

Chapter 9

(10) *M.* Very good and to the point. But what do you think about the anapest? Or does the same reason hold?

D. Exactly the same.

M. Then, let's consider the bacchius, if you will, and tell me what its first meter is.

D. I think it is four syllables, one short and three longs: two longs belonging to the bacchius, but the last one to begin the foot properly placed with the bacchius, with a rest to make up for what is lacking. Yet I should like to explore this with my ear in some example or other.

M. It is easy to give examples, and yet I don't think you could be so delighted with these as with those just given. For these five-time feet, and the seven-time ones, too, do not flow so smoothly as those divided either into equal parts, or into one and two or two and one, so great is the difference between the sesquiate movements and the equal or complicate movements we talked about so much in our first discussion. And so, just as the poets treat these five- and seven-time feet contemptuously, so prose adopts them more happily than others. And this can be easily seen in the examples you asked for. Such is *Laborat magister docens tardos*. Repeat this with a three-time rest in between. And for you to feel it more easily, I have put a long syllable after the three feet because it is the beginning of the cretic, which can be put with the bacchius. And I haven't given you an example of the first meter, of four syllables, lest one foot wouldn't be enough to impress on your senses how much of a rest should follow the one foot and a long. Listen now, I shall give it and repeat it myself so you may feel the three times in the rest: *Labor nullus, Amor magnus*.

D. It is evident enough these feet are more suitable to prose, and there is no need to go through the others with examples.

M. You are right. But when there's to be a rest, you don't think only a long syllable can be put after the bacchius?

D. Certainly not. Also a short and a long, the first half-foot of the bacchius itself. For, if we were allowed to begin a cretic on the grounds it can be put with a bacchius, how much more will we be allowed to do it with the bacchius itself, and especially since we did not even put all that part of the cretic equal in times to the first part of the bacchius.

Chapter 10

(11) *M.* Now, then, if you will, go through the rest yourself, while I listen and judge, and in all those feet, where the left-over is filled in by a rest, describe what is placed after the full foot.

D. What you ask is very short and easy now, I believe. For what has been said of the bacchius can also be said of the second paeon. But after the cretic it is permissible to put one long syllable, and an iamb, and a spondee, so there is a rest either of three times, or two, or one. And this applies also to the first and last paeon. After the antibacchius may be placed either one long syllable or a spondee, and so in this meter there will be a three-time or a one-time rest. The same thing is true of the third paeon. Certainly, wherever a spondee can properly be put, there also an anapest. But after the molossus, because of its division, we put one long syllable with a four-time rest, or two longs with a two-time rest. But since, both by experience and reason it has been ascertained all six-time feet can be ordered with the molossus, there will be a place after it both for the iamb with a three-time rest, for the cretic with a one-time rest, and in the same way for the bacchius. But if we resolve the cretic's first long and the bacchius' second long into two shorts, there will be a place for the fourth paeon too. And

what I have said of the molossus, I could also say of the other six-time feet. Now I think the proceleusmatic is to be referred back to the other four-time feet, except when we place three shorts after it. And this is the same as putting an anapest after it, because of the final syllable habitually taken as long when followed by a rest. And the iamb is rightly subordinated to the first epitrite and so also the bacchius, cretic, and fourth paeon. And let the same be said of the second epitrite so there is either a four-time or two-time rest. But the spondee and molossus can properly follow the other two epitrites, on the condition it is possible to resolve the spondee's first long and the molossus' first or second into two shorts. Therefore, in these meters there will be either a three-time or one-time rest. The dispondee is left. If we should put a spondee after it, there will be four times to rest; if a molossus, two, and there remains the possibility of dissolving a long into two shorts either in the spondee or molossus, with the exception of the final long syllable. You have what you wanted me to run through. Perhaps you have corrections.

Chapter 11

(12) *M.* Not I certainly, but you, when you put your ear to judging the matter. Tell me, when I say or beat this meter, *Verus optimus*, and this one, *Verus optimorum*, and this one, *Veritatis inops*, whether your senses receive the third as happily as the other two. And they will judge this easily by your repeating them and beating them with the necessary rests.

D. They clearly receive the first two with pleasure, but not the last.

M. Then it's not right to put an iamb after a dichoree.

D. So it isn't.

M. But when he has repeated the following meters with a proper regard for the interposing of rests, everyone agrees it can be put after the other six-time feet:

Fallacem cave,
Male castum cave,
Multiloquum cave,
Fallaciam cave,
Et invidum cave,
Et infirmum cave.

D. I understand what you say, and I agree.

M. See, too, if there isn't a hitch when this last meter, repeated with a two-time rest interposed, continues on, unequal. For it wouldn't sound like the following, would it?

Veraces regnant.
Sapientes regnant.
Veriloqui regnant.
Prudentia regnant.
Boni in bonis regnant.
Pura cuncta regnant.

D. These last have an even and agreeable sound, but that other was quite awkward.

M. Then we shall hold, in meters of six-time feet the dichoree is dissonant with the iamb, and the antispast with the spondee.

D. We certainly shall.

(13) *M.* Well, can't you put your finger on the cause if you notice a foot is so divided into two parts by the arsis and thesis that, if it has any middle syllable, either one or two, they are either attributed to the first part or second part or divided between them both?

D. I certainly know this, and it's true. But what's the point?

M. Listen, then, to what I am going to say; then you will see more easily what you are looking for. For I suppose it is clear to you there are some feet without middle syllables, like the pyrrhic and other two-syllable feet; others, where the middle agrees in length with the first part or last part, or both, or neither. With the first part as in the case of the anapest or antibacchius or first paeon; with the last part as in the case of the dactyl or bacchius or fourth paeon; with both as in the case of the tribrach or molossus or choriamb or any ionic; with neither as in the case of the cretic or second and third paeons, or diiamb or dichoree or antispast. For in those feet capable of division into three equal parts, the middle is in accord with the first and last parts. But in those not capable of such division the middle is in accord with the first part only, or with the last, or with neither.

D. And I know this, too, and I am waiting to see where it all leads.

M. Why to this point, of course: the iamb with a rest is improperly placed after the dichoree because its middle part is equal neither to the first part nor to the last, and so is not in accord with the arsis and thesis. The same thing is true in the case of the spondee, similarly ill at ease when placed with a rest after the antispast. Have you anything to say to the contrary?

D. Nothing, except the shock the ear feels when these feet are so placed is in comparison with the sweetness diverting it when these feet along with a rest are placed after the other six-time feet. For if without the others you were to give examples and ask me how the iamb sounded after the dichoree or the spondee after the antispast, accompanied by a rest in each case—to say what I feel, I should perhaps approve and praise them.

M. And I don't contradict you. It's enough for me, how-

ever, these arrangements offend in comparison with numbers of the same kind, but more consonant as you say. For they are to be rejected from the fact that, since these feet we admit run on more happily end in the same half-feet, and are of the same kind, there should have been no discrepancy between them. But don't you think in line with this reasoning an iamb with a rest shouldn't be put after the second epitrite? For in the case of this foot, too, the iamb occupies the middle in such a way it is equal neither to the times of the first part nor of the second.

D. This reasoning compels my agreeing to that.

Chapter 12

(14) *M.* Come now, give me, if you will, an account of all the meters we have discussed, that is, of those beginning with full feet of their own with no rests interposed in the cyclic return, or with feet not full, followed by a rest, but such as reason has shown to be in harmony. And the number of them begins with two incomplete feet and goes as far as eight complete ones in such a way however, as not to exceed, thirty-two times.

D. What you impose is laborious, yet it is worth the work. But I remember a little while ago we had already gotten to seventy-seven meters in going from the pyrrhic to the tribrach. For the two-syllable feet each produced fourteen, making all together fifty-six. But the tribrach, because of its two-way division, produced twenty-one. Then to these seventy-seven we add fourteen from the dactyl and as many from the anapest. For the full feet, when arranged without rests, go from two to eight feet and produce seven meters, but when the half-feet are added with rests and the meters begin with one foot and a half and go to seven and a half, there are seven more. And

now there are all together one hundred and five. But the bacchius cannot stretch its meter to eight feet, lest it exceed the thirty-two times, nor can any of the five-time feet, but they can go to six. The bacchius, then, and the second paeon, equal to it not only in times but also in division, produce each five meters going from two to six feet when the full feet are ordered without rests; but with rests, beginning with a foot and a half and going to five and a half feet, they produce five meters each when followed by a long, and likewise five each when followed by a short and a long. And so they produce each fifteen meters, or thirty all told. And now all together there are a hundred and thirty-five meters. But the cretic and the first and fourth paeons, being divided in the same way, can be followed by a long and an iamb and a spondee and an anapest, and therefore come to seventy-five meters. For, since there are three of them, they each produce five without rests, but twenty with rests, making a total, as we said, of seventy-five. And this, added to the former sum, makes two hundred and ten. The antibacchius and the third paeon, alike in division, each produce five meters in the case of full feet without rests, but with rests they produce five meters each when followed by a long, five each by a spondee, five each by an anapest. We add these to the last sum, and we have in all two hundred and fifty meters.

(15) The molossus and the other six-time feet, seven in all, each produce four meters with full feet, but with rests, since they can be followed each one by a long or an iamb or spondee or anapest or bacchius or cretic or fourth paeon, they each produce twenty-eight, or a total of a hundred and ninety-six meters. And these, added to the four each, make two hundred and twenty-four. But eight must be subtracted from this sum, because the iamb doesn't properly follow the dichoree

nor the spondee the antispast. That leaves two hundred and sixteen, and this added to the whole sum makes all together four hundred and sixty-six meters. The ratio of the proceleusmatic cannot be considered along with those it agrees with, on account of the greater number of half-feet placed after it. For one long syllable with a rest can be put after it just as after the dactyl and the feet like it to give a two-time rest, and three shorts to give a one-time rest. And the final short can in this way be taken for a final long. The epitrites each produce three meters with full feet, beginning with a two-foot meter and going as far as a four-foot meter. For if you should add a fifth foot, you would exceed the allotted thirty-two times. But with rests the first and second epitrites produce three meters each when followed by an iamb, three each when followed by a bacchius, three each by a cretic, and three each by a fourth paeon. And with the full meters this makes all told thirty. But the third and fourth epitrites each produce three meters before the introduction of rests. With the spondee they each produce three, with the anapest three, with the molossus three, with the lesser ionic three, and with the choriamb three. And together with the full meters this makes a total of thirty-six. Therefore, all the epitrites together produce sixty-six meters, and these, with the proceleusmatic's twenty-one, added to the former sum makes five hundred and fifty-three. There remains only the dispondee, producing three meters with full feet; but when rests are used, with the spondee it produces three, three with the anapest, three with the molossus, three with the lesser ionic, and three with the choriamb. And this makes a total of eighteen. So there will be five hundred and seventy-one meters all told.

Chapter 13

(16) *M.* There certainly would be if three were not

to be subtracted because of the iamb's difficulties with being placed after the second epitrite. But this is all fine. And so tell me, now, how this meter affects your ear, *Triplici vides ut ortu Triviae rotetur ignis*.

D. Very agreeably.

M. Can you tell me the feet it consists of?

D. I can't; I can't find out how any I measure off together. For, if I should start with a pyrrhic or an anapest or a third paeon, those following don't fit in. And I can find a cretic after a third paeon, leaving a long syllable allowable after a cretic. But this meter couldn't properly consist of these with a three-time rest interposed. For there is no rest when its repetition is pleasing to the ear.

M. See if it shouldn't begin with a pyrrhic followed by a dichoree, and then a spondee filling out the times owing the foot you started with. Likewise, you can begin with an anapest followed by a diiamb, so the final long when placed with the anapest's four times makes six times, to harmonize with the diiamb. And so from that you understand it is permissible for parts of a foot to be placed, not only at the end, but also at the beginning of meters.

D. I now understand.

(17) M. What if I should take away the final long to have a meter like this, *Segetes meus labor*; you notice it's repeated with a two-time rest? And so it is clear some part of the foot can be put at the beginning of the meter, some at the end, and some in a rest.

D. That's clear.

M. But this is clearly true if you measure off a full dichoree in this meter. On the other hand, if you should measure off a diiamb with an anapest at the start, you find a four-time part of the foot at the beginning, and the two times left due

in a rest at the end. And thus we learn a meter can begin with a part of a foot ending with a full foot, but never without a rest.

D. This is very clear.

(18) *M.* Further, can you measure off this meter, and tell the feet it consists of?

*Iam satis terris nivi, atque dirae
Grandinis misit Pater, et rubente
Dextera sacras iaculatus arces.*²

D. I can establish a cretic at the beginning and measure off the two remaining six-time feet, one a greater ionic, the other a dichoree, and add a one-time rest to fill out six times with the cretic.

M. Something is amiss in your consideration. For when the dichoree is at the end with a rest left over, its last syllable, a short, is taken for a long. Or do you deny this?

D. I certainly admit it.

M. Then a dichoree must not be put at the end if it is to be followed by a rest in repetition, lest it be perceived no longer as a dichoree but as a second epitrite.

D. That's evident.

M. How, then, shall we measure off this meter?

D. I don't know.

Chapter 14

M. Then see if it sounds well when I recite it with a one-time rest after the first three syllables. For there will be nothing due at the end to keep a dichoree from properly being there.

² Horace, *Odes* 1.2.1-3. The 'traditional' method of scanning this, that of Marius Victorinus, is quite different. But Masqueray, *Traité de métrique grecque* (Paris 1899) scans as Augustine does.

D. It sounds very pleasing.

(19) *M.* Then let's add this rule also to the art, that not only at the end, but also before the end, there may be rests. And it must be applied either when what is necessary for filling out the times of a foot cannot properly be given as a final rest because of a final short, or when two incomplete feet are established, one at the beginning and the other at the end, such as here, *Gentiles nostros inter oberrat equos*. For you saw, I believe, I introduced a two-time rest after the five long syllables, and one of the same length must be introduced at the end, when a cyclic return is made to the beginning. For, if you should measure off this meter by the six-time law, you will have first a spondee, second a molossus, third a choriamb, fourth an anapest. Therefore, two times are due the spondee in order to complete a six-time foot. And so there is a two-time rest after the molossus and before the end, and again after the anapest, and at the end. But, if you measure it off by the four-time law, there will be a long syllable at the beginning, then we measure off two spondees, then two dactyls, and it will finish with a long. And so we have a two-time rest after the two spondees and before the end, and again at the end in order to fill out both of those feet whose halves have been placed at the beginning and the end.

(20) Yet sometimes, what is due two incomplete feet, placed one at the beginning the other at the end, is rendered by the final rest alone, if it be of such a quantity as not to exceed the half-foot, as in the case of these two,

*Silvae laborantes, geluque
Flumina constiterint acuto.*³

For the first of these begins with an antibacchius, from there

³ Horace, *Odes* 1.9.3-4.

runs into a molossus, and ends in a bacchius. And so there is a two-time rest, and when you have given one of these to the bacchius and the other to the antibacchius, the six-time intervals will everywhere be filled. But the second begins with a dactyl, from there goes into a choriamb, and closes with a bacchius. It will then be necessary to have a three-time rest. Out of that we shall give one time to the bacchius and two to the dactyl, so there will be six times in every foot.

(21) But what is due for filling out the last foot is given before that due for the first foot. Our ears don't allow it to be otherwise. And no wonder. For when we repeat, what comes last is certainly joined with what comes first. And so in the meter we gave, *Flumina constiterint acuto*, since three times are due to fill out the six-time intervals, if you should wish to give them, not with a rest but with words, they could be rendered by an iamb, choree, or tribrach because each of these contains three times. But the senses themselves would not allow them to be rendered by the choree where the first syllable is long; the second, short. For that first ought to sound, due the last bacchius, that is, the short syllable; not the long belonging to the first dactyl. This can be seen in these examples:

Flumina constiterint acuto gelu.

Flumina constiterint acute gelida.

Flumina constiterint in alta nocte.

And it is evident to anyone the first two are proper when repeated, but the last one not at all.

(22) Likewise, when a single time is due each incomplete foot, if you want to render them by word, the senses don't allow them to be compressed into one syllable. Quite justly, of course. For it is not proper for what is to be rendered sep-

arately not to be constructed separately. And, therefore, in the meter *Silvae laborantes geluque*, if you should add a long syllable to the end in place of the rest, as in *Silvae laborantes gelu duro*, your ears do not approve as when we say *Silvae laborantes gelu et frigore*. And you perceive this well enough, when you repeat each one.

(23) Likewise, when there are two incomplete feet, it is not proper a greater be put at the beginning than at the end. For the hearing condemns this, too, for example, if you should say *Optimum tempus adest tandem* with the first foot a cretic, the second a choriamb, and the third a spondee, with the result that we have a three-time rest, two times being due the last spondee for filling out the six, and one to the first cretic. And so, if it should be said in this way, *Tandem tempus adest optimum*, with the same three-time rest, who would not find its repetition most enjoyable? And, therefore, it is proper either the final incomplete foot be of the same quantity as the first one, as in *Silvae laborantes geluque*; or the first one be the smaller and the last one the larger, as in *Flumina constiterint acuto*. And this is not arbitrary, because on the one hand there is no discord where there is equality. But where the number is unequal, if we should come from the less to the greater, as is usual in counting, this very order again effects an accord.

(24) And so it also follows, when these incomplete feet just mentioned are put in, if a rest is interposed in two places, that is, before the end and at the end, then there is a rest before the end of a quantity owing the last foot, but a rest at the end of a quantity owing the first foot. For, the middle tends toward the end, but a return is to be made from the end to the beginning. But, if to each the same amount is owing, there is no dispute, and in this case there must be a rest before the

end of the same quantity as at the end. Moreover, there must be no rest except where there is an end to a part of the discourse. In the case of those numbers not made by words, but by some beat or breath or even by the tongue, there is no way to make the distinction after what sound or beat a rest should come, so a legitimate rest may intervene according to the preceding ratios. And, therefore, a meter also can begin with two incomplete feet, on condition the combined quantities of both should not be less than one foot and a half. For we have already affirmed two incomplete feet are properly inserted when what is due both does not exceed the length of a half foot. An example is *Montes acuti*, so either we have a three-time rest, or a one-time rest after the spondee with a two-time rest at the end. For this meter cannot be properly measured otherwise.

Chapter 15

(25) Let this [prescription], too, be part of the discipline: when we have a rest before the end, that part of the discourse may not end in a short syllable, to keep the senses from taking it because of the rest following it, for a long syllable in accordance with the continually repeated rule to that effect. And so in the meter *Montibus acutis* we cannot make a one-time pause after the dactyl as we could after the spondee in the example before, for then no longer a dactyl but a cretic would be perceived, with the result the meter would not seemingly consist of two incomplete feet, the object of our present explanation, but a full dichoree and a final spondee with a two-time rest owing at the end.

(26) And it must be noted, too, when an incomplete foot is placed at the beginning, what is owing is repaid either in rest right on the spot, as in *Iam satis terris nivis atque dirae*; or at

the end, as in *Segetes meus labor*. But to an incomplete foot at the end, what is due is repaid in rest either right on the spot, as in *Ite igitur Camoenae*; or somewhere in the middle, as in *Ver blandum viget arvis, adest hospes hirundo*. For the one time owing the last bacchius can be a rest either after the whole number, or after the number's first foot, the molossus, or after its second, the lesser ionic. But what is owing incomplete feet in the middle can only be repaid on the spot, as in *Tuba terribilem sonitum dedit aere curvo*. For, if we should so measure out this meter as to make the first an anapest, the second either of the ionics expressed as five syllables with either the first or final long resolved into two shorts, the third a choriamb, the last a bacchius, then there will be three times owing, one to the final bacchius and two to the first anapest to fill out the times each ought to have. But this whole three-time interval can be rendered as a final rest. But, if you should begin with a complete foot, meting out the first five syllables for either ionic, then a choriamb follows. From there on you will not find a complete foot, and so there will have to be rest for the space of one long syllable; when this is added, the choriamb will be completed. A bacchius whose last time will be repaid by a final rest is left to close the meter.

(27) And so I now think it's clear, when there is a rest in the middle places, it redeems either those times owing at the end, or those owing where the pause is made. But sometimes it is not necessary for the pause to be in the middle places, since the meter can be measured off another way as in the example we just gave. But sometimes it is necessary, as in *Vernat temperies, aurae tepent, sunt deliciae*. For it is clear this number runs in either four-time or six-time feet. If in four, there must be a one time rest after the eighth syllable, and two-time rest at the end. First, measure off a spondee; second, a

dactyl; third, a spondee; fourth, a dactyl, adding a rest after the long syllable because it is not proper to do so after the short syllable; fifth, a spondee; sixth, a dactyl, with a final long closing the line and its two missing times redeemed by a rest at the end. But, if we measure off six-time feet, the first will be a molossus, the second a lesser ionic, the third a cretic becoming a dichoree when a one-time rest is added, the fourth a greater ionic, and a final long followed by a four-time rest. It could be otherwise with one long placed at the beginning, followed by a lesser ionic, then a molossus, then a bacchius becoming an antispast when a one-time rest has been added. A final choriamb would close the meter, with a four-time rest being given the first long. But the ear rejects such a measuring, because, unless the part of the foot placed at the beginning is greater than a half foot, the lack cannot be properly restored where it is owing by the final rest after the complete foot. But with other feet inserted, we know how much is wanting. But the sense does not take in there is such a long rest, unless there is less owing in the rest than is put in sound, because, when the voice has traversed the greater part of the foot, the remaining lesser part easily presents itself anywhere.

(28) And so, although in the case of the meter we have just given as an example, *Vernat temperies, aurae tepent, sunt deliciae*, there is one necessary measuring if there is a one-time rest after the tenth syllable and a four-time rest at the end, yet there is a voluntary measuring if one should wish to have a two-time rest after the sixth syllable, a one-time rest after the eleventh, and a two-time rest at the end, resulting in a spondee at the beginning, a choriamb next, third a spondee with a two-time rest added on to make a molossus or lesser ionic, fourth a bacchius likewise becoming an anti-

past by the addition of a one-time rest, fifth a choriamb to close the number as far as sound is concerned, with a two-time rest at the end redeeming the first spondee. And likewise there is another way. For if you wish, you can have a one-time rest after the sixth syllable, and again after the tenth and eleventh, and a two-time rest at the end. With the result the first foot is a spondee, the second a choriamb, the third an antibacchius becoming an antispast by the addition of the one-time rest, the fourth a spondee becoming a dichoree by the insertion and addition of one-time rests, finally a choriamb closing the number to give at the end a two-time rest owing the first spondee. And there is a third way of measuring it, if there should be a one-time rest after the first spondee with the other rests just as before except for there being a final one-time rest because of the usually beginning spondee's becoming an antibacchius with the addition of the one-time rest following it, with the result only a one-time measure is owing it to appear as a final rest. And so now you see how rests are inserted in meters, some necessary, some voluntary: necessary when something is owing for completing the feet, but voluntary when the feet are whole and complete.

(29) But what has just been said about the rule of avoiding rests of more than four times was said of necessary rests where times due are filled out. For in those we have called voluntary rests, it is also proper to sound a foot and rest a foot. But, if we should do this at equal intervals, there will not be a meter, but a rhythm with no fixed end appearing as a means to a return to the beginning. And so, if you should wish, for example, to punctuate a line with rests so as to pause after the first foot for the length of a foot, this must not be continued. But it is proper to prolong a meter up to the legitimate number of times with rests inserted in

any sort of arrangement, as in *Nobis verum in promptu est, tu si verum dicis*. It is proper here to have a four-time rest after the first spondee, and another after the following two, but no rest after the last three, because the thirty-two times have already been completed. But it is much more apt, and somehow more just, there be a rest either only at the end, or at the end and in the middle, too, and this can be done with one foot subtracted, to give *Nobis verum in promptu est, tu dic verum*. And this rule is to be maintained for meters of other feet that, in the case of necessary rests the times due to fill out the feet ought to be redeemed either by final or middle rests. But the rest must not be greater than that part of the foot occupied by either the arsis or thesis. But in the case of rests by choice it is possible to rest either for the space of a whole foot or of part of a foot, as we have shown in the examples just given. But let this finish the treatment of the ratio of rest-insertion.

Chapter 16

(30) Now let us say a few things about the mixing of feet and the conjunction of their respective meters, since many things were said when we were investigating what feet ought to be mixed together, and since some things must be said about the composition of meters when we begin to talk about verse. For, feet are conjoined and mixed according to the rules we disclosed in our second discourse. But here it is in order to remember all the meters already celebrated by poets have had each one its author and inventor to keep us from transgressing certain fixed laws they laid down. For it is not proper, when they have fixed them by reasoning, to make any change in them, even if we could make the change according to reasoning and without any offense to the ear.

And the knowledge of this sort of thing is handed down not by art, but by history. And, therefore, it is believed rather than known. For, if some Falerian or other has composed meters to sound like these

*Quando flagella ligas, ita liga,
Vitis et ulmus uti simul eant;*⁴

we can't know it, but only believe it by hearing and reading. It belongs to the discipline we are treating, to see whether it consists of three dactyls and a final pyrrhic, as most of those unskilled in music affirm (for they do not see a pyrrhic cannot follow a dactyl), or, as reason shows, the first foot in this meter is a choriamb, the second an ionic with a long syllable resolved into two shorts, the last an iamb followed by a three-time rest. And half-taught men could see this, if it were recited and beaten out by a learned man according to both laws. For they would judge from natural and common sense what the discipline's norm would prescribe.

(31) Yet the poet's wishing these numbers to be unchangeable when we use this meter has to be respected. For it satisfies the ear, although it would be equally well satisfied if we should put a diiamb for the choriamb or the ionic, without resolving the long syllable into shorts, and whatever else might fit in. In this meter, then, nothing will be changed, not for the reason by which we avoid inequality, but for that by which we observe authority. For reason certainly teaches some meters are established as immobile, that is, where nothing should be changed, as in this one we have just talked about; others as mobile, where one may substitute certain feet

⁴ 'When you bind switches, bind so the elm and vine go together.' Amerio points out this is the way Marius Victorinus and Terentianus treat this meter, *op. cit.* 184.

for others, as in *Trioae qui primus ab oris, arma virumque cano*. For here an anapest may be substituted for a spondee in any place. Others are neither completely immobile nor completely mobile, as

*Pendeat ex humeris dulcis chelys
Et numeros edat varios, quibus
Assonet omne virens late nemus,
Et tortis errans qui flexibus.*⁵

For you see here both spondees and dactyls can be placed everywhere, except in the last foot which the author of the meter always wished to be a dactyl. And you see, even in these three kinds, authority has some weight.

(32) But as regards what in the composition of feet belongs to reason alone to judge concerning these things perceived, you know those parts of feet harmoniously placed with a rest after certain feet, as the iamb after the dichoree or second epitrite, and the spondee after the antispast, are still badly placed after other feet these have been mixed with. For it is evident the iamb is well placed after the molossus, as we see in this example with the final three-time rest we are so often repeating. *Ver blandum viret floribus*. But, if you should put a dichoree first in place of the molossus, as in *Vere terra viret floribus*, the ear rejects and condemns it. It is easy, too, to discover this in the other cases, if the ear only search it out. For it is a most sure reasoning, when feet are combined capable of such combination, only those parts of a foot agreeing with all the feet in that sequence be added

⁵ Terentianus Maurus quotes this from Pomponius. See his *de Metris* 11.2135 ff. (Keil VI 389).

'Let the sweet harp hang from the shoulders and bring forth varied numbers every far-green wood resounds with, and wandering with curious turns . . .

on at the end, to avoid any discord arising one way or another among friends.

(33) This is more wonderful that, although a spondee completes both the diiamb and the dichoree without dissonance, yet when these two feet, either alone or in one way or another mixed with others agreeable to them, have been put in one sequence together, it is the sense's judgment a spondee cannot be put at the end. For no one would doubt, would he, the ear accepts willingly each of these repeated separately; *Timenda res non est* and *Iam timere noli*. But, if you should join them so, *Timenda res, iam timere noli*, I should not want to hear it outside of prose. Nor is it less awkward if you put another foot in anywhere, for instance, a molossus in this way, *Vir fortis, timenda res, iam timere noli*, or in this way, *Timenda res, vir fortis, iam timere noli*, or again in this way, *Timenda res, iam timere noli*, or again in this way, *Timenda res, iam timere vir fortis noli*. And the cause of the awkwardness is this: the diiambic foot can also be beaten in the proportion of two to one, just as the dichoree in the proportion of one to two. But the spondee is equal to their two-part. But, since one pulls it to the first part, the other to the last part, a certain disagreement arises. And so in this way reason relieves us of our wonder.

(34) And the antispast produces something just as marvelous. For if no other foot, or the diiamb alone of all of them, should be mixed with it, it allows the meter to be closed by an iamb, but not so when placed with others. In the case of the dichoree, it is because of the dichoree itself; and I wonder very little at that. But why with the other six-time feet it refuses to allow that particular three-time foot at the end, I do not know. The cause is perhaps too secret for us to be able to find

it out and show it. But I judge it is so by these examples. For there is no doubt each of these two meters, *Potestate placet* and *Potestate potentium placet*, is repeated harmoniously with a three-time rest at the end; but each of these with the same rest, inharmoniously: *Potestate praeclara placet*, *Potestate tibi multum placet*, *Potestate iam tibi sic placet*, *Potestate multum tibi placet*, *Potestatis magnitudo placet*. Now, in so far as the senses are concerned, they have done their duty in this question, and have indicated what they would approve and what they would not. But reason must be consulted as to why it is so. And mine in all this obscurity only sees this: the antispast has its first half in common with the diiamb, for each begins with a short and a long, but its last half in common with the dichoree, for both end with a long and short. And so the antispast either when it is alone allows the iamb to close the meter as its own first half, or again when it is with the diiamb it has this half in common. And it would allow it with the dichoree, if such an ending were harmonious with the dichoree, but not in the case of others, and it is not joined with them in such company.

Chapter 17

(35) But, with regard to the composition of meters, it is enough at present to see diverse meters can be joined together so long as they agree with respect to beat, that is, to their arsis and thesis. But they differ either in quantity, as when greater are joined with less, for example,

*Iam satis terris nivis atque dirae
Grandinis misit Pater, et rubente
Dextera sacras iaculatus arces,
Terruit urbem.*

For this fourth line made up of a choriamb and final long, you

see how small it is compared to the first three, all equal to each other. Or in feet, as these,

*Grato Pyrrha sub antro,
Cui flavam religas comam.*⁶

You see, certainly, the first of the two consists of a spondee and choriamb, and a final long due the spondee for completing the six times; the second, of a spondee and choriamb, and two final shorts likewise filling out the spondee to six times. They are equal, then, in times, but somewhat different in feet.

(36) And there is another difference in combinations of this kind: some are so combined they have no rests placed between them as these last two; others require a rest of some kind in between them, like these,

*Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte, nec iam sustineant onus
Silvae laborantes, geluque
Flumina constiterint acuto.*⁷

For, if each of these is repeated, the first two acquire a one-time rest, the third a two-time, the fourth, a three-time. Considered together, in going from the first to the second there is necessarily a one-time pause, from the second to the third a two-time, from the third to the fourth a three-time one. But, if you should return from the fourth to the first, you will pause for one time. And whatever ratio is used for the return to the beginning is also used for passing to another such combination. We rightly call this kind of combination a cycle [*circuitum*], in Greek called *períodos*. So the cycle cannot be less than two numbers, nor have they wished it to be more than four. It is

6 Horace, *Odes* 1.5.3-4.

7 Horace, *Odes* 1.9.1-4.

proper, then, to call the least bi-membered, the middle one tri-membered, the last quadri-membered; for the Greeks call them *dikolon*, *tríkolon*, *tetrákolon*. And, since we shall treat of this whole class more thoroughly, as I have said, in our discussion of verses, let this be enough for the moment.

(37) I think you now certainly understand there are a great many kinds of meter. In fact, we found there were five hundred and sixty-eight, when no examples were given of rests except final ones, and no mixture of feet made, and no resolution of long syllables into two shorts stretching the foot to more than four syllables. But, if you wish to get the number of meters with every possible insertion of rests applied, and every combination of feet, and every resolution of long syllables, the number is so great its name perhaps is not at hand. But, although these examples we have given and those we can give, poets judged proper in making them, and common nature in hearing them, yet, unless a learned and practised man's recitation should commend them to our ears and the sense of hearing should not be slower than humanity requires, the ones we have treated cannot be judged true. But let's rest a little, and then let's discuss verse.

D. Good.

BOOK FIVE

Verse is discussed.

Chapter 1

(1) *M.* The controversy among ancient learned men in their attempt to find out what verse is, has been great and not without fruit. For the subject has been discovered and written down for the knowledge of posterity, and has been confirmed, not only by serious and certain authority, but also by reason. Now, they noticed there is a difference between rhythm and meter, so all meter is rhythm, but not all rhythm meter. For every legitimate composition of feet is numerable, since the composition containing meter cannot not be number, that is, not be rhythm. But, since it is not the same thing to roll forward, although in legitimate feet, yet without any definite end, and to progress likewise in legitimate feet, but to be bounded by a fixed end, these kinds, therefore, had to be distinguished by names. So the first was called only by the name proper to it, rhythm, but the other by meter as well as rhythm. Again, since of those numbers bounded by a definite end, that is of meters, there are some where there is no ratio of division within them and others where there certainly is, this difference also had to be noted in names. And so the kind of rhythm where this ratio is not has been properly called meter; where it is, they have named it verse. And reason will perhaps show us the origin of this name as we go on. And do not think this so prescribed it is not permissible also to call verses meters. But it's one thing to abuse a name with the license of a resemblance; another to call a thing by its name. Anyhow, let's be

done now with telling over names. For in their case, as we have already learned, the willingness of those speaking and the authority of age count for everything. Let's investigate these other things, if you will, as we are wont, with sense announcing and reason discovering, so you may know the ancient authors did not institute these things as if not already existing whole and finished in the nature of things, but found them by reasoning and designated them by naming them.

Chapter 2

(2) And so I first ask you whether a foot only pleases the ear if the two parts in it, one the arsis, the other the thesis, answer to each other in a numerical and skillful joining?

D. I have already been persuaded and apprised of this.

M. Now, meter, resulting as it does from the conjunction of feet, isn't to be thought to belong to the class of things incapable of division, is it? For no indivisible thing can extend through time, and it would be absurd, wouldn't it, to think what consists of divisible feet is indivisible?

D. I certainly say it isn't indivisible.

M. But aren't all things capable of division more beautiful if their parts agree in some equality than if they should be discordant and dissonant?

D. There's no doubt about it.

M. Well, what number, then, is the author of equal division? The number two?

D. It is.

M. Then, just as we found the foot is divided into two harmonious parts and in this way delights the ear, if we also find a meter of this kind, won't it be rightly preferred to such as are not?

D. I agree.

Chapter 3

(3) *M.* Very well. Now, tell me this. Since in all things we measure by a part of time, one thing precedes and another follows, one begins and another ends, would you think there ought to be no difference between the part preceding or beginning and the part which follows or ends?

D. I think there must be.

M. Tell me, then, what the difference is between the two parts of a verse where one is *cornua velatarum*, and the other *vertimus antennarum*.¹ For, if it should be recited, not as the poet wrote it, with *obvertimus*, but in this way, *Cornua velatarum vertimus antennarum*, doesn't it become uncertain by more or less frequent repetition which part is first, which last? For it is no less the same verse said this way: *Vertimus antennarum cornua velatarum*.

D. I see it becomes very uncertain.

M. Do you think that ought to be avoided?

D. I do.

M. See, then, whether it has been properly avoided in this case. One part of the verse, the first, is, *Arma virumque cano*, and the other following it, *Troiae qui primus ab oris*. And they differ from each other to the extent, if you change the order and recite them this way, *Troiae qui primus ab oris, arma virumque cano*, you would have to measure off other feet.

D. I understand.

M. But see whether this ratio is kept in the other lines. Now whatever measure *Arma virumque cano* begins, you know these do likewise: *Italiam fato, Littora multum ille et, Vi superum saevae, Multa quoque et bello, Inferretque deos, Albanique patres*. In short, you can go through as many of the

¹ Vergil, *Aeneid* III.549.

other lines as you wish, you will find these first verse-parts to be of the same measure, that is, five distinct half-feet. Very rarely, indeed, if not in this way; so the end-parts are no less equal to each other: *Troiae qui primus ab oris, Profugus Laciniaque venit, Memorem Iunonis ob iram, Passus dum conderet urbem, Latio genus unde Latinum, Atque altae moenia Romae.*

D. That's very evident.

(4) M. And so, five and seven half-feet divide into two parts, the heroic verse consisting, as everyone knows, of six four-time feet. And without the harmonious conjunction of two members, either this one, or some other, there is no verse. And in all these examples reason has shown this much must be observed: the first part cannot be second, nor the second first. And if it is otherwise, they will no longer be called verses except through misuse of the name. But they will have rhythm and meter, and it is not improper to stick in such things at long intervals in long poems composed of verses. And just of such a kind is the one I recited a while back: *Cornua velatarum vertimus antennarum.* And so I don't believe a verse is so called, as some think, because it returns from a fixed ending to the beginning of the same member, so the name is taken from those who turn around [*se vertunt*] when retracing their steps. For verse seems to have this in common with those meters which are not verses. But, on the contrary, perhaps the name came about rather in the way the grammarians have called a deponent verb one not depositing the letter 'r,' for example 'lucror' and 'conqueror'; just so whatever is made up of two members, neither able to be put in the place of the other without violating the law of the numbers, is called verse because it cannot be reversed. But you can accept either of these derivations or reject them both, and look for another, or with me

disapprove of any question of this kind. It has nothing to do with the present affair. For, since the thing itself signified by this name is sufficiently apparent, there's no need to labor the word's derivation. Perhaps you have some objections?

D. I have none, certainly, but go on with the rest.

Chapter 4

(5) *M.* Next we must look to the ending of the verse. For they wanted this also to be marked and distinguished by some difference, or rather reason itself wanted it so. Don't you think it better the ending confining the number's forward roll, with the equality of times undisturbed, should stand out, rather than be confused with the other parts not effecting an ending?

D. Who doubts it? It's too evident.

M. See, then, whether those people were right in wanting the spondaic foot to be the distinctive ending of the heroic verse. For in the other five places it is permissible to put either a spondee or a dactyl, but at the end only a spondee. For what they reckon a trochee becomes a spondee on account of the last syllable's indifference we spoke enough about in the treatment of meter. But according to them the six-foot iambic either will not be a verse or will be one without this distinction of ending. But either is absurd. For no one, either among very learned men or moderately or even slightly learned, has ever doubted this was a verse: *Phaselus ille quem videtis, hospites,*² and whatever is formed of words in this number-form. And yet the more serious authors, and so the most skillful, have judged nothing to be a verse without a distinctive ending.

(6) *D.* You are right. And, therefore, I believe some other

² Catullus, 4.1.

mark of its ending must be looked for, and the spondee story is not acceptable.

M. What is it? You don't doubt, do you, whatever it is, it is either a difference in foot, time, or both?

D. What else can it be?

M. But which of these three do you think it is? For I, since ending a verse to keep it within its proper bounds is proper only to the time-measure, I don't think this mark can be taken elsewhere than from time. Or do you find something else better?

D. I certainly agree.

M. Do you see this, too. Since time in this case can only be different in the one's being longer, the other shorter, the end-mark must consist in a shorter time, because, when the verse is ended, it is done to prevent it's proceeding farther?

D. I see that. But to what does the added 'in this case' refer?

M. To the fact we do not everywhere get the time-difference only in brevity and length. You don't say, do you, the difference of summer and winter is one of time or rather of a shorter and longer interval, and don't you place it in the power of cold and hot, or of dry and wet, and any other thing like that?

D. I now understand, and I agree this mark we are looking for must be taken from shortness of time.

(7) *M.* Listen then to this verse, *Roma, Roma, cerne quanta sit deum benignitas*, called trochaic, and measure it and say what you find out about its members and the number of its feet.

D. I should easily reply about the feet, for it is evident there are seven and a half, but as to the members the matter is not clear enough. For I see the ends of parts of discourse in many places, yet I believe the partition is in the eighth half-foot with

the first member *Roma, Roma, cerne quanta*, and the second *sit deum benignitas*.

M. And how many half-feet does it have?

D. Seven.

M. Reason has most certainly led you to this. For since nothing is better than equality, it would be proper to approach it in any division. If only less can be gotten, an approximation to it must be sought, not to stray too far from it. And so, since here the verse has in all fifteen half-feet, it could not be divided more equally than into eight and seven. But there is the same approximation in seven and eight. Yet in this way the distinctive ending would not be preserved, as reason itself has taught us it must be. For if there were such a verse as *Roma, cerne quanta sit tibi deum benignitas*, beginning with a member of seven half-feet, *Roma, cerne quanta sit*, and ending with one consisting of these eight, *tibi deum benignitas*, then the verse could not close with a half-foot, for eight half-feet make four whole feet. At the same time there would result another deformity in our not measuring the same feet in the last member as in the first, and rather would the first member finish with the mark of shorter time, that is, with a half-foot, than the second this ending by rights belongs to. For in the one there are three and a half trochees, *Roma, cerne quanta sit*; in the other four iambs would be scanned *tibi deum benignitas*. But in the case we have before us, we scan trochees in both members, and the verse closes with a half-foot so the ending has the mark of a short syllable. For there are four in the first, *Roma, Roma, cerne quanta*, but three and a half in the second, *sit deum benignitas*. Or are you prepared to say something to the contrary?

D. Nothing at all; I willingly agree.

(8) *M.* Let us keep these laws unchanged, then, if you

will, that a verse should not be without a partition into two members approaching equality, as this one is, *Cornua velatarum obvertimus antennarum*. That this equality should not make the members convertible, so to speak, as it does in *Cornua velatarum vertimus antennarum*. And when this convertibility is avoided, that the members should not have too great a discrepancy between them, but nearly equal each other, as much as possible by proximate numbers, not to say they can be divided such a way, eight half-feet are in the first member, *Cornua velatarum vertimus*, and four in the last, that is, *antennarum*. That the second member should not have an even number of half-feet, as *tibi deum benignitas*, lest the verse, finishing with a full foot, should not have an ending distinguished by a shorter time.

D. I now have them, and I shall commit them to memory as far as I can.

Chapter 5

(9) *M.* Since, then, we now hold a verse ought not to end with a full foot, how do you think we ought to measure the heroic verse so as to preserve the law of members and the end-marks?

D. Well, I see there are twelve half-feet, and the members cannot each have six half-feet, because convertibility must be avoided. Nor is it proper for there to be a great discrepancy between them as in three and nine or nine and three. Nor should an even number of half-feet be given the second member, resulting in a division of eight and four or four and eight, and a verse ending with a full foot. The division must be made into five and seven or seven and five. For these numbers are both odd and proximate, and the members certainly approach each other more nearly than they would in the numbers four and eight. To be very certain about it, I see the end-parts of

discourse always or nearly always in the fifth half-foot, as in Vergil's first verse, *Arma virumque cano*; and in the second, *Italiam fato*; and in the third, *Littora multum ille et*; likewise in the fourth, *Vi superum saevae*; and so on, for nearly the whole poem.

M. That's true. But you must look to what feet you are measuring, to dare no violation of these laws just so firmly established.

D. Although the reason is sufficiently clear to me, yet I am disturbed by the novelty. For, usually, in this kind of line we scan nothing but spondees and dactyls, and almost no one is so uneducated as not to have heard of that, even if he is less able to do it. And so, if we should in this case wish to follow that very common custom, the law of ending has to be abrogated, for the first member would close with a half-foot, but the second with a full foot, and it ought to have been just the contrary. But, since it seems very unsuitable to abolish this law and I have now learned to know it is permissible, in numbers, for us to begin with an incomplete foot, we are left to judge it is not a dactyl with a spondee here, but an anapest. So the verse begins with one long syllable; then two feet, either spondees or anapests or both, end the first member; then again three feet for the other member, either anapests or spondees in any place or in all; and finally one syllable to rightly end the verse. Do you accept this?

(10) *M.* I, too, judge it quite correct, but the public is not easily persuaded of such things. For the force of custom, if it is old and born of false opinion, is so great nothing is more hostile to the truth. For you understand, as far as making the verse goes, there is no difference whether in this kind of line the anapest or the dactyl is placed with the spondee. Yet, for measuring it rationally, something not proper to the ear but

to the mind, this fact is discerned by a true and fixed reason, not by irrational opinion. And we are not the first to have found it out, but it was noticed long before this custom grew up. And so, if people should read those who have been most learned in this discipline either in the Greek or Latin tongue, they, chancing to hear this, will not be too surprised, although one is ashamed of the stupidity of seeking an authority for strengthening men's reason, since nothing is to be preferred to the authority of truth and reason itself, certainly better than any man. For we do not in this case look only to the authority of the ancients as in the lengthening or shortening of a syllable, to use our words as they also used them. Yet, because in a matter of this kind it is the part of slothfulness to follow no rule, and of license to establish a new one, so in the measuring of verse the inveterate will of man and not the eternal ratio of things is to be considered, since we first perceive its measured length naturally by the ear, and then establish it by the rational consideration of numbers, and since anyone judging this meter to be properly completed more surely than other meters judges it must close with a distinctive ending, and since it is clear such an ending must be marked by a shorter time. For this confines the length of the time and somehow checks it.

Chapter 6

(11) And since all this is so, how can the second member end if not with an incomplete foot? But the beginning of the first member is either a complete foot, as in the trochaic verse, *Roma, Roma, cerne quanta sit deum benignitas*, or part of a foot, as in the heroic verse, *Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris*. And so, with all hesitation now removed, measure if you will the verse, *Phaselus ille quem videtis, hospites*, and tell me about its members and feet.

D. I see its members are certainly distributed into five and seven half-feet, so the first is *Phaselus ille* and the second *quem videtis hospites*. The feet, I see, are iambic.

M. But I ask, aren't you to take care at all the verse doesn't end with a full foot?

D. You are right; I was off the track. For who wouldn't be bright enough to see it must end in a half-foot like the heroic verse. And considered in this genus, we measured the verse, not with iambs, but with trochees, to have a half-foot close it.

(12) *M.* It's just as you say. But look, what do you think is to be said about this one they call Asclepiadean, *Maecenas atavis edite regibus*.³ For a part of the discourse ends in the sixth syllable, and not inconsistently, but in nearly all verses of this kind. Its first member is *Maecenas atavis*; the second, *edite regibus*. And one can well hesitate as to what ratio it's in. For if you should measure it off in four-time feet, there will be five half-feet in the first member and four in the second. But the law forbids the last member's consisting of an even number of half-feet so ending the verse in a full foot. It remains for us to consider six-time feet, with each member consisting of three half-feet. And in order for the first member to end with a full foot, we must begin with two longs; then a whole choriamb divides the verse so the second member begins with another choriamb following it, and the verse closes with a half-foot of two short syllables. For this number of times together with the spondee placed at the beginning fill out a six-time foot. Do you have anything perhaps to add to this?

D. Nothing, certainly.

M. You are willing for both members to consist of the same number of half-feet.

D. Why not? For conversion here is not to be feared, because

³ Horace, *Odes* 1.1.1.

if the first member were put in place of the second with the first becoming second, the same law of feet will no longer hold. And so there is no cause why the same number of half-feet should not be allowed the members in this case, since this equality can be maintained without any fault of convertibility, and since also the law of a distinctive ending is preserved when the foot doesn't end in a full foot—and this ought to be most consistently preserved.

Chapter 7

(13) *M.* You have quite seen through the matter. And so, since now reason has found there are two kinds of verses, one where the number of half-feet in the members is the same, another where it is not, let us diligently consider, if you will, how this inequality of half-feet may be referred to some equality by a somewhat more obscure but certainly very subtle ratio of numbers. For look, when I say two and three, how many numbers do I say?

D. Two, of course.

M. So two is one number, and three one, and any other you might have said.

D. That's so.

M. Doesn't it seem to you from this, one can be joined not absurdly with any number? For one can't say one is two, but in a certain way two is one; likewise it can be truly said three and four are one.

D. I agree.

M. Listen to this. Tell me what does three times two make all together?

D. Six.

M. Six and three aren't the same number, are they?

D. Not at all.

M. Now, I want you to take four times three and tell me the product.

D. Twelve.

M. You see, also, twelve is more than four.

D. And a great deal more certainly.

M. To dilly-dally no longer, this rule must be fixed: whatever two numbers you choose from two on, the less multiplied by the greater must exceed the greater.

D. Who could have any doubt about this? For, what is so small in the plural number as two? And yet, if multiplied by a thousand, it will so exceed a thousand as to be its double.

M. You are right. But take the number one and then any other greater number and, just as we did with the others, multiply the lesser by the greater. The greater will not be exceeded in the same way, will it?

D. Clearly not, but the lesser will be equal to the greater. For two times one is two, ten times one is ten, and a thousand times one is a thousand, and by whatever number I multiply one, the result must be equal.

M. So one has a certain right of equality with other numbers, not only in any number's being one, but also in one's giving, multiplied by any number, that same number as a product.

D. That's very evident.

(14) *M.* Come now, look to the numbers of half-feet the unequal members in the verse are made of, and you will find a wonderful equality by means of the ratio we have discussed. For, I believe, that is the least verse in two members of an unequal number of half-feet which has four half-feet and three, as for instance *Hospes ille quem vides*. For the first member, *Hospes ille*, can be cut equally into two parts of two half-feet each, but the second, *quem vides*, is so divided one

part has two half-feet, the other one half-foot. And so this last member is as if it were two and two by that law, just discussed, of the equality one has with all numbers. And so by this division the first member is in some way the same length as the second. And where there would be four and five half-feet, as in the case of *Roma, Roma, cerne quanta sit*, it doesn't work out this way, and so that will be a meter rather than a verse, because the members are unequal in such a way they can be referred to no law of equality by any division whatsoever. You certainly see, I believe, the four half-feet, *Roma, Roma*, of the first member can be separated into two each; and the five last ones, *cerne quanta sit*, can be divided into two and three, where, by no law whatsoever, does equality appear. For in no way can the five half-feet, because of the two and three, be accounted the same as the four, the way we found in the shorter verse just given, the three half-feet because of the one and two have the same value as four. Is there anything you haven't followed or anything displeasing you?

D. Why, on the contrary, everything is evident and thought out.

(15) M. Well, now, let's consider five and three half-feet, like this little verse, *Phaselus ille quem vides*, and let's see how such an inequality may fall under a law of equality. For all agree this kind of line is not only a meter, but also a verse. And so, when you have cut the first member into two and three half-feet, and the second into two and one, join together the subordinate parts you find alike in both, since in the first section we have two's, and in the second there are two parts left, one of three half-feet from the first member, the other in one half-foot from the last member. And so we also join the last two together because it is in community with all members, and, added together, one and three make

four, the same as two and two. By this division, therefore, five and three half-feet are brought into agreement, too. But tell me if you have understood.

D. I certainly have, and very much approve.

Chapter 8

(16) *M.* We should next discuss five and seven half-foot. Of this kind are those two noblest verses, the heroic and what is popularly called the iambic, a six-foot verse, too. For *Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris* is so divided its first member is *Arma virumque cano*, or five half-feet, and its second *Troiae qui primus ab oris*, or seven. And *Phaselus ille quem videtis, hospites* has for its first member *Phaselus ille*, in five half-feet, and for its second, in seven half-feet, *quem videtis, hospites*. But this great nobleness labors within this law of equality. For when we have divided the first five half-feet into two and three, and the last seven into three and four, the parts of three half-feet each will certainly go together. And if the other two should combine so one of them consisted in one half-foot and the other in five, they would be joined together by the law permitting the union of one with any number, and added together they would make six, the sum also of three and three. But now, because two and four are found in this case, together they will give six, but by no law of equality is two as much as four, to produce, you might say, a necessary joining. Unless you could say, perhaps, it is sufficiently subsumed under a rule of equality by having two and four make six just as three and three. And I don't think this ratio is to be attacked, for this is an equality, too. But I should not be willing for five and three half-feet to enjoy a greater harmony than five and seven. For the name of one is not so famous as that of the other, and in

the case of the first you see not only the same sum is found when one and three are added together as when two and two, but also the parts are much more concordant when one and three are joined together because of the harmony of one with all numbers, than when two and four are joined as in the second case. Do you find anything not clear?

D. Nothing at all. But somehow it offends me these six-foot verses, although more celebrated than other kinds and said to have the first place among verses, should have less harmony in their members than those of obscurer fame.

M. Don't be discouraged. For I shall show you so great a harmony in the six-foot verses as they alone among all others have merited, so you may see they have been justly preferred. But, since its treatment is a little longer, although more interesting, we ought to leave it to the end when we have sufficiently discussed the others and are free of all care for a closer scrutiny of the secrets of these verses.

D. Willingly. But I should wish to have explained what we first started out to do so as to understand it now more easily.

M. In comparison with those already discussed, those you are waiting for become more agreeable.

Chapter 9

(17) And so now consider whether in two members, one six half-feet and the other seven, is found the equality necessary to a real verse. For you see this must be discussed after five and seven half-feet. And an example of this is *Roma, cerne quanta sit deum benignitas.*

D. I see the first member can be distributed into parts having three half-feet each; the second into three and four. And so when the equals are added they make six half-feet, but

three and four are seven and are not equal in number to the first lot. But if we should consider two and two in the part with four, and two and one in the part with three, then, when the parts with two have been added, the sum is four, but when those with two and one are added, if we take these also as four because of one's agreeing with all other numbers, then they become all together eight, and they exceed the sum of six by more than when they were seven.

(18) *M.* It's as you say. Now, seeing this kind of combination doesn't fall under the law of verses, let's consider now next in order those members with the first having eight half-feet, the second seven. Well, this combination has what we want. For, joining the half part of the first member with the part of the second member nearest that half, since they are each four half-feet, I make a sum of eight. And so there are left four half-feet from the first member and three from the second. Two from the one and two from the other together become four. Again two from the one and one from the other, combined according to that law of agreement constituting one equal to all the other numbers, are in a way taken for four. So now this eight agrees with the other eight.

D. But why don't I get an example of this?

M. Because it's been so often repeated. Yet, so you may not think it's been left out at its proper place, here it is, *Roma, Roma, cerne quanta sit deum benignitas*, or this, too, *Optimus beatus ille qui procul negotio*.⁴

(19) And so now examine the combination of nine and seven half-feet. An example of this is *Vir optimus beatus ille qui procul negotio*.

D. It is easy to recognize these harmonies. For the first

⁴ A variation on Horace, *Epodes* 1.2.

member is divided into four and five half-feet and the second into three and four. The lesser part of the first member, then, joined with the greater part of the second, makes eight, and the greater part of the first member with the lesser part of the second likewise makes eight. For the first combination is four and four half-feet, and the second five and three. Further, if you should divide five into two and three half-feet, and three into two and one, there appears another harmony of two with two and of one with three, because one is joined with all other numbers by that law of ours. But, unless reason fails me, there remains nothing more for us to seek on the combination of members. For we have already come to eight feet, and we recognized some time ago a verse can't lawfully exceed eight feet. And so, come now, open up these secrets of the six-foot verses, the heroic and iambic or trochaic, you have excited and disturbed my attention for.

Chapter 10

(20) *M.* I shall; at least, that reason common to us both will. But say, don't you remember when we were talking about meters, we said and wholly exhibited by our very senses, those feet whose parts are in the superparticular ratio, either in two and three, as the cretic or paeons, or in three and four, as the epitrites, are thrown out by the poets because of their less pleasing sound and harmoniously embellish the severity of prose when a period's close is bound by them?

D. I remember. But where does this get us?

M. It's because I want us first to understand, once feet of this kind have been denied use in poetry, there only remain those whose parts are in a one-to-one ratio as the spondee, or two-to-one as the iamb, or in both as the choriamb.

D. That's so.

M. But if this is the matter of the poets and prose is at variance with verse, no verse can be made except of this kind of feet.

D. I agree, for I see poems in verse are on a grander scale than those other meters proper to lyric poems. But so far, where this reasoning leads us I can't see.

(21) *M.* Be patient. Now let's talk about the excellence of six-foot verse. And first I want to show you, if I can, the most proper six-foot verses can only be of two kinds, also the most famous of all: one the heroic like *Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris*, measured according to custom with the spondee and dactyl, but according to a more subtle reasoning with spondee and anapest; the other called iambic, and by the same reasoning found to be trochaic. Now, I believe you see clearly somehow the sound-intervals are dull, unless the long syllables are interspersed with short ones; likewise they become too cut up and too tremulous, you might say, unless the shorts are interspersed with longs; and in neither case is there a proper compounding even though they burden the ear with an equality of times. And so, neither those verses with six pyrrhics nor those with six proceleusmatics aspire to the dignity of heroic verse, nor those with six tribrachs to the dignity of trochaic verse. Further, in those verses reason itself prefers to all others, if you should convert the members, the whole will be so changed we will be forced to measure off other feet. And so you might say these are more inconvertible than those consisting either all of shorts or all of longs. And, therefore, it makes no difference whether the members in these more properly organized verses are ordered with five and seven half-feet or with seven and five. For in neither of these orders can the verse be converted without so much change it turns out to run in other feet. Yet, in the

case of these verses, if the poem is begun with verses having the first members of five half-feet, those with first members of seven half-feet should not be mixed in, lest it then be possible to convert them all. For no substitution of feet cancels conversion. Yet the rare interspersion in heroic verses of an all spondaic verse is allowed, although this latter age of ours has very little approved it. But in the case of trochaic or iambic verses, although it is permissible to put in a tribrach anywhere, yet it has been judged very bad in poems of this sort to resolve a verse entirely into shorts.

(22) And so when the epitrites have been excluded from the six-foot mode of verse, not only because they are more fitted to prose, but also because with six of them, like the dispondees, they would exceed thirty-two times, and when the five-time feet have also been excluded because prose claims them more eagerly for closing periods, and when likewise the molossi and all other six-time feet, although they do well in poems, have been excluded from this present affair because of the number of times, there remain the verses composed all of short syllables having either pyrrhics or proceleusmatics or tribrachs, and all of longs having spondees. And though they are admitted to the six-foot mode, yet they must give way to the dignity and harmony of those varied with shorts and longs and on this account much less convertible.

Chapter 11

(23) But it can be asked why the six-foot verses are judged better measured by that subtle ratio in terms of anapests or trochees, than when they are measured in terms of dactyls or iambs. For without reference to meaning, since we are now discussing numbers, if the verse were in the one case *Troiae qui primus ab oris arma virumque cano*, or in the

other *Qui procul malo pius beatus ille*, each of these would certainly be a six-foot verse, and not less tempered with a good disposition of longs and shorts, nor any more convertible. And the members in each case are so ordered a part of discourse ends in the fifth and seventh half-feet. Why, then, should they be thought better if they are rather so: *Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris* and *Beatus ille qui procul pius malo*? And to this question I could too easily and rapidly reply, it happened by chance these were first noticed and repeated. Or if not fortuitous, I believe it seemed better the heroic verse should close with two longs rather than with two shorts and a long, because the ear finds its rest more easily in the longs. And the other verse would better have a long syllable than a short in the final half-foot. Or perhaps it's this way. Whichever of the two pairs are chosen first necessarily rob of their supremacy those they could become by a conversion of members. And so that kind is judged best *Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris* is an example of, and immediately the other, its converse, would be improper, for instance, *Troiae qui primus ab oris, arma virumque cano*. And this must also hold for the trochaic kind. For if *Beatus ille qui procul negotio* is better, then the kind it would become on conversion, *Qui procul negotio beatus ille*, certainly should not be. Yet, if anyone should dare make such verses, it is evident he will make other kinds of six-foot verse not so good as these.

(24) And so these, the most beautiful of all six-foot verses, have not been able, the two of them, to maintain their integrity against the license of men. For in the case of the trochaic kind, the poets think all four-time feet applying to numbers should be mixed in, not only with the six-foot verse, but with the least up to the greatest magnitude of eight feet.

And the Greeks, in fact, put them alternately, beginning with the first and third places, if the verse began with a half-foot; if with a full trochee, these longer feet are put alternately beginning with the second and fourth places. And in order for this corruption to be tolerable, they haven't divided each foot into two parts by beat, one to the arsis, the other to the thesis, but, putting the arsis on one foot and the thesis on the next (and so they call the six-foot verse trimeter), they bring the beat back to the division of the epitrites. At all events, if this should be constantly held to, although the epitrites are feet belonging to prose rather than to poetry and it would turn out to be, no longer six-foot, but three-foot verse, yet in any case that equality of numbers would not be wholly destroyed. But now it is allowed, provided only they are also put in the places already mentioned, to put the four-time feet not only in every place, but wherever one pleases and as many times as one pleases. And even the ancients of our race could not keep these places at intervals free of feet of this kind. And so with respect to this kind of verse the poets have gone all the way in this corruption and license, because, we are to think, they wished dramatic poetry to be very much like prose. But now that enough has been said as to why these among six-foot verses are of greater nobleness, let's see why the six-foot verses themselves are better than any others constructed of any number of feet whatsoever. Perhaps you have something to say against this?

D. No, I agree. And now I am eagerly waiting to know about that equality of members you so much interested me in a while ago—if it is now proper to turn to it.⁵

⁵ The curious argument on the six-foot verse which follows is referred to very definitely by Aulus Gellius, XVIII.15.2, who refers it back to Varro. See Weil, *op.cit.* 142.

Chapter 12

(25) *M.* Then let me have your entire attention and tell me if you think any length can be cut into any number of parts.

D. I have been sufficiently persuaded of that, and I don't think I can doubt every length called a line has its half and in this way can be cut into two lines. And, since the lines made by this cut are certainly lines, it is clear the same thing can be done with them. And so, any length can be cut into any number of parts.

M. Very readily and truly explained. And can't it be rightly affirmed every length, on being extended its length in width, is equal to the square of its width? For, if the line move sideways any more or less than the length of the line itself, it isn't the square; if just that, it is the square.

D. I understand and agree. Nothing could be truer.

M. I am sure you see this follows: if counters, laid out one after another at equal distances, are substituted for the line, their length will only take on the form of a square when the stones have been multiplied by an equal number. For example, if you put down two stones, you will not get a square unless two others are added in width. And if three, six must be added, apportioned in width in two rows of three each. For, if they should be added in length, no figure results. For length without width is not a figure. And it is possible to consider the other numbers in proportion. For, as two times two and three times three make square figures in numbers, so also do four times four, five times five, six times six, and so on for the rest.

D. This, too, is reasoned and evident.

M. See, now, if time has length.

D. Who would doubt there's no time without length?

M. And further, can a verse be without time-length?

D. It certainly cannot.

M. What in this length is to be substituted for the counters: the feet necessarily divided into two parts, that is, into an arsis and thesis, or the half-feet, each containing only an arsis or thesis?

D. I judge it more proper to substitute the half-feet for the counters.

(26) *M.* Come, then, repeat how many half-feet the heroic verse's shorter member contains.

D. Five.

M. Give an example.

D. *Arma virumque cano.*

M. You only wanted the other seven feet to be in harmony by an equality with these five didn't you?

D. That's all, certainly.

M. Further, is there any verse seven half-feet can complete by themselves?

D. There certainly is. For the first and smallest verse has just this number of half-feet with a rest added at the end.

M. You are right. But for it to be a verse, into what two members is it divided?

D. Into four and three half-feet.

M. Then bring each part under the law of squares, and see what four times four makes.

D. Sixteen.

M. What three times three?

D. Nine.

M. What's the whole?

D. Twenty-five.

M. Since, then, seven half-feet can have two members,

when each of its members has been referred to the ratio of squares they add up to the number twenty-five. And this is one part of the heroic verse.

D. So it is.

M. Then the other part of five half-feet, since it cannot be divided into two members and must harmonize by means of some equality, isn't the whole of it to be squared?

D. I judge so. And yet I already see a marvelous equality. For five times five gives twenty-five. And so, not without cause have the six-foot verses become more famous and more noble than the others. For it is hard to say how great the difference is between the equality of these unequal members and that of all others.

Chapter 13

(27) *M.* Then my promise didn't fail you, or, rather, reason itself both of us follow. And so, to finish this talk soon enough, you see certainly, although the meters are almost innumerable, yet a meter can only be a verse if it has two members harmoniously joined together, either with an equal number of half-feet with their endings inconvertible, as in *Maecenas atavis edite regibus*, or again with an unequal number of half-feet yet combined according to some equality as four and three, or five and three, or five and seven, or six and seven, or eight and seven, or seven and nine. For the trochaic can begin with a full foot, as in *Optimus beatus ille qui procul negotio*, and with an incomplete foot, as in *Vir optimus beatus ille qui procul negotio*, but it can certainly only end with an incomplete foot. Whether these incomplete feet contain whole half-feet, as in the case of the example just cited, or less than a half-foot, as the two last shorts in this choriamb, *Maecenas atavis edite regibus*, or more than

a half, as the first two longs at the beginning or the bacchius at another choriambic verse's end, as for example, *Te domus Evandri, te sedes celsa Latini*,⁶ still all these incomplete feet are called half-feet.

(28) Now, not only are there such poems as those of the epic or even of the comic poets, made in verses so as to be of one kind, but also the lyric poets composed the circular kind called by the Greek *peridoi*, not only on those meters not governed by the law of verse, but also in verses. For that famous one of Flaccus,

*Nox erat, caelo fulgebat luna sereno
Inter minora sidera.*⁷

is a circular two-membered poem consisting of verses. And the two verses cannot harmonize unless they are both reckoned in six-time feet. For the heroic mode does not harmonize with the iambic or trochaic mode, because one set of feet is divided in a one-one ratio, the other in a double ratio. And so, the circular poems are made either of any meter without verse, like those in the discussion before this one when we were talking just about meters, or are made only of verses like those we have just been talking about, or are measured both in verses and other meters, as in this case:

*Diffugere nives, redeunt iam gramina campis,
Arboribusque comae.*⁸

But in what order you place either the verses with the other meters, or the greater members with the lesser, makes no difference in the ear's pleasure, provided the circular meter

6 Terentianus quotes this, according to Maurist ed.

7 Horace, *Epodes* 15.1-2.

8 Horace, *Odes* IV.7.1-2.

is not shorter than a two-membered verse nor longer than a four-membered one. But, if you have nothing to the contrary, let this be the end of the discussion, so we may next come with as much wisdom as we can from these sensible traces of music, all dealing with that part of it in the numbers of the times to the real places where it is free of all body.

BOOK SIX

The mind is raised from the consideration of changeable numbers in inferior things to unchangeable numbers in unchangeable truth itself.

Chapter 1

(1) *M.* We have delayed long enough and very childishly, too, through five books, in those number-traces belonging to time-intervals. And let's hope a dutiful labor will readily excuse our triviality in the eyes of benevolent men. For we only thought it ought to be undertaken so adolescents, or men of any age God has endowed with a good natural capacity, might with reason guiding be torn away, not quickly but gradually, from the fleshly senses and letters it is difficult for them not to stick to, and adhere with the love of unchangeable truth to one God and Master of all things who with no mean term whatsoever directs human minds. And so, whoever reads those first books will find us dwelling with grammatical and poetical minds, not through choice of permanent company, but through necessity of wayfaring. But when he comes to this book, if, as I hope and pray, one God and Lord has governed my purpose and will and led it to what it was intent upon, he will understand this trifling way is not of trifling value, this way we, too, not very strong ourselves, have preferred to walk, in company with lighter persons, rather than to rush with weaker wings through the freer air. So, as far as I can see, he will judge either we haven't sinned at all or very little, if only he is of the number of spiritual men. For if by chance the other crowd from the schools, with tumultuous tongues taking vulgar delight in the noise

of rhythm-dancers, should chance upon these writings, they will either despise all or consider those first five books sufficient. But this one the very fruit of those is found in, they will either throw aside as not necessary, or put off as over and above the necessary. But, brother-fashion, I warn those others not educated to understand these things, if, steeped in the sacraments of Christian purity and glowing with the highest charity for the one and true God, they have passed over all these childish things, for fear they descend to them and, having begun to labor here, bewail their backwardness, not knowing they can pass over difficult roads and obstacles in their path, even if unknown, by flying. But, if those read who because of infirm or untrained steps cannot walk here, having no wings of piety to disregard and fly by these things with, let them not mix themselves up with an improper business, but nourish their wings with the precepts of the most salutary religion and in the nest of the Christian faith, and carried over by these let them leave behind the labor and dust of this road, more intent on the fatherland itself than on these tortuous paths. For these books are written for those who, given up to secular letters, are involved in great errors and waste their natural good qualities in vanities, not knowing what their charm is. And if they would notice it, they would see how to escape those snares, and what is the place of happiest freedom.¹

Chapter 2

(2) And so you, my friend, sharing reason with me,

¹ Because of the passages of Letters 101 to Memorius, Marrou conjectures that this first chapter of Book 6 is really an introduction tacked on in order to make Book 6 a self-sufficient unit. For this was the only Book he sent to Memorius. *Sextum sane librum quem emendatum reperi, ubi est omnis fructus caeterorum, non distuli mittere Charitati tuae* (Epist. 101.4). See Mariou, *St. Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Bibl. des Ecoles d'Athènes et de Rome, cvix, 1939) 580-83.

that we may pass from corporeal to incorporeal things, tell me if you will, when we recite this verse, *Deus creator omnium*, where you think the four iambs and twelve times are it consists of. Is it to be said these numbers are only in the sound heard or also in the hearer's sense belonging to the ears, or also in the act of the reciter, or, because the verse is known, in our memory too?

D. In all of them, I think.

M. Nowhere else?

D. I don't see what else there is, unless, perhaps, there is some interior and superior power these proceed from.

M. I am not asking for what is to be merely suspected. And so if these four kinds are so apparent to you, you see no others equally evident, then let us look at them, if you will, separately one by one and see whether any one of them can be without any other. For I am sure you won't deny the possibility of a sound's beating the air by the drop of liquid or the shock of bodies, with pauses and limits of this sort, and existing where no hearer is present. And when this takes place, of the four there is only this first kind where the sound has the numbers.

D. I don't see any other.

(3) *M.* What about this other kind in the sense of the hearer? Can it be if nothing sounds? For I am not asking whether the ears have, if something sounds, a power [*vis*] of perceiving they don't lack even if the sound is wanting. For, even when there is a silence, they differ somewhat from deaf ears. But I am asking whether they have the numbers themselves, even if nothing is sounding. For it is one thing to have the number, another to be able to sense the harmonious sound. For if you should touch with your fingers a sentient place in the body, the number of times it's touched is sensed by the sense of touch. And when it is sensed, the sensor pos-

esses it. But it is likewise a question whether, not the sensing, but the number is in the sensor, when nothing is touching.

D. I couldn't easily say the sense is lacking in such numbers determined in themselves, even before anything sounds; otherwise it would neither be charmed by their harmony nor offended by their absurdity. And so, whatever it is we either approve or disapprove by when something sounds, when we do so not by reason but by nature, that I call the number of the sense. For this power of approval and disapproval is not created in my ears, when I hear the sound. The ears are certainly not otherwise accessible to good sounds than to bad ones.

M. Watch out you don't confuse the following two things. For, if any verse is sometimes pronounced shorter, sometimes longer, it cannot occupy the same interval of time, although the same ratio of feet may be preserved. And so, pleasing the ears by its peculiar kind of harmony is the doing of that power we accept harmonious things and reject disagreeable ones by. But its being perceived in a shorter time when it is spoken more quickly than when it is spoken more slowly makes no difference except how long the ears are touched by sound. So this affection of the ears when they are touched with sound is in no way such as if they should not be so touched. For as hearing differs from not hearing, so hearing this tone differs from hearing another. Therefore, this affection is neither prolonged beyond nor restrained to less, since it is the measure of the sound producing it. So it is one thing in the iamb, another in the tribrach, longer in the longer iamb, shorter in the shorter, nothing in a rest. And if it is produced by an harmonious sound, it must be harmonious. Nor can it be except when its author, the sound, is present; for it is like a trace imprinted in water, not found before your pressing a body into it, and not remaining when you have taken it away. But that natural power, belonging to the judiciary, you might say, present in

the ears, is still there during the rest, and the sound does not bring it into us, but is rather received by it to be approved of or disapproved of. And so, if I am not mistaken, these two must be distinguished, and it must be admitted the numbers in the passion of the ears when something is heard are brought in by the sound and taken away by the rest. And it is inferred the numbers in the sound itself can be without those in the hearing, although these last cannot be without the first.

Chapter 3

(4) *D.* I agree.

M. Notice, then, this third kind, being in the practice and operation of the person pronouncing, and see whether these numbers can be without those in the memory. For silent within ourselves we can also by thinking go through certain numbers in the amount of time they would be gone through by the voice. It is evident these are in a certain operation of the mind which, since it produces no sound and visits no passion on the ear, shows this kind of number can be without the other two, namely, the one in the sound, the other in the hearer when he hears. But we ask if it would be without memory's accompanying it. Yet, if the soul produces the numbers we find in the beat of the veins, the question is solved. For it is clear they are in the operation and we are no whit helped with them by the memory. And if it is not sure in the case of these whether they belong to the soul operating, certainly about those we produce in recurrent breathing, there is no doubt there are numbers in its time-intervals, and the soul so operates them they can also be changed in many ways when the will is applied. Nor is there need of any memory for their production.

D. It seems to me this kind of number can be without the

other three. For, although I don't doubt the various vein-beats and respiration-intervals are created for the equilibrium [*temperatio*] of bodies, yet who would so much as deny they are created by the soul in operation? And if the flow, according to the diversity of bodies, is faster for some, slower for others, yet, unless there is a soul to produce it, there is none.

M. Consider, too, the fourth class, that is, the class of those numbers in the memory. For, if we draw them out by recollection, and, when we are carried away to other thoughts, we again leave them as if hidden in their own hiding places, I don't think it is difficult to see they can be without the others.

D. I don't doubt they can be without the others. But just the same, unless they were heard or thought, they could not be sent on to the memory. And so, although they remain at the death of those that are heard or thought, yet they are imprinted by them.

Chapter 4

(5) *M.* I don't contradict you, and I should like now to ask which of these four kinds you judge the principal one. Except, I believe, while we were discussing these things, a fifth kind appeared from somewhere, a kind in the natural judgment of perceiving when we are delighted by the equality of numbers or offended at a flaw in them. For I am mindful of your opinion our sense could have in no way done this without certain numbers latent in it. Or do you, perhaps, think a great power like this belongs to some one of those four?

D. On the contrary. I think this kind is to be distinguished from all of them. For it is one thing to sound and this is attributed to a body; another to hear, and in the body the soul is passive to this from sounds; another to produce numbers either more slow or less so; another to remember them; and another,

by accepting or rejecting, to give sentence on them all as if by some natural right.

(6) *M.* Come, now, tell me which of these five is the most excellent.

D. The fifth, I think.

M. You are right, for, unless it excelled, it could not bring judgment on them. But again, I want to know of the other four which you judge the greatest.

D. The kind in the memory, certainly. For I see those numbers are of greater duration than when they sound or are heard or are produced.

M. Then you prefer things made to things making. For you said a while ago those in the memory are imprinted by the others.

D. I should rather not prefer them. But still, how can I not prefer those of greater duration to those of less, I don't see.

M. Don't let this disturb you. For not as eternal things to temporal are those decaying through a longer time to be preferred to those passing away in a shorter time. Because one day's sanity is to be preferred to many days' folly. And if we compare desirable things, one day's reading is better than many days' writing, if the same thing is read in one day, written in many. So numbers in the memory, although they remain longer than those they are imprinted by, yet it is not proper to prefer them to those we cause, not in the body, but in the soul. For they both pass away, one by cessation, others by forgetting. But those we operate seem to be snatched from us, even though we have not yet stopped, by the succession of those immediately following, when the first by disappearing give place to the second, the second to the third, and continuously those before to those after, until a complete stop destroys the last. But in the case of forgetting, several numbers are

wiped away together, even though by degrees. For they do not remain entire for any time. For what is not found in the memory after a year, for instance, is also already less after a day's time. But this decrease is not sensed, yet it is not therefore falsely conjectured. Because the whole does not disappear suddenly the day before the year is finished, and so the understanding grants it begins to lapse from the time it comes into the memory. That is why we often say, 'I vaguely remember,' whenever we repeat something, recalling it after a time before its complete destruction. And, therefore, both these kinds of numbers are mortal. But things making are by right preferred to those made.

D. I accept and approve.

(7) *M.* Now, then, consider the other three, and explain which of them is the best, and so to be preferred to the others.

D. That's not easy. For, according to the rule things making are to be preferred to those made, I am forced to give the prize to the sounding numbers. For, when we hear we sense them, and when we sense them we are passive to them. And so, these last make those others existing in the ear's affection when we hear, but, again, these we have by sensing produce in the memory others they are rightly preferred to, since they are produced by them. But here, because sensing and remembering both belong to the soul, I am not disturbed if I should prefer something produced in the soul to something else likewise produced in it. But I am disturbed how the sounding numbers, certainly corporeal or somehow in a body, are to be considered of more worth than those found in the soul when we sense. And yet, again, it is disturbing how these last are not rather to be more highly considered since they make, and the others are made by them.

M. Be rather amazed at the body's being able to make any-

thing in the soul. For it could not, perhaps, if the body the soul used to animate and govern without trouble and with the greatest ease, changed for the worse by the first sin, were not subject to death and corruption. And yet, it has a beauty of its own, and in this way it sets its dignity off to fair advantage in the eyes of the soul. And neither its wound nor its disease has deserved to be without the honor of some ornament. And the highest Wisdom of God designed to assume this wound, by means of a wonderful and ineffable sacrament, when He took upon Himself man without sin, but not without the condition of sin. For He was willing to be humanly born, to suffer, and to die. None of these things was accomplished by our merit, but by this most excellent goodness, in order we might rather look to the pride we most deservedly fell into those things by, than to the humiliations He undeservingly suffered, and so with calm mind we might pay the death owed, if He, too, was able to bear it unowed on our account, and anything else more secret and more atoned for in such a sacrament to be understood by saintly and more holy people. And so it is not surprising a soul operating in mortal flesh feels the passion of bodies. And not because it is better than the body ought all taking place in it be considered better than all taking place in the body. I suppose you think the true is to be preferred to the false.

D. Who wouldn't.

M. But what we see in our sleep isn't a tree?

D. Not at all.

M. But its form is in the soul. And the form of what we now see has been made in the body. And so, since the true is better than the false, and although the soul is better than the body, the true in the body is better than the false in the soul. But as the latter is better in so far as it is true, not in so far as it is made in the body, so the former is worse in so far as it is false,

not in so far as it is made in the soul. Have you anything to say about this?

D. Nothing, certainly.

M. Listen, then, to this other thing, nearer to the mark, I believe, than 'better.' For you won't deny what is proper is better than what is not proper.

D. I certainly admit that.

M. But no one doubts a man would be improper in the same clothes a woman would be proper in.

D. That's evident.

M. Well, then, it isn't to be greatly wondered at, is it, if this form of numbers is proper in the sounds falling on the ears, and improper in the soul when it has them by sensing and being passive?

D. I don't think so.

M. Why, then, do we hesitate to prefer sounding and corporeal numbers to those made by them, even though they are made in the soul which is better than the body? Because we are preferring numbers to numbers, producers to produced, not the body to the soul. For bodies are the better the more harmonious [*numerosiora*] they are by means of these numbers. But the soul is made better through lack of those numbers it receives through the body, when it turns away from the carnal senses and is reformed by the divine numbers of wisdom. So it is truly said in the Holy Scriptures, 'I have gone the rounds, to know and consider and seek wisdom and number.'² And you are in no way to think this was said about those numbers shameful theaters resound with, but about those, I believe, the soul does not receive from the body, but receiving from God on high it rather impresses on the body. And what kind of thing this is, is not to be considered in this place.

² Eccle. 7.26.

Chapter 5

(8) But, lest it turn out the life of a tree is better than our own, because it doesn't receive numbers from the body by sensing (for it has no sense), it must be carefully considered if there is really nothing called hearing unless something is produced in the soul by the body. But it is very absurd to subordinate the soul like a matter to the body as an artisan. For the soul is never inferior to the body, and all matter is inferior to the artisan. The soul, then, is in no way a matter subordinated to the body as an artisan. But it would be, if the body worked numbers in it. Therefore, when we hear, numbers are not made in the soul by those we know in sounds. Or do you think otherwise?

D. What happens, then, when a person hears?

M. Whatever it is—and perhaps we cannot find or explain it—it won't result, will it, in our denying the soul's being better than the body? And when we admit this, can we subordinate it to the body working and imposing numbers, so the body is an artisan but the soul a matter something harmonious is made from and in? And, if we believe this, we must believe the soul is inferior to the body. And what more miserable and detestable thing than this can be believed? And since things are thus, I shall try as much as God will help me to conjecture at and discuss whatever lies there. But if, because of the infirmity of either or both of us, the result should be less than we wish, either we ourselves shall investigate it at another time when we are less agitated, or we shall leave it to more intelligent people to examine, or, unworried, we shall leave it unsolved. But we must not for that reason let these other more certain things slip from our hands.

D. I shall hold that as unshaken if I can, and yet I shouldn't wish that secret place to remain impenetrable to us.

(9) *M.* I shall say right away what I think. But you must either follow or go ahead of me, if you can, when you see me stop and hesitate. For I think the body is animated by the soul only to the purpose of the doer. Nor do I think it is affected in any way by the body, but it acts *through* it and *in* it as something divinely subjected to its dominion. But at times it acts with ease, at times with difficulty, according as, proportionately to its merits, the corporeal nature yields more or less to it. And so, whatever corporeal things are taken into this body or come into contact with it from without, have in the body itself, not in the soul, some effect either opposed to its operation or agreeing with it. And so, when it fights the body's opposition and with difficulty throws the matter subjected to it into the ways of its operation, it becomes more attentive to the actions because of the difficulty. And this difficulty on account of the attention, when not unobserved, is called feeling, and this is named pain or trouble. But when what is taken in or touches it easily agrees, all that or as much as is necessary is projected into the course of its operation. And this action of the soul by which it joins its body to an outside body harmonizing with it, since it is accomplished more attentively because of an unusualness, is not unobserved, but because of the harmony is felt with pleasure. But when those things the soul uses to mend the wear and tear in the body are lacking, need follows. And when the soul becomes more attentive on account of the difficulty of the action and this operation does not pass unobserved, then this is called hunger or thirst or some such thing. But when there is a superfluity of things taken in, from the burden of these is born a difficulty of operation and an awareness accompanies the issue. And since this action does not pass unobserved, indigestion is felt. It also operates with attention when it gets rid of the superfluity: if smoothly, with pleasure; if roughly, with pain. The soul also occupies

itself attentively with any sickly disturbance of the body, desiring to succor it as it declines and disintegrates. And when this action does not pass unobserved, it is said to feel sickness and illness.

(10) In short, it seems to me the soul, when it has sensations in the body, is not affected in any way by it, but it pays more attention to the passions of the body. But this sense, even while we do not sense, being nevertheless in the body, is an instrument of the body directed by the soul for its ordering so the soul may be more prepared to act on the passions of the body with attention to the end of joining like things to like and of repelling what is harmful. Further, I think, it operates something luminous in the eyes, a most clear and mobile air in ears, something misty in the nose, something damp in the mouth, something earthy and muddy you might say in the touch. But whether these are put together in this way or by some other distribution, the soul acts quietly if the things within are in unity of health as if they agreed to some domestic pact. But when things affecting the body, you might say with otherness, are applied, it exerts more attentive actions accommodated to certain places and instruments. Then it is said to see or hear or smell or taste or touch. And by such actions it willingly associates proper things and resists improper ones. I think the soul, then, when it senses, produces these actions on the passions of the body, but does not receive these passions.

(11) And so, when we now examine the numbers of sounds and the sense of hearing is called into doubt, it isn't necessary to digress any longer. Let's return, then, to the question, and see if sound causes anything in the ear. Or do you deny that it does?

D. Not at all.

M. Well, you agree ears are an animated member?

D. I do.

M. Since, then, what in this member is like air is moved when the air is moved, we don't believe, do we, the soul, with a vital motion quickening in silence the body of the ears before this sound, can either stop from the work of moving what it animates, or can move the air of the ear now moved extrinsically in the same way it moved before the sound slipped in?

D. It seems it must be in another way.

M. Then, to move it in another way, mustn't it be said to act, not to be acted on?

D. That's true.

M. So we are not absurd in believing the movements of the soul, or its actions or operations—find any easier name you can—do not escape the soul's notice when it senses.

(12) But these operations are applied to these passions of the body either as when figures interrupt the light of our eyes, or sound enters the ears, or odors move into the nostrils, or savors to the palate, and to the rest of the body solid and bodily things; or as when something runs and crosses from place to place in the body itself; or as when the whole body is moved by its own weight or that of another. These are operations the soul applies to these passions of the body, delighting the soul when it agrees with them, offending it when it opposes them. But when it is affected by its own operations, it is affected by itself, not by the body. But clearly when it adapts itself to the body, it is less with itself, because the body is always less than it is.

(13) And so, when the soul is turned from its God to its servant, it is necessarily deficient; but, when it is turned from its servant to its God, it necessarily progresses and furnishes its servant a very easy life, and, therefore, the least laborious and

full of business, no attention being given it in its surpassing peace. Just so is the bodily affection called health. Indeed, it needs none of our attention, not because the soul then does nothing in the body, but because it does nothing more easily. For in all our operations the greater the difficulty we operate with, the more attentively we do it. But this health will be the most firm and certain when this body will have been restored to its former stability, in its own time and order. And this its resurrection is properly believed before it is fully understood. For the soul must be ruled by the superior, and rule the inferior. But God alone is superior to it, and only body is inferior to it, if you mean the soul whole and entire. And so as it cannot be entire without the Lord, so it cannot excel without a servant. But as its Lord is greater than it, so its servant is less. And so, intent on its Lord, it understands His eternal things and is greater, and its servant, too, is greater in its kind through the soul itself. But when the Lord is neglected, intent on its servant with the carnal concupiscence it is seduced by, the soul feels the movements it gives its servant, and is less; yet not so inferior as its servant, even when it is at the lowest in its own nature. But the body by this offense of its mistress is much less than it was, since she was much greater before it.

(14) And so, for one now mortal and fragile, it is dominated with great difficulty and attention. And from there does this error fall upon the soul that it esteems the body's pleasure because the matter yields to its attention, more than it esteems its health needing no attention. No wonder it is involved in troubles, preferring unquiet to security. But a greater unquiet arises for one turning back to God for fear he be turned away. And it is so until the push of carnal business, excited by daily habit and inserting itself into the heart of the conversion by disorderly memories, comes to rest. When a man's movements

that carry him away into outside things have been in this way quieted, then he enjoys an interior freedom of peace signified by the sabbath. So he knows God alone is his Lord, and He is served with the greatest freedom. But, although he starts those carnal movements as he wishes, he does not stop them as he wishes. For, again, the reward of sin is not in his power as sin itself is. For, indeed, this soul is a thing of great worth, and yet it doesn't remain apt for suppressing its own lascivious movements. For it sins in its strength, and by divine law made weaker after sin it is less able to undo what it has done. 'Unhappy man I am, who will deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Then a movement of the soul, conserving its force and not yet extinct, is said to be in the memory. And, when the mind is intent on something else, it is as if that previous movement were not in the mind and were lost, except, before it dies away, it be renewed by some affinity of similar things.

(15) But have you anything to say to the contrary?

D. You seem to me to say what is probable, and I shouldn't dare oppose.

M. Since, then, feeling itself is a moving the body against the movement made in it, don't you think then we do not feel when bones and nails and hair are cut, not because these are not at all alive in us, for otherwise they would neither be held together nor be fed nor grow, nor show their strength in begetting their kind. But because they are penetrated with an air less free or mobile than is necessary for the soul's causing a movement there so rapid as that movement it is against when it's said to feel. Although some such life is understood in trees and other vegetation, it is nowise proper to prefer it, not only to our own life exceeding it in reason, but also to that of brutes.

For it is one thing not to sense because of very great solidity, and another not to sense because of very great health of body. For in the one case the instruments moving relatively to the passions of the body are lacking, and in the other these passions themselves are lacking.

D. I approve and agree.

Chapter 6

(16) *M.* Let's get back to the problem proposed, and tell me, of the three kinds of numbers, one in the memory, the other in sensing, and another in sound, which of these seems to you the most excellent.

D. I put sound after these other two, both in the soul and in some sense living. But of these last two I am uncertain which I consider superior. But, perhaps, since we said those in action are to be preferred to those in the memory only because the ones are active and the others are caused by them, so for the same reason it is proper to prefer also those in the soul while we are listening to those in the memory caused by them. That's the way it seemed to me before.

M. I don't think your reply absurd. But since it has been argued those numbers in sensing are also operations of the soul, how do you distinguish them from those we see to be in act even when the soul in silence and not remembering performs something harmonious through intervals of time? Or do the ones belong to the soul moving itself with respect to its body, while those others inhering belong to the soul moving itself with respect to the body's passions?

D. I accept this distinction

M. Well, do you think it acceptable those relative to the body be judged superior to those relative to the body's passions?

D. Those existing in silence seem to me to be freer than those exerted not only on the body but also on the body's passions.

M. It seems we have distinguished five kinds of numbers and ordered them in some sort of scale of merits. And if you will, we shall impose names proper to them, to avoid in the rest of our discourse using more words than things.

D. Very willingly.

M. Then let the first be named judicial, the second advancing [*progressores*], the third reacting [*occursores*],⁴ the fourth memorial, the fifth sounding.

D. I understand and I am glad to use these names.

Chapter 7

(17) *M.* Come now, tell me, which of these seems to you undying, or do you think they all fall in their time and die?

D. I think the judicial alone are undying. For the others, I see, either pass away when they are made or are stricken out of the memory by forgetfulness.

M. You are just as certain, then, of the immortality of the first as you are of the destruction of the others? Or is it proper to inquire more diligently whether they are undying?

D. Let's look into the matter thoroughly.

M. Say, then, when I pronounce a verse sometimes longer, sometimes shorter, provided I comply with the law of times putting feet in a one-two ratio, I don't offend the judgment of your senses with any kind of hitch or fraud, do I?

D. Not at all.

M. Well, but that sound, given out in shorter and, you

⁴ *Occursores* is here translated as 'reacting,' but with the understanding, of course, that the sounding numbers cause the reacting numbers only as something like occasional causes.

might say, faster syllables, it can't occupy more time than it sounds, can it?

D. How can it?

M. Then, if those judicial numbers are time-bound in just the interval the sounding numbers were disposed in, can they hope to judge those other sounds based on the same iambic law, but slower?

D. In no way.

M. Then it appears those judicial numbers are not confined to a span of time.

D. It certainly appears so.

(18) *M.* You are right in agreeing. But if they are confined to no interval, then no matter how slowly I should emit iambic sounds in regular intervals, they could still be used for judging. But now, if I should say a syllable of such a stretch as three steps in walking (to make it small), and another syllable double that, and if I should order the succeeding iambs at such a pace, then the law of one to two would nevertheless be preserved. And yet we couldn't apply that natural judgment to confirming these measurements, could we?

D. I can't deny you seem right, for my opinion of the matter is very simple.

M. Then the judicial numbers are also confined to certain limits of time-spans they cannot exceed in their judgments. And whatever exceeds these intervals, they find no way to judge. And if they should be confined in this way, I do not see how they are immortal.

D. And I don't see what I can say to that. Although now I shall be less forward in presuming on their immortality, yet I do not understand how they are in this way proved mortal. For it is possible whatever intervals they can judge they can always judge, since I cannot say they are destroyed as the others

by forgetfulness, or their length of time is so long as a sound's movement, or of such a stretch as reacting numbers, or as the numbers we have called advancing, impelled in time and prolonged in length. For each of these passes away with the time of its operation. But the judicial remain certainly in the nature of man, whether also in the soul I do not know, to pass judgment on things given even if varied within certain lengths, by approving harmonies in them and rejecting discords.

(19) *M.* At least you concede some men are more quickly offended by discordant numbers, some more slowly, and most judge them defective only by the comparison with sound ones on hearing them agree and disagree.

D. I agree to that.

M. Well, what do you think this difference arises from, if not from nature or practice or both?

D. That's true.

M. Then, I want to know if someone at sometime could pass judgment on and approve longer intervals than another could.

D. I believe that's possible.

M. Well, anyone who can't, if he should practice properly and should not be really dull, could, couldn't he?

D. Certainly he could.

M. But he couldn't go so far as to judge even longer intervals, comprehending in that judicial sense intervals in the ratio of one to two hours or days or months or years (for they'd at least be hindered by sleep) and approving them as iambs of motion.

D. They can't.

M. Why can't they do so? Unless it's because to each living thing in its proper kind and in its proportion with the universe is given a sense of places and times, so that even as its body

is so much in proportion to the body of the universe whose part it is, and its age so much in proportion to the age of the universe whose part it is, so its sensing complies with the action it pursues in proportion to the movement of the universe whose part it is? So this world, often called in Sacred Scriptures by the name of heaven and earth, is great by containing all things whose parts being all diminished in proportion it remains just as large, or increased in proportion it still remains just as large. For nothing is large of itself in space and time-stretches, but with respect to something shorter; and again nothing is small of itself, but with respect to something larger.⁵ And so, if there is attributed to human nature for the actions of carnal life a sense such that it cannot pass judgment on greater stretches of times than the intervals pertaining to the use of such a life demand, then, since this nature of man is mortal, so I think also this sense is mortal. For it is not for nothing custom is called a sort of second and fitted-on nature. But we see new senses in the judging of this kind of corporeal things, built up by custom, by another custom disappear.

Chapter 8

(20) But whatever kind of thing these judicial numbers may be, they are certainly superior to any other in this, that we doubt and with difficulty find out if they are mortal. But of the other four kinds there is no question they are mortal. And although they do not embrace some members

⁵ Just as the thing rhythmized was considered only as a matrix for ratios, so here the extended world is such a matrix, and so is the sensible life of man. Being then belongs more to the relations than to the relata and this doctrine will find its keystone in the Trinity where the distinction of Persons involves a certain primacy of relations. It is interesting to note in this connection that Boethius, who mentions Augustine, carefully pointed this out in his discussion of the categories of Aristotle in his *De Trinitate*.

of these four classes because they have been extended beyond their laws, yet they appropriate the kinds themselves for their very consideration. For even the advancing numbers, when they seek a certain harmonious operation in the body, are modified by the secret will of the judicial numbers. For whatever restrains and keeps us from walking with unequal steps, or from beating out in unequal intervals, or from eating or drinking with uneven motions of the jaw, and from scratching with unequal motions of the nails, or to be brief, from unequal movements in any application of ourselves to doing something with our bodily members, and tacitly demands a certain equality, that very thing is something judicial, I don't know what, introducing God the builder of the animal, properly believed to be the author of all fittingness and agreement.

(21) And these reacting numbers, brought forth certainly not according to their own will, but in virtue of the body's passions, in so far as the memory can keep their intervals, just so far they given over to the judgment of the judicial are numbers and are judged. For the number consisting in time-intervals can in no way be judged by us unless we are aided in the judging by memory. For any syllable, no matter how short, since it begins and stops, has its beginning at one time and its ending at another. Then it is stretched over some little interval of time and stretches from its beginning through its middle to an end. So reason finds spatial as well as temporal intervals have an infinite division and so no syllable's end is heard with its beginning. And so, even in hearing the shortest syllable, unless memory help us have in the soul that motion made when the beginning sounded, at the very moment when no longer the beginning but the end of the syllable is sounding, then we cannot say we have heard anything. And from this it often comes about, being occupied with another thought, we do not

in conversation seem to have heard even ourselves. This is not because the soul does not at that time put in motion those reacting numbers, since certainly the sound reaches the ears, and the soul cannot be idle at its body's passion and since it cannot move differently than if that passion of the body should occur, but because the impetus of the motion is immediately blotted out by the attention [*intentio*] on something else, an impetus which, if it remained, would remain in the memory so we would also know and feel we had heard. But if a rather slow mind follows not too easily what reason discovers in the case of a short syllable, in the case of two syllables there's certainly no doubt no soul can hear both at the same time. For the second does not sound unless the first stops. For how can what cannot sound together be heard together? Then, as the diffusion of rays shining out into the open from tiny pupils of the eye, and belonging therefore to our body, in such a way that, although the things we see are placed at a distance, they are yet quickened by the soul, so, just as we are helped by their effusion in comprehending place-spans, the memory too, because it is somehow the light of time-spans, so far comprehends these time-spans as in its own way it too can be projected. But when a sound beats a longer time on the ears, in no way articulated and again another, double it, or equal it, is added on from some stopping place or another, then that motion of the mind, created by its attention on the past and finished sound in its transition, is repressed by its attention on the continuously succeeding sound, and so it does not remain in the memory. And so mustn't these judicial numbers be thought of as extended in a certain interval of time? For they can't judge the numbers situated in the time-spans unless the memory should come to their assistance, with the exception of the advancing numbers whose very advance they regulate. But there intervene the time-spans where we forget or remember what

they judge. And so we cannot judge round or square or any other solid definite things in those bodily forms which are properly objects of the eyes, unless we turn them around to the eyes. But when one part is seen, if for that reason it should blot out what is seen in another, then the attention of the person judging would be in vain, because it, too, is accomplished in a certain time-span. And it is up to memory to see to this diversity.

(22) But it is much more evident we judge memorial numbers by judicial when the memory itself presents them. For, if reacting numbers are judged in so far as they are presented by it, much more are those found to live in the memory itself which are brought back by memory itself as if they had been stored up by other applications of our attention. For what else do we do when we recall to memory except examine somehow what we've stored up? But a motion of the mind, not destroyed, runs back into our cogitation on the occasion of similar ones, and it's this that's called remembering. And so, either in thought alone or also in the movement of our members, we enact numbers we have already enacted sometime or other. But for that reason we know they haven't just come, but come back into our cogitation, because whenever they were being committed to memory, they were repeated with difficulty, and we needed prior practice in order to follow through. And with this difficulty overcome, when the numbers offer themselves without trouble and at will, conformably to the times and in their proper order, so easily, indeed, those inhering more forcibly come forth as if of their own will even while we are thinking of something else, we then feel they are not new. There is also another thing, I think, giving us to feel the present motion of the mind has already existed at some time: that is, to recognize when we compare by an interior light of some

sort the recent, and certainly more lively, movements of the action we are in the midst of when we remember, with the now more composed memorial numbers. And such knowledge is recognition and remembering. Then the memorial numbers are also judged by these judicial numbers, never alone, but along with active or reacting numbers or with both, bringing them from their hiding-places to the light, and recalling these numbers, lost before and now brought to life again. So, since the reacting numbers are judged in so far as the memory presents them to those judging, in turn the memorial numbers can be judged as the reacting numbers exhibit them. So this is the difference: for the reacting numbers to be judged, the memory presents what might be called recent traces of their flight, but when we hear and judge the memorial numbers, the same traces relive with the passage of the reacting numbers. Now, why do we need to say anything further about the sounding numbers, since, if they are heard, they are judged in the reacting numbers? But if they sound where they can't be heard, who doubts they can't be judged by us? And just as in sounds with the ears as instruments, so in dancing and other visible motions, we judge, by means of these same judicial numbers with the help of the memory, whatever pertains to temporal numbers.

Chapter 9

(23) Since things are so, let us try if we can and transcend those judicial numbers and see if there are any superior to them. Although in the case of these judicial numbers we now see a minimum of time-spans, yet they are only applied for judging those things in a time-span, and not even all such, but only those articulated memory-wise. Do you object to this?

D. The force and power of these judicial numbers moves me to the utmost. For it seems to me it's to them the functions

of all the senses are referred. And so, I don't know whether among numbers any thing more excellent than these can be found.

M. There is nothing lost in our looking more carefully. For, either we shall find in the human soul superior ones, or, if it should be clear there are none in it higher, we shall confirm these to be the highest in it. For it is one thing not to be, and another not to be capable of being found either by us or any man. But I think when that verse *Deus creator omnium* we quoted is sung, we hear it through reacting numbers, recognize it through memorial numbers, pronounce it through advancing numbers, are delighted through judicial numbers, and appraise it by still others, and in accordance with these more hidden numbers we bring another judgment on this delight, a kind of judgment on the judicial numbers. Do you think it's the same thing to be delighted by sense and to appraise by reason?

D. I admit they are different. But I am disturbed first by the name. Why aren't those called judicial numbers where reason rather than where delight resides? Second, I fear this appraisal of reason is only a more diligent judgment of judicial numbers concerning themselves. Not one kind of number in delight and another in reason, but one and the same kind of number judges at one time those produced in the body when memory presents them as we just proved, and at the other times of themselves, in a purer manner and more remote from the body.

(24) *M.* Don't worry about names; the thing is in the meaning [*potestas*]. Names are imposed by convention, not by nature. But your thinking them the same and not wishing to accept them as two kinds of number—the same soul's doing both, I guess, wrings that out of you. But you must notice in

advancing numbers the same soul⁶ moves the body or moves to the body, and in reacting numbers the same soul goes to meet its passions, and in memorial numbers it fluctuates in motions, you might say, until they somehow subside. And so we see the motions and affections of one nature, that is, the soul, in these kinds which are necessarily enumerated and distinguished. And, therefore, if, as it is one thing to be moved to those things the body is passive to, and this is done in sensing; another, to move oneself to the body, and this is done in operating; another, to hold in the soul what is gotten from these motions, and that is to remember; so it is one thing to accept or reject these motions either when they are first produced or when revived by the memory, and this is done in the delight at the fitness or in the distaste at the absurdity of such movements or affections; and another thing to appraise whether they delight rightly or not, and this is done by reasoning—if all this is true, then we must admit these last are of two kinds just as the first are of three kinds. And, if we have been right in our judgment, the very sense of delight could not have been favorable to equal intervals and rejected perturbed ones, unless it itself were imbued with numbers; then, too, the reason laid upon this delight cannot at all judge of the numbers it has under it, without more powerful numbers. And, if these things are true, it appears five kinds of numbers have been found in the soul, and, when you add to these those corporeal numbers we have called sounding, you will see six kinds of numbers in rank and order. And now, if you will, let those that tried to take first place be called sensuous, and those found to be more excellent receive the name of judicial numbers, since that is more honorable. And again I think the name of sounding numbers ought to be

⁶ I read *eandem animam* for *eadem animam* in Migne, an obvious misprint not in Benedictine Edition.

changed, since, if they should be called corporeal, they will also evidently signify those involved in dancing and in any other visible motion. Do you approve, then, of what's been said?

D. I do. For it seems to me both true and evident. And I am willing to accept your corrections in vocabulary.

Chapter 10

(25) *M.* Well, now examine the force and power of reason in so far as we can examine it in its works. For reason itself, to mention the most extraordinary thing it attains in its operation, first has considered what is good mensuration, and seen it to be in a free movement, and directed it to the end of its own beauty. Then it saw there was something in the movements of bodies varying in the brevity and length of time, in so far as it was greater or less in time, and something else varying in the beat of spatial intervals in certain degrees of swiftness and slowness. After this division, it articulated into different numbers whatever was in a time-stretch by means of moderate intervals convenient to the human senses, and followed through their kinds and order to the measurements of verses. Lastly, it turned its attention to what the soul it's the head of would do in the measuring, operating, sensing, and retaining of these things. And it separated all these numbers of the soul from bodies. And it saw itself could not notice, distinguish or rightly enumerate all these things without certain numbers of its own, and it set them above the others as of an inferior order, by means of a kind of judicial appraisal.

(26) And now of its own delight, that looks so closely into the balancings of times and shows its decisions in measuring these numbers, it asks this question: 'What is it we love in sensible harmony?' Nothing but a sort of equality and

equally measured intervals, isn't it so? Does the pyrrhic foot or spondaic or anapestic or dactylic or proceleusmatic or dissondaic delight us for any other reason than its comparing the one of its parts to the other by an equal division of itself? And what beauty does the iamb, trochee, or tribrach have if not the division of their greater part into two such as their lesser? And, too, do the six-time feet sound more smooth and gay except through their division according to either law: that is, either into two equal parts with three times each, or into one part single and the other double; that is, so the greater part is twice the less and is in this way divided equally by it, since the four times are measured off and cut in two by the two times? What about the five and seven-time feet? How is it they seem more adapted to prose than to verse, if not because their smaller part does not divide their larger in two? And yet, whence are they themselves admitted in the order of their own kind to the numberliness of times, if not because the smaller part also in the five-time foot has two such sub-parts as the greater has three, and in seven-time feet the smaller three such as the greater four? So in all feet, no measuring net marks off any least part others as many as possible are not equal to.

(27) Consider in the case of feet joined together, whether this conjoining be continued on as far as one wishes as in rhythms, or whether it be restrained by some definite end as in meters, or whether it be divided into two members symmetrical to one another by some law as in verses—by what now other than equality is one foot in accord with another? And how is it the molossus' and ionic's middle syllable, a long one, can be divided, not by division, but by the will of the person reciting and beating time, into two equal moments, so even the whole foot is in harmony with each three-time

part when it is added to others divided in the same way? Isn't it only because the law of equality dominates, that is, because it's equal to its sides, each of two times, and it itself is of two times? Why can't the same thing be done in the case of the amphibrach when it is added to other four-time feet, if it isn't because an equality of this sort isn't found there, the middle syllable being double and the sides single? Why in rests isn't our sense offended by a deficiency, if not because what is due that same law of equality, although not in sound, is yet made up in spread of time?⁷ Why, too, is a short syllable taken for a long one when followed by a rest—and not by convention, but by natural consideration directing the ears—if not because by the same law of equality we are prevented, in a longer time-span, from forcing the sound into a shorter

⁷ There is more in this sentence than meets the eye. In the first place we have here the appearance in rhythm of the being of non-being. The rest, the absence of a sensible motion, is itself the object of the time-count and plays its role on the same level as a sensible sound. Its absence is counted by the 'spread of time' (*spatium temporis*). This is the forerunner of the *distentio animi* of the *Confessions*, all of which is certainly tied in with Plotinus' doctrine of *to parakolouithema* in his treatise *On Time and Eternity*: 'What it means then to say [time] is the accompaniment of movement . . . ' (III. 7.10.1-2). For the essential point of Plotinus' attack on Aristotle's 'Time-is-the-number-of-movement' theory is that there is something like the synthesis of the constantly recurring motions which necessitates an intellectual accompaniment of the motion. For, without this there would be no unity of the past and present, no one magnitude to be numbered. Nor can the movement itself establish its own homogeneity so that it can be said for instance that the daily motion of the heavens is always equal to itself. It is the intellectual accompaniment which in view of equality considers one or another cyclic movement in the sensible world as equal one cycle to another and so perceives an order there. 'For on the one hand one will refer a body moving for such and such a time to the [uniform] movement of such and such magnitude (for it is the principle) and to its time. But the time of this movement, on the other hand, one will refer to the movement of the soul which divides out the equal intervals' (*Enn.* III. 7.13.58-62). So in mechanical theories the choice of equal motions is made with a view to the convenient ordering of all the others. One should hasten to add this does not reduce time to a purely

time? And so the nature of hearing and passing over in silence allows the lengthening of a syllable beyond two times: so what is also filled with rest can be filled with sound. But for a syllable to occupy less than two times, with a span left and rests at will, is a sort of deception of equality, because there can be no equality in less than two. And finally in the case of that equality of members, the circuits the Greeks call *periodoi* are varied by and verses are formed by, how is a return made somehow to the same equality unless the members joined together as unequals be found to have a force of equality so that in the circuit the shorter member harmonize in beat with the greater by equal feet, and in the verse by a more subtle consideration of numbers?

(28) And so reason wonders and asks the sensuous delight of the soul which reserves to itself the judicial role whether, when an equality in the number of time-spans pleases it, any two short syllables one hears are really equal, or could it be one of them is pronounced longer, not to the long syllable's measure, but a little under, yet enough to exceed its like. You can't deny this is possible, can you, when the soul's delight does not sense these differences, but delights in unequals as equals?

psychological being. Any thing perceived by an act of the intellect is an object in its own right.

It is not too far-fetched, perhaps, to consider along with these texts of Plotinus and Augustine a text of Aristoxenus: 'It is clear that the comprehending of melody is the accompanying with hearing and understanding of the notes gone by in their every difference (For melody like the other parts of music is in becoming) . . . For the comprehension of music consists of these two, sensing and memory. For we must sense what is becoming and remember the become. There is no other way to follow the things of music' (*Harmonica* II 38, 29-39.3).

The doctrine of Augustine certainly starts with these same terms and insights. Obviously, the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* and of the Incarnation will force him to more intellectualist conclusions. See Guitton, *Le temps et l'éternité chez Plotin et St. Augustin* (Paris 1933), which, however, does not treat the problem profoundly enough.

And what is worse than this error and inequality? And so we are advised to turn away from the enjoyment of things imitating equality. For we cannot perceive whether they perfectly fill out their time, although we can perhaps perceive they do not perfectly do so. And yet in so far as they imitate we cannot deny they are beautiful in their kind and order.

Chapter 11

(29) Let's not, then, be envious of things inferior to ourselves, and let us, our Lord and God helping, order ourselves between those below us and those above us, so we are not troubled by lower, and take delight only in higher things. For delight is a kind of weight in the soul. Therefore, delight orders the soul. 'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.'⁸ Where delight, there the treasure; where the heart, there happiness or misery. But what are the higher things, if not those where the highest unchangeable undisturbed and eternal equality resides? Where there is no time, because there is no change, and from where times are made and ordered and changed, imitating eternity as they do when the turn of the heavens comes back to the same state, and the heavenly bodies to the same place, and in days and months and years and centuries and other revolutions of the stars obey the laws of equality, unity, and order. So terrestrial things are subject to celestial, and their time circuits join together in harmonious succession for a poem of the universe.

(30) And so many of these things seem to us disordered and perturbed, because we have been sewn into their order according to our merits, not knowing what beautiful thing Divine Providence purposes for us. For, if someone should be

⁸ Matt. 6.21.

put as a statue in an angle of the most spacious and beautiful building, he could not perceive the beauty of the building he himself is a part of. Nor can the soldier in the front line of battle get the order of the whole army. And in a poem, if syllables should live and perceive only so long as they sound, the harmony and beauty of the connected work would in no way please them. For they could not see or approve the whole, since it would be fashioned and perfected by the very passing away of these singulars. So God has ordered the man who sins as vicious, but not viciously. For he has been made vicious by will, thus losing the whole he who obeyed God's precepts possessed, and has been ordered in part so who did not will to fulfill the law has been fulfilled by the law. But whatever is fulfilled by the law is also fulfilled justly; and whatever justly is not fulfilled viciously, because God's precepts possessed, and has been ordered in part so he far as he is man is something good. But whatever is unchaste in so far as it is unchaste is a bad work. But man for the most part is born of unchastity, that is to say, from man's bad work, God's good work.

(31) And so, to return to the subject all this was said for, these numbers are pre-eminent by virtue of the beauty of ratio. And if we were absolutely separated from them, then whenever we should be disposed to the body, the advancing numbers would not alter the sensuous numbers. But by moving bodies they produce the sensible beauties of times. And so reacting numbers are also made opposed to sounding numbers. And the same soul receiving all its own motions multiplies, you might say, in itself, and makes them subject to recall. And this force it has is called memory, a great help in the everyday business of this life.

(32) Then whatever this memory contains from the

motions of the mind brought to bear on the passions of the body are called *phantasiai* in Greek. And I don't find in Latin anything I should rather call them. And the life of opinion consists in having them instead of things known and things perceived, and such a life is at the very entrance of error. But when these motions react with each other, and boil up, you might say, with various and conflicting winds of purpose, they generate one motion from another; not indeed those impressed from the senses and gotten from the reactions to the body's passions, but like images of images, to which we give the name phantasms. For my father I have often seen I know, in one way, and my grandfather I have never seen, another way. The first of these is a phantasia, the other phantasm. The first I find in my memory, the last in that motion of my mind born of those the memory has. But it is difficult both to find out and to explain how they are born. Yet, I think, if I had never seen human bodies, I could nowise imagine them by thinking with a visible form. But what I make from what I've seen, I make by memory. Yet it's one thing to find a phantasia in the memory and another to make a phantasm out of the memory. And a power of the soul can do all these things. But it is the greatest error to hold even true phantasms for things known, although in both kinds there is that we say, not absurdly, we know, that is, we have sensed such and such things, or imagined them. After all, I am not afraid to say I had a father and a grandfather. But I should be mad to say it is they themselves my mind holds in the phantasia or phantasm. But some follow their phantasms so headlong the only ground for all false opinions is to hold phantasias or phantasms for things known, known by the senses. And so let us resist them as much as we can, nor so fit our mind to them that, while our thinking is on them, we believe we see them with the understanding.

(33) And this is why, if numbers of this kind, coming to be in a soul given over to temporal things, have a beauty of their own, yet, even though they continually effect it by passing away, this beauty is grudged by a Divine Providence born of our punishable mortality merited by God's most just law, where yet He has not so forsaken us we may not turn back and be fetched again from the delight of the carnal senses, under the spread of His merciful hands. For such a delight strongly fixes in the memory what it brings from the slippery senses. And this habit of the soul made with flesh, through carnal affection, in the Holy Scriptures is called the flesh. And it is struggling with such a mind in that apostolic sentence: 'In mind I serve the law of God, but in flesh the law of sin.'⁹ But when the mind is raised to spiritual things and remains fixed there, the push of this habit is broken, too, and, being little by little repressed, is destroyed. For it was greater when we followed along with it; not altogether nothing, but certainly less when we check it. And so with a determined retreat from every wanton movement where lies the fault of the soul's essence, and with a restored delight in reason's numbers, our whole life is turned to God, giving numbers of health to the body, not taking pleasure from it; which happens when the exterior man is corrupt, even when there is a change for the better.

Chapter 12

(34) But the memory not only takes in the carnal motions of the mind, and we have already spoken of these numbers, but also the spiritual motions I shall now speak of briefly. For in so far as they are simpler, they demand fewer words, and the greatest possible serenity of mind. That equal-

⁹ Rom. 7.25.

ity we could not find sure and fixed in sensible numbers, but yet we knew shadowed and fleeting, the mind could never indeed desire unless it were known somewhere. But this could be nowhere in the spans of places and times; for those swell up and these pass away. Where, then, do you think, tell me, if possible. For you don't think it's in the forms of bodies, and you'll never dare say they are equal by pure experiment; nor in intervals of times where we do not know whether they are insensibly longer or shorter than they should be. I want to know where you think that equality is on seeing which we desire certain bodies or motions of bodies to be equal, and on more careful consideration we dare not trust them.

D. There, I think, where it is more excellent than bodies, but whether it is in the soul itself or above the soul I do not know.

(35) *M.* If, then, we look for that rhythmical or metrical art we use for making verses, do you think it possesses the numbers verses are made by?

D. I can't suppose anything else.

M. Whatever these numbers are, do they seem to you to pass away with the verses or to remain?

D. To remain, certainly.

M. Therefore, it must be agreed some things that pass away are made from some numbers that remain?

D. Reason forces me to agree.

M. Well, you don't think this art is other than some affection of the artisan's minds, do you?

D. So I believe.

M. Do you believe this affection also to be in one unskilled in this art?

D. Nowise.

M. And in the one having forgotten it?

D. Not even in the one himself unskilled even though he has been skilled at some time or other.

M. Well, if anyone reminds him by questioning, do you think those numbers return to him from the persons questioning, or he moves himself to something within his own mind whence returns to him what he had lost?

D. I think he does it within himself.

M. You don't think, by questioning, he could also be forcibly reminded which syllable is short or which is long if he has forgotten completely, do you? Since by an old agreement and custom of man, to some syllables a lesser, to others a greater stretch is given. For indeed if it were by nature or by discipline fixed and stable, then the learned men of our time would not have lengthened some syllables the ancients shortened, nor shortened some they lengthened.

D. I believe this can be so, since however much is forgotten can again be brought to memory by a remindful questioning.

M. I can't believe you think anyone by questioning could get you to remember what you ate a year ago.

D. I confess I couldn't, and I don't think now I could be reminded about syllables whose spans were completely forgotten.

M. Why so, except because, in the noun *Italia*, the first syllable by the will of certain men is shortened, and now by the will of others lengthened? But that one and two should not be three and that two should not be the double of one, none of the dead or living or of those to be can bring it about.

D. Evidently not.

M. What, then, if we asked very clearly all the other things pertaining to numbers the way we have with one and two, and if one were questioned, unskilled, not by forgetting,

but because he had never learned? Don't you think then he could likewise know this art except for the syllables?

D. How doubt it?

M. How, then, do you think he would move himself so these numbers may be impressed on his mind, and make that affection called art? Or will the questioner give them to him?

D. I think he does it within himself this way that he understands the things asked to be true and replies.

(36) *M.* Come, tell me now whether these numbers under discussion seem to you to be changeable?

D. Nowise.

M. Then you don't deny they're eternal.

D. I admit it.

M. Well, is there no lingering fear some inequality won't spoil them?

D. Nothing at all is surer for me than their equality.

M. From where, then, must we believe what is eternal and unchangeable to be given the soul if not from the eternal and unchangeable God?

D. I don't see what else to believe.

M. Well, then, isn't it evident he, who under another's questioning moves himself within to God to know the unchangeable truth, cannot be reminded by any outside warning to see that truth, unless his memory hold his own same movement?

D. It's evident.

Chapter 13

(37) *M.* I wonder, then, how he falls away from the contemplation of these things to need another's recalling it to his memory. Or must the mind even when intent on it be thought to require such a return?

D. I think so.

M. Let us see, if you will, what this could be could so incite to turn away from the contemplation of the highest and unchangeable equality. For I only see three kinds. For the mind is either intent upon something equal when it is turned away or something higher or lower.

D. There is need only to discuss two of them, for I see nothing superior to eternal equality.

M. Then, do you see anything could be equal to it and yet other?

D. I don't.

M. It only remains, then, to inquire what the lower is. But don't you think first of the soul avowing that equality to be certainly unchangeable, but knowing it itself changes from its intuiting at one time this equality and at another time something else and so following the variety of time, not found in eternal and unchangeable things, works this and that?

D. I agree.

M. Then this affection or motion of the soul by which it understands eternal things and counts temporal things below them even within itself and knows these higher things are rather to be desired than those lower, don't you think that's prudence?

D. I certainly do.

(38) *M.* Well, then, don't you think it worth pondering, at once there's not in the soul the inhering in eternal things, there's yet in it the knowing they should be inherited in?

D. I want us very much to ponder this, and I want to know how it comes about.

M. You will easily see, if you notice the things we direct the mind to most, and have the greatest care for. For I think they're those we very much love, isn't that so?

D. No others.

M. Say, then, we can only love beautiful things, can't we? For, although some people seem to love ugly things, those the Greeks commonly call *saprophíloi*, it is yet a matter of how much less beautiful they are than those things pleasing most people. For, clearly, no one loves those things whose foulness his sense is offended by.

D. It's as you say.

M. These beautiful things, then, please by number, where we have shown equality is sought. For this is found not only in that beauty belonging to the ears or in the motion of bodies, but also in the very visible forms where beauty is more usually said to be. Don't you think it's only equality when equal numbers reply to equal numbers in twos, but in ones, when they have a mean place so equal intervals are kept for them on each side?

D. I certainly do.

M. What is it in light itself holding the origin of all colors (for color also delights us in the forms of bodies), what is it in light and colors we seek if not what suits the eye? For we turn away from too great a flare, and we are unwilling to face things too dark, just as also in sounds we shrink from things too loud, and do not like whispering things. And this is not in the time-intervals, but in the sound itself, the light, you might say, of such numbers, whose contrary is silence, as darkness to colors. When, then, we seek things suitable for the way of our nature and reject things unsuitable we yet know are suitable to other living things, aren't we here, too, rejoicing in some law of equality when we recognize equals allotted in more subtle ways? This can be seen in smells and tastes and in the sense of touch—and for this a long time to follow out more clearly but very easy to explore. For there's not one of these sensibles doesn't please us from equality or likeness. But where equality and likeness, there number-

liness [*numerositas*]. In fact, nothing is so equal or like as one and one, isn't that so?

D. I agree completely.

(39) *M.* Well, didn't we persuade ourselves a while ago the soul effects these things in bodies, and doesn't suffer from bodies?

D. We did.

M. Then the love of acting on the stream of its bodily passions turns the soul away from the contemplation of eternal things, diverting its attention with the care of sensible pleasure; it does this with reacting numbers. But the love of operating on bodies also turns it away, and makes it restless; this it does with advancing numbers. The phantasias and phantasms turn it away; these it does with memorial numbers. Finally, the love of the vainest knowledge of such things turns it away; this it does with sensible numbers where lie rules of an art, as if glad in their imitation. And from these is born curiosity by its very care an enemy of peace, and in its vanity impotent over truth.

(40) But the general love of action turning away from the true arises from pride by which vice the soul has preferred imitating God to serving God. And so it is rightly written in Holy Scripture: 'The beginning of man's pride is to fall from God,'¹⁰ and 'The beginning of all sin is pride.' What pride is could not have been better shown than where it is said: 'What does earth and ashes take pride in, since in its own life it gives up its inmost things?' For since the soul is nothing through itself—for it would not otherwise be changeable and suffer a flight from essence—since then through itself it is nothing, but whatever it is is from God,

¹⁰ Eccli. 10. 14, 15, 9, 10.

staying in its order, it is quickened in mind and conscience by the presence of God Himself. And so it has this good inmost. And so to puff with pride is to go forth to the outermost and, we might say, to become empty, that is to be less and less. But to go forth into the outermost what is that but giving up the inmost things, that is, putting yourself away from God, not in the span of places, but in affect of mind?

(41) But that appetite of the soul is to have under it other souls; not of beasts as conceded by divine law, but rational ones, that is, your neighbors, fellows and companions under the same law. But the proud soul desires to operate on them, and as much as every soul is better than every body, just so much does the action on them seem more excellent than on bodies. But God alone can operate on rational souls, not through a body, but through Himself. But such is the state of sin that souls are allowed to act upon souls moving them by signifying by one or the other body, or by natural signs as look or nod, or by conventional signs as words. For they act with signs by commanding or persuading, and if there is any other way besides command and persuasion, souls act with or upon souls. But by rights it has come about those souls wishing to be over others command their own parts and bodies with difficulty and pain, in part being foolish in themselves, in part, oppressed by mortal members. And so with these numbers and motions souls set upon souls by, with the desire of honor and praise they are turned away from the sight of that pure and entire truth. For God alone honors the soul making it blessed in secret when it lives justly and piously before Him.

(42) The motions the soul thrusts upon those cleaving to it and servant to it, then, are like the advancing ones, for it acts as if on its own body. But those motions it thrusts

out, wishing to attach some to itself or to enslave, are counted as reacting motions. For it acts as if in the senses forcing a thing moving up outside to become one with it, and a thing not able to do so to be kept out. And the memory takes in both these motions, and makes them memorial, likewise boiling up in tumultuous fashion with the phantasias and phantasms of these acts. Nor are there lacking the corresponding judicial numbers seeing what moves suitably and unsuitably in these acts, not wrongly to be called sensible, for it is by sensible signs souls act toward souls. What wonder if the soul wound up in so many and great concerns is turned away from the contemplation of the truth? And it sees it in so far as it breathes free of them. But, because it has not yet turned them out, it cannot remain there. And so it is the soul has not at once the knowledge of where it ought to be and the power to be there. Do you agree?

D. Nothing, I daresay, to the contrary.

Chapter 14

(43) *M.* What's left, then? Since we have considered as far as possible the stain and oppression of the soul, isn't it to see what action is divinely commanded it for its return, after purgation and forgiveness, to peace, and for its entry into the joy of its Master?

D. Yes.

M. And what more do you think there's for me to say when Holy Scripture, in so many volumes endowed with such authority and holiness, exhorts us only to love our God and Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind, and to love our neighbor as ourself? If, then, we refer all those motions and numbers of human action to this end, we shall certainly be cleansed. Isn't it so?

D. It certainly is, but how short this is to hear, and how hard and arduous to do.

(44) *M.* What, then, is easy? To love colors and voices and sweets and roses and soft bodies? Is it then easy for the soul to love these things where it only desires equality and likeness, yet, considering a little more carefully, knows hardly the last shadow and trace of them? And is it difficult for the soul to love God thinking upon whom, as thoughts till then upon mean and sickly things allow, it finds these nothing unequal, nothing unlike, nothing divided in places, nothing changed in time? Or is there rather delight in throwing up a vast extent of building and passing the time in works of this kind where if the numbers please—there's nothing else—what can there be called equal and like, the discipline's reason would not laugh to scorn? And if this is so, why then does it sink from the truest height of equality to these things, and build up earthly machines in its own ruins? Was this not promised by Him who knows not to deceive? 'For my yoke,' He says, 'is light.'¹¹ The love of this world is more wearisome. For, what the soul seeks in it, constancy and eternity, it does not find, since the lowest beauty is finished out with the passage of things, and what there imitates constancy is thrown through the soul by the highest God. For the form [*species*] changeable only in time is prior to that changeable both in time and place. And just as souls have been told by the Lord what to love, so they are told through the Apostle John what not to love. 'Do not love this world,' he says; 'because all things in the world are concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes, and secular ambition.'¹²

(45) But what manner of man do you think this is, re-

¹¹ Matt. 11.30.

¹² 1 John 2.15,16.

ferring all those numbers from the body and over against the body's passions and held from them by memory, not to carnal pleasure, but only to the body's health? A man referring all those numbers operating on souls bound to him or those numbers put out to bind them, and therefore sticking within the memory, not to his own proud excelling, but to the usefulness of those souls themselves? A man also using those numbers in either kind as directing, in the role of moderators and examiners of things passing in the senses, not for an idle or harmful curiosity but for a necessary approval or disapproval? Doesn't such a man work all these numbers and yet not get caught in them? For he only chooses the body's health not to be hindered, and refers all those actions to the good of that neighbor he has been bidden to love as himself in the natural tie of common right.

D. You talk of a great and very manlike man.

(46) *M.* It's not those numbers below reason and beautiful in their kind do soil the soul, then, but the love of lower beauty. And whenever the soul finds to love in it not only equality, concerning which we have said enough for this work, but also order, it has lost its own order. Nor yet does it depart from the order of things even at this point, and so it is whenever and however a thing is, it is highly ordered. For it is one thing to keep order and another to be kept by order. That soul keeps order that, with its whole self, loves Him above itself, that is, God and fellow souls as itself. In virtue of this love it orders lower things and suffers no disorder from them. And what degrades it is not evil, for the body also is a creature of God and is adorned in its own beauty, although of the lowest kind, but in view of the soul's dignity is lightly esteemed, just as the value of gold is degraded by a mixture with the finest silver. And so whatever numbers result from our

criminal mortality, we shall not except them from the making of Divine Providence, since they are beautiful in their own kind, but let us not love them to become happy in their enjoyment. For we shall keep free of them since they are temporal, by using them well, as with a board in a flood by not throwing them aside as burdensome and not grasping them as stable. But the love of our neighbor commanded us is our most certain ascent to inhere in God and not so much to be kept by His ordering as to keep our own order firm and sure.

(47) Or perhaps the soul does not love order as even those sensible numbers attest? But how, then, is the first foot a pyrrhic, the second an iamb, the third a trochee, and so on? But in this law you will have rather told the following of reason, not of sense. Well, isn't this so of sensible numbers that when say eight long syllables take up as much time as sixteen short ones, yet the shorts look rather to be mixed with the longs? And when reason judges of sense and for it proceleusmatic feet are declared equal to the spondaic, it finds here only the power of ordering, because long syllables are only long in comparison with short syllables, and again short syllables are only short in comparison with long. And so the iambic verse, no matter how long it's pronounced, if it does not lose the rule of one and two, does not lose its name. But that verse consisting of pyrrhic feet with the gradual lengthening of its enunciation becomes suddenly spondaic, if you consult not grammar with music. But if it is dactylic or anapestic, since longs are perceived by comparison with shorts mixed in, no matter how long its enunciation, it keeps its name. Why are additions of half feet not to be kept with the same law, in the beginning as at the end; nor all used, although fitting the same beat? Why the sometime placing of two shorts rather than one long at the end? Aren't they measured off by sense

itself? Nor in these is there found an equality-number, suffering no change, but only a bond of order. It would take too long to go over all the other things like this having to do with the numbers of times. But even the senses reject visible forms, either leaning the wrong way or upside down, and like things, where it's not the inequality—for the equality of the parts remains—but the perverseness that's condemned. And finally in all our senses and works when we familiarize many unusual and therefore displeasing things by gradual steps to our taste, we first accept them with a kind of toleration and then gladly, haven't we kept our pleasure with order, and don't we turn from them unless the first are harmoniously bound with the middle, and the middle with the last?

(48) And so, let us put our joy neither in carnal pleasure, nor in the honors and praises of men, nor in the exploring of things touching the body from without, having God within where all we love is sure and unchangeable. And in this way it comes to be, when temporal things are present, yet are we not involved in them, and those things outside the body can be absent without sense of pain, and the body itself taken away with little or no sense of pain and brought back transformed by the death of its nature. For the soul's attention in the direction of the body contracts endless business, and the love of some special work to the neglect of universal law, a work yet inseparable from the universe of God's rule. And so who loves not the law is subject to the law.

Chapter 15

(49) For if, for the most part, thinking intently on things incorporeal and being always what they are, we meanwhile effect temporal numbers in some bodily movement, easy and useful, by walking or singing, then they pass straight

through us unnoticed, although they would not be were we not acting. And then, if, when we are occupied in our empty phantasms, likewise these, too, pass by as we act without feeling, how much more and more constantly 'when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality,'¹³ that is, to speak plainly, when God has vivified our mortal bodies, as the Apostle says, 'for the spirit remaining in us.'¹⁴ How much more, then, intent on one God and manifest truth, face to face, as it's said, shall we feel with no unquietness and rejoice in the numbers we move bodies by. Unless perhaps one is to believe the soul, although it can rejoice in things good through it, cannot rejoice in the things its good from.

(50) But this action the soul, its God and Master willing, extracts itself from the love of an inferior beauty by fighting and downing its own habit that wars against it; on that point of victory within itself over the powers of this alloy from whose envious desire to entangle it, it soars to God—its support and station—isn't such an action for you called the virtue temperance?

D. I see and understand.

M. Well, when it advances along this way, now divining eternal joys nor quite grasping them, no loss of temporal things nor any death can deter it from saying to weaker fellows, can it: 'It is good I be dissolved and be with Christ; but for your sakes it is necessary to remain in the flesh?'¹⁵

D. So I think.

M. And this disposition where it fears neither adversity nor death, that can only be called fortitude, can't it?

D. I see that.

¹³ I Cor. 15.53.

¹⁴ Rom. 8.11.

¹⁵ Phil. 1.23,24.

M. Now, this ordering itself, according to which it serves only one God, desires to be co-equal to only the purest souls and to have dominion only over animal and corporeal nature, what virtue do you think that is?

D. Who doesn't know that's justice?

M. Right.

Chapter 16

(51) But now I want to know, when we decided a while ago among ourselves prudence to be the virtue the soul knows its proper station by, its ascent to it being through temperance, that is, conversion of love to God called charity, and aversion from this world attended by fortitude and justice, I want to know whether you think when it will have come to the fruit of its delight and zeal by perfect sanctification, by that perfect vivification, too, of its body, and, the swarm of phantasms wiped from its memory, will have begun to live with God Himself for God alone, when will have been fulfilled that divinely promised us in these words: 'Beloved, now we are sons of God, and it has not yet appeared what we shall be. We know when He will have appeared we shall be like Him, since we shall see Him as He is,¹⁶—I want to know then whether you think these virtues we've recalled will then be there too.

D. I don't see, when those things the fight's about have passed by, how either prudence can be there, only choosing what to follow in opposition, or temperance, only turning love from things opposed, or fortitude, only bearing up under things opposed, or justice, only desiring to be equal to the most blessed souls and to master its lower nature in opposition, that is, not yet in possession of that it desires.

16 1 John 3.2.

(52) *M.* Your reply is not absurd so far. And I don't deny it has seemed this way to certain learned men. But I, on consulting the books whose authority none surpasses, found this said, 'Taste and see, since the Lord is sweet.'¹⁷ The Apostle Peter also puts it this way: 'If yet you have tasted, since the Lord is sweet.'¹⁸ I think this is what is effected in those virtues purging the soul by conversion. For the love of temporal things could only be dislodged by some sweetness of eternal things. But when it has come to what is sung, 'But the sons of men will hope under the cover of your wings; they will be drunk of the abundance of your house, and you will give them to drink in a torrent of pleasure; for in you is the fountain of life,' it does not say the Lord will be sweet to taste, but you see what a flood and flow is said of the eternal fountain; even a drunkenness follows on it. And by this name is wonderfully signified, it seems to me, that forgetfulness of secular vanities and phantasms. Then the rest follows, and it says, 'In your light we shall see light. Stretch forth your mercy to those knowing you.' 'In light' is to be taken as in Christ, who is the Wisdom of God, and is often called light. When therefore it is said 'We see,' and 'knowing you,' it can't be denied there'll be prudence there. Or do you think the true good of the soul can be known where there's no prudence?

D. I now understand.

(53) *M.* Well, can there be those right in heart without justice?

D. I know justice is very often signified by this name.

M. Then isn't it that the same prophet later says when he sings, 'And your jusice to those who are of right heart'?

D. Evidently.

¹⁷ Ps. 33.9.

¹⁸ I Peter 2.3.

M. Come, then, recall if you will we have already sufficiently expounded the soul lapses by pride into certain actions of its own power, and neglecting universal law has fallen into doing certain things private to itself, and this is called turning away from God.

D. I remember, certainly.

M. When, therefore, it acts, so this never again delights it, doesn't it seem to you to fix its love in God and to live most temperately and chastely and securely away from all filth?

D. It seems to be.

M. See, then, too, how the prophet goes on saying, 'Let not the foot of pride come upon me.' For, saying 'foot' he signifies the distraction or fall, and in freedom from this the soul inheres in God and lives eternally.

D. I agree and follow.

(54) *M.* Then fortitude remains. But as temperance against the lapse in the free will, so fortitude avails against the force anyone can be broken by if less strong in the face of attackers or if wretchedly lying down. And this force is usually well signified in the Scriptures by the name of hand. Then who besides sinners try to apply this force? Well, in so far as the soul is barricaded through this very thing and secured by God's support so nothing befalls it from anywhere, it sustains an enduring and you might say impassible power called fortitude; and I think this is said when it is added, 'Nor let the hand of sinners disturb me.'¹⁹

(55) But whether this or something else is to be understood by these words, will you deny the soul fixed in that perfection and blessedness sees the truth, remains unspotted, suffers no harm, is subject to the one God, and rises above other natures?

¹⁹ Ps. 35.8-12.

D. I don't see how it can otherwise be absolutely perfect and blessed.

M. Then, either this contemplation, sanctification, impassibility, and ordering of it are those four virtues perfected and consummated, or, not to split hairs over names when the things fit, instead of these virtues the soul in labor uses, some such powers are to be hoped for it in eternal life.

Chapter 17

(56) We have only recalled what belongs most to this present discussion, that all this is done by God's Providence He has created and rules all things through, so even the sinful and miserable soul may be moved by numbers and set numbers moving even to the lowest corruption of the flesh. And these numbers can be less and less beautiful, but they can't lack beauty entirely. But God, most good and most just, grudges no beauty whether fashioned by the soul's damnation, retreat, or perseverance. But number also begins from one, and is beautiful in equality and likeness, and bound by order. And so, whoever confesses there's no nature of any kind, but desires unity, and tries as much as it can to be like itself, and holds its salvation as a proper order in place or time or weight of body, must confess all things whatever and of any size are made from one beginning through a form equal to it and like to the riches of His goodness, by which they are joined together in charity as one and one gift from one.²¹

(57) . And so that verse proposed by us, '*Deus creator om-*

²¹ For Augustine the doctrine of creation from nothing is not only an article of faith, but a dialectical truth which follows from a sound doctrine of oneness. It rests on the recognition of beings, objects of the human intellect but independent of it. A scrutiny of these beings leads immediately to the further recognition that their very being as object supposes an absolute sufficiency in itself participated in

nium,' sounds with the harmony of number not only to the ears, but even more is most pleasing in truth and wholeness to the soul's sentiment. Unless, perhaps, you are moved by the stupidity, to speak mildly, of those denying anything can be made from nothing, even though God Almighty be said to have made it. Or is it rather the artisan can operate the sensible numbers of his habit by the reasonable numbers of his art, and by sensible numbers those advancing numbers, his numbers in their operation move by, and time-spans belong to; and from these again he can fashion visible forms in wood numbered with place-spans; and the nature of things serving God's will cannot make this wood from earth and other elements; and could not even make these final things from nothing? In fact the time-numbers of a tree must precede its place-numbers. For there's no stem does not in fixed time-measures spring up to replace its seed, germinate, break out into the air, unfold its leaves, become strong, and bring back either fruit or, by very subtle numbers of the wood itself, the force of the seed. And how much more the bodies of animals where the placing of the members presents a much more numbered equalness to

by all the others. This is oneness in itself, the ground of all recognition and knowledge. For Plato and Augustine, as soon as one understands what it means to know, one is forced to admit oneness in itself. Any proof which proceeds only from premises to conclusion by the methods of discursive knowledge is insufficient. For one can always deny premises. To find that without which one cannot even deny premises is the task of the upward dialectic.

Since for Augustine time is a kind of unity and order contemplated by the human intellect by which the sensible things existing seemingly only at this moment and hardly existing then take on significance and have a history, it therefore is more than the sensible things themselves, and the acuity of such a question as that of the eternity of motion is greatly diminished and perhaps has little meaning. The appearance here of the phrase 'Creator of all things' and its constant appearance throughout the book is indicative that the great problem of time is to give the sensible world meaning and being rather than to save us from the intellectual horror of self-perpetuating 'eternal' moving things of which time is only an abstraction.

sight. Can these be made of the elements and these elements not have been made of nothing? For which among them is more ordinary and lowly than earth. Yet first it has the general form of body where a unity and numbers and order are clearly shown to be. For any part of it, no matter how small, must be extended from an indivisible point in length, third takes on breadth, and fourth height, to fill the body. From where, then, is the measure of this progression of one to four? And from where, too, the equality of the parts found in length, breadth, and height? From where a corrationality (for so I have chosen to call proportion), so the ratio length has to the indivisible point, breadth has to length, and height to breadth? Where, I ask, do these things come from, if not from the highest and eternal rule of numbers, likeness, equality, and order? And if you abstract these things from earth, it will be nothing. And therefore God Almighty has made earth, and earth is made from nothing.

(58) Then, too, this form earth is differentiated from the other elements by, doesn't it present something one in so far as it has received it, and no part of it is unlike the whole? And doesn't it have the soundest final ground in its kind by the connection and agreement of the same parts? And the nature of water extends above it, itself abounding in unity, more beautiful and more pellucid because of the greater likeness of its parts, keeping the place of order and its own soundness. And what shall I say of the nature of air, sweeping to unity with a greater reach and as much more beautiful than water is than earth, and so much higher in worth. And what about the supreme circuit of the heavens where the whole universe of visible bodies ends, the highest beauty in its kind, and the soundest excellence of place? Now all these things we've enumerated with the help of the carnal senses, and all things in

them, can only receive and hold local numbers seemingly in a kind of rest, if temporal numbers, in motion, precede within and in silence. Likewise, a vital movement measures off and precedes these as they move in time-spans, a vital movement serving the Master of all things, having in its numbers no temporal spans divided out, but with a power providing times.²² And above this power, the rational and intellectual numbers of the blessed and saintly souls²³ transmit the very law of God no leaf-fall breaks and our hairs are numbered by, to the judgments of earth and hell, without toll from any nature between.

(59) I in my littleness have gathered with you what I could and as I could on such great matters. But, if any read this talk of ours committed to writing, they must know these things have been written by persons much weaker than those who, having followed the authority of the two Testaments, by believing, hoping, and loving, venerate and worship the con-substantial and unchangeable Trinity of the one highest God from whom, through whom, and in whom are all things. For they are purified, not by flashing human reasoning, but by the effective and burning fire of charity. And while we do

22 Augustine seems to be saying that the root of all dispersion is the temporal and that the spatial dispersion depends upon it. He then proceeds to enumerate the hierarchy of numbers. As Svoboda has pointed out, we can consider this as a hierarchy of rhythms since *numerus* is an ambiguous word. Conceptually it makes little difference, but rhetorically this systematic ambiguity may have great effect. Time has much the same position in the system of Kant as in that of Augustine: it is the mediating principle between the intelligibles and the sensible world. So it is, too, for Plotinus.

23 'The rational and intellectual numbers of the blessed and saintly souls' refer, as Augustine points out in *Retractationes* 1.11.3, to the angels. He finds the word 'souls' inappropriately used.

This whole book is a bold development of the traditional Platonic phrase stemming from Xenocrates: *psyché arithmós autón kinón*. 'The soul is a self-moving number.'

not think those the heretics deceive with the promises of reason and false science ought to be neglected, yet, in the consideration of the ways themselves, we go more slowly than holy men who deign not to wait in their flying ascent. And yet we should dare not do this if we did not see that many pious sons of that best of mothers, the Catholic Church, who in their youthful studies have sufficiently developed the faculty of speaking and arguing, have, for the confuting of heretics, done this same thing.

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