three: it is suitable to the *exordium*, the hand being moved forward with an easy motion a little distance both to right and left, while the head and shoulders gradually follow the direction of the gesture. It is also useful in the *statement of facts*, but in that case the hand must be moved with firmness and a little further forward, while, if we are reproaching or refuting our adversary, the same movement may be employed with some vehemence and energy, since such passages permit of greater freedom of extension. On the other hand, this same gesture is often directed sideways towards the left shoulder: this is a mistake, although it is a still worse fault to thrust the arm across the chest and gesticulate with the elbow. The middle and third fingers are also sometimes turned under the thumb, producing a still more forcible effect than the gesture previously described, but not well adapted for use in the *exordium* or *statement of facts*. But when three fingers are doubled under the thumb, the finger, which Cicero says that Crassus used to such effect, is extended. It is used in denunciation and in indication (whence its name of index finger), while if it be slightly dropped after the hand has been raised toward the shoulder, it signifies affirmation, and if pointed as it were face downwards toward the ground, it expresses insistence. Again, if its top joint is lightly gripped on either side, with the two outer fingers slightly curved, the little finger rather less than the third, we shall have a gesture well suited for argument. But for this purpose the same gesture is rendered more emphatic by holding the middle joint of the finger and contracting the last two fingers still further to match the lower position of the middle finger and thumb. The following gesture is admirably adapted to accompany modest language: the thumb and the next three fingers are gently converged to a point and the hand is carried to the neighbourhood of the mouth or chest, then relaxed palm downwards and slightly advanced. It was with this gesture that I believe Demosthenes to have commenced the timid and subdued *exordium* of his speech in defence of Ctesiphon, and it was, I think, in such a position that Cicero held his hand, when he said, "if I have any talent, though I am conscious how little it is." Slightly greater freedom may be given to the gesture by pointing the fingers down and drawing the hand in towards the body and then opening it somewhat more rapidly in the opposite direction, so that it seems as though it were delivering our words to the audience.
Sometimes we may hold the first two fingers apart without, however, inserting the thumb between them, the remaining two pointing inwards, while even the two former must not be fully extended. Sometimes, again, the third and little finger may be pressed in to the palm near the base of the thumb, which in its turn is pressed against the middle joints of the first and middle fingers; at others the little finger is sometimes drooped obliquely, or the four fingers may be relaxed rather than extended and the thumb slanted inwards: this last gesture is well adapted to pointing to one side or marking the different points which we are making, the hand being carried palm-upwards to the left and swept back to the right face-downwards.

The following short gestures are also employed: the hand may be slightly hollowed as it is when persons are making a vow, and then moved slightly to and fro, the shoulders swaying gently in unison: this is adapted to passages where we speak with restraint and almost with timidity. Wonder is best expressed as follows: the hand turns slightly upwards and the fingers are brought in to the palm, one after the other, beginning with the little finger; the hand is then opened and turned round by a reversal of this motion. There are various methods of expressing interrogation; but, as a rule, we do so by a turn of the hand, the arrangement of the fingers being indifferent. If the first finger touch the middle of the right-hand edge of the thumb-nail with its extremity, the other fingers being relaxed, we shall have a graceful gesture well suited to express approval or to accompany _statements of facts_, and to mark the distinction between our different points. There is another gesture not unlike the preceding, in which the remaining three fingers are folded: it is much employed by the Greeks both for the left hand and the right, in rounding off their _enthymemes_, detail by detail. A gentle movement of the hand expresses promise or assent, a more violent movement suggests exhortation or sometimes praise. There is also that familiar gesture by which we drive home our words, consisting in the rapid opening and shutting of the hand: but this is a commander rather than an artistic gesture. Again, there is the somewhat unusual gesture in which the hand is hollowed and raised well above the shoulder with a motion suggestive of exhortation. The tremulous motion now generally adopted by foreign schools is, however, fit only for the stage. I do not know why some persons disapprove of the movement of the fingers, with their tops converging, towards the mouth. For we do this when we are slightly surprised, and at times also employ it to express fear or entreaty when we are seized with sudden indignation. Further, we sometimes clench the hand and press it to our breast when we are expressing regret or anger, an occasion when it is not unbecoming even to force the voice through the teeth in phrases such "What shall I do now?" "What would you do?" To point at something with the thumb turned back is a gesture which is in general use, but is not, in my opinion, becoming to an orator. Motion is generally divided into six kinds, but circular motion must be regarded as a seventh. The latter alone is faulty when applied to gesture. The remaining motions — that is, forward, to right or left and up or down — all have their significance, but the gesture is never
directed to what lies behind us, though we do at times throw the hand back. The best effect is produced by letting the motion of the hand start from the left and end on the right, but this must be done gently, the hand sinking to rest and avoiding all appearance of giving a blow, although at the end of a sentence it may sometimes be allowed to drop, but must be quickly raised again: or it may occasionally, when we desire to express wonder or dissent, spring back with a rapid motion. In this connexion the earlier instructors in the art of gesture rightly added that the movement of the hand should begin and end with the thought that is expressed. Otherwise the gesture will anticipate or lag behind the voice, both of which produce an unpleasing effect. Some, through excess of subtlety, have erroneously prescribed that there should be an interval of three words between each movement; but this rule is never observed, nor can it be. These persons, however, were desirous that there should be some standard of speed or slowness (a most rational desire), with a view to avoid prolonged inactivity on the part of the hands as well as the opposite fault, into which so many fall, of breaking up the natural flow of their delivery by continual motion. There is another still more common error, which is less easy of detection. Language possesses certain imperceptible stresses, indeed we might almost call them feet, to which the gesture of most speakers conforms. Thus there will be one movement at novum crimen, another at Gaius Caesar, a third at et ante hanc diem, a fourth at non auditum, a fifth at propinquus meus, a sixth at ad te and others at Quintus Tubero and detulit. From this springs a further error, namely, that young men, when writing out their speeches, devise all their gesture in advance and consider as they compose how the hand is to fall at each particular point. A further unfortunate result is that the movement of the hand, which should end on the right, frequently finishes on the left. It is therefore better, in view of the fact that all speech falls into a number of brief clauses, at the end of which we can take breath, if necessary, to arrange our gesture to suit these occasions. For example, the words novum crimen, Gaius Caesar, in a sense form a phrase complete in itself, since they are followed by a conjunction, while the next words, et ante hanc diem non auditum, are also sufficiently self-contained. To these phrases the motions of the hand must be conformed, before the speech has passed beyond the calmness of tone on which it opens. But when increasing warmth of feeling has fired the orator, the gesture will become more frequent, in keeping with the impetus of the speech. Some places are best suited by a rapid, and others by a restrained delivery. In the one case we pass rapidly one, fire a volley of arguments and hurry upon our way; in the other, we drive home our points, force them on the hearer and implant them in his mind. But the slower the delivery, the greater its emotional power: thus Roscius was rapid and Aesopus weighty in his delivery, because the former was a comic and the latter a tragic actor. The same rule applies to the movements. Consequently on the stage young men and old, soldiers and married women all walk sedately, while slaves, maidservants, parasites and fishermen are more lively in their movements.
But instructors in the art of gesture will not permit the hand to be raised above the level of the eyes or lowered beneath the breast; since it is thought there are grave blemish to lift it to the top of the head or lower it to the lower portions of the belly. It may be moved to the left within the limits of the shoulder, but no further without loss of decorum. On the other hand, when, to express our aversion, we thrust our hand out to the left, the left shoulder must be brought forward in unison with the head, which will incline to the right. It is never correct to employ the left hand alone in gesture, though it will often conform its motion to that of the right, as, for example, when we are counting our arguments on the fingers, or turn the palms of the hands to the left to express our horror of something, or thrust them out in front or spread them out to right and left, or lower them in apology or supplication (though the gesture is not the same in these two cases), or raise them in adoration, or stretch them out in demonstration or invocation, as in the passage, "Ye hills and groves of Alba," or in the passage from Gracchus: "Whither, alas! shall I turn me? To the Capitol? Nay, it is wet with my brother's blood. To my home?" etc. For in such passages greater emotional effect is produce if both hands co-operate, short gestures being best adapted to matters of small importance and themes of a gentle or melancholy character, and longer gestures to subjects of importance or themes calling for joy or horror.

It is desirable also that I should mention the faults in the use of the hands, into which even experienced pleaders are liable to fall. As for the gesture of demanding a cup, threatening a flogging, or indicating the number 500 by crooking the thumb, all of which are recorded by writers on the subject, I have never seen them employed even by uneducated rustics. But I know that it is of frequent occurrence for a speaker to expose his side by stretching his arm too far, to be afraid in one case of extend eu his hand beyond the folds of his cloak, and in another to stretch it as far as it will go, to raise it to the roof, or by swinging it repeatedly over his left shoulder to deliver such a rain of blows to the rear that it is scarcely safe to stand behind him, or to make a circular sweep to the left, or by casting our his hand at random to strike the standers-by or to flap both elbows against his sides. There are others, again, whose hands are sluggish or tremulous or inclined to saw the air; sometimes, too, the fingers are crooked and brought down with a run from the top of the head, or tossed up into the air with the hand turned palm upwards. There is also a gesture, which consists in inclining the head to the right shoulder, stretching out the arm from the ear and extending the hand with the thumb turned down. This is a special favourite with those who boast that they speak "with uplifted hand." To these latter we may add those speakers who hurl quivering epigrams with their fingers or denounce with the hand upraised, or rise on tiptoe, whenever they say something of which they are specially proud. This last proceeding may at times be adopted by itself, but they convert it into a blemish by simultaneously raising one or even two fingers as high as they can reach, or heaving up both hands as if they were carrying something. In addition to these faults, there are those which spring
not from nature, but from nervousness, such as struggling desperately with our lips when they refuse to open, making inarticulate sounds, as though something were sticking in our throat, when our memory fails us, or our thoughts will not come at our call; rubbing the end of our nose, walking up and down in the midst of an unfinished sentence, stopping suddenly and courting applause by silence, with many other tricks which it would take too long to detail, since everybody has his own particular faults. 122 We must take care not to protrude the chest or stomach, since such an attitude arches back, and all bending backwards is unsightly. The flanks must conform to the gesture; for the motion of the entire body contributes to the effect: indeed, Cicero holds that the body is more expressive than even the hands. For in the *de Orator*¹¹¹ he says, “There must be no quick movements of the fingers, but the orator should control himself by the poise of the whole trunk and by a manly inclination of the side.” 123 Slapping the thigh, which Cleon is said to have been the first to introduce at Athens, is in general use and is becoming as a mark of indignation, while it also excites the audience. Cicero¹¹² regrets its absence in Calidius, “There was no striking of the forehead,” he complains, “nor of the thigh.” With regard to the forehead I must beg leave to differ from him: for it is a purely theatrical trick even to clap the hands or to beat the breast. 124 It is only on rare occasions, too, that it is becoming to touch the breast with the finger-tips of the hollowed hand, when, for example, we address ourselves or speak words of exhortation, reproach or commiseration. But if we ever do employ this gesture, it will not be unbecoming to pull back the toga at the same time. . .