

proached the praetor of the city and he have authorised them, by a vote of the Senate, to do so, provided that not fewer Senators than 100 be present when that matter is deliberated." Passed.

"Let no single person in a company beyond five in all, men and women, be minded to hold ceremonies, and let men not more than two, and not more than three women be minded to attend there among, unless it be by the advice of the praetor of the city, and a vote of the Senate as recorded above."

You shall proclaim these orders at a public meeting for a period covering not less than three market-days; and that you might be aware of the vote of the Senate, they voted as follows: They resolved that "should there be any persons who act contrary to the purport of the proclamation as recorded above, proceedings for capital offence must be taken against them." And the Senate resolved that it be "right and proper that you engrave this proclamation onto a tablet of bronze and that you order it to be fastened up where it can be most easily read; and that within ten days after the delivery of this State-letter to you, you see to it that those lodges of Bacchus which may exist are dispersed, in the manner recorded above, save if there be concerned anything holy therein." In the domain of the Teurani.

A Consultation Concerning the Christians, A.D. 110 or 111

Pliny to the Emperor Trajan: It is my custom to refer all my difficulties to you, Sir, for no one is better able to resolve my doubts and to inform my ignorance.

I have never been present at an examination of Christians. Consequently, I do not know the nature or the extent of the punishments usually meted out to them, nor the grounds for starting an investigation and how far it should be pressed. Nor am I at all sure whether any distinction should be made between them on the grounds of age, or if young people and adults should be treated alike; whether a pardon ought to be granted to anyone retracting his beliefs, or if he has once professed Christianity, he shall gain nothing by renouncing it; and whether it is the mere name of Christian which is punishable, even if innocent of crime, or rather the crimes associated with the name.

For the moment this is the line I have taken with all persons brought before me on the charge of being Christians. I have asked them in person if they are Christians, and if they admit it, I repeat the question a second and

Pliny, *Letters* 10.96-97. From *Plinius Secundus: Letters and Panegyricus*, vol. 2, translated by Betty Radice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 285, 287, 289, 291. Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the Loeb Classical Library.

third time, with a warning of the punishment awaiting them. If they persist, I order them to be led away for execution; for, whatever the nature of their admission, I am convinced that their stubbornness and unshakable obstinacy ought not to go unpunished. There have been others similarly fanatical who are Roman citizens. I have entered them on the list of persons to be sent to Rome for trial.

Now that I have begun to deal with this problem, as so often happens, the charges are becoming more widespread and increasing in variety. An anonymous pamphlet has been circulated which contains the names of a number of accused persons. Among these I considered that I should dismiss any who denied that they were or ever had been Christians when they had repeated after me a formula of invocation to the gods and had made offerings of wine and incense to your statue (which I had ordered to be brought into court for this purpose along with the images of the gods), and furthermore had reviled the name of Christ: none of which things, I understand, any genuine Christian can be induced to do.

Others, whose names were given to me by an informer, first admitted the charge and then denied it; they said that they had ceased to be Christians two or more years previously, and some of them even twenty years ago. They all did reverence to your statue and the images of the gods in the same way as the others, and reviled the name of Christ. They also declared that the sum total of their guilt or error amounted to no more than this: they had met regularly before dawn on a fixed day to chant verses alternately among themselves in honour of Christ as if to a god, and also to bind themselves by oath, not for any criminal purpose, but to abstain from theft, robbery and adultery, to commit no breach of trust and not to deny a deposit when called upon to restore it. After this ceremony it had been their custom to disperse and reassemble later to take food of an ordinary, harmless kind; but they had in fact given up this practice since my edict, issued on your instructions, which banned all political societies. This made me decide it was all the more necessary to extract the truth by torture from two slave-women, whom they call deaconesses. I found nothing but a degenerate sort of cult carried to extravagant lengths.

I have therefore postponed any further examination and hastened to consult you. The question seems to me to be worthy of your consideration, especially in view of the number of persons endangered; for a great many individuals of every age and class, both men and women, are being brought to trial, and this is likely to continue. It is not only the towns, but villages and rural districts too which are infected through contact with this wretched cult. I think though that it is still possible for it to be checked and directed to better ends, for there is no doubt that people have begun to throng the temples which had been almost entirely deserted for a long time; the sacred

ries which had been allowed to lapse are being performed again, and flesh of sacrificial victims is on sale everywhere, though up till recently scarcely anyone could be found to buy it. It is easy to infer from this that a great many people could be reformed if they were given an opportunity to repent.

Trajan to Pliny: You have followed the right course of procedure, my dear Pliny, in your examination of the cases of persons charged with being Christians, for it is impossible to lay down a general rule to a fixed formula. These people must not be hunted out; if they are brought before you and the charge against them is proved, they must be punished, but in the case of anyone who denies that he is a Christian, and makes it clear that he is not by offering prayers to our gods, he is to be pardoned as a result of his repentance however suspect his past conduct may be. But pamphlets circulated anonymously must play no part in any accusation. They create the worst sort of precedent and are quite out of keeping with the spirit of our age.

27. Quintilian, *The Training of the Orator*, Book I (Selections)

Marcus Fabius Quintilianus was born between A. D. 30 and 40, to a family whose home was in the Ebro valley of northeast Spain. At some point in his youth he moved to Rome, where he studied rhetoric and observed the techniques of practicing orators, but he returned to Spain to pursue his career on home ground. His horizon suddenly expanded in A. D. 68 when Galba, then governor of Spain, set forth with his army to depose the emperor Nero, and took Quintilian back to Rome with him. From then on, under Galba and his successors, Quintilian was one of the most well-connected practitioners in the capital. He argued important cases in the courts, and opened a school of rhetoric which drew the sons of the elite (including Pliny, for one). When the emperor Vespasian established a state-subsidized professorship in Latin rhetoric, Quintilian was appointed to the chair, which he held until his retirement in the late 80s. After that, in the early 90s, the emperor Domitian invited him to the palace, to educate the grandnephews whom he had designated to succeed him.

Institutio oratoria I preface to 1.4.5, 1.10.1-2, 1.10.22-27, 1.10.34-38, 1.10.49-1.11.4, 1.11.8-12, 1.11.15-17. From *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, vol. 1, translated by H. E. Butler (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1921), pp. 5-65, 159-61, 171-73, 177-79, 183-89 (odd-numbered pages). Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the Loeb Classical Library.

Quintilian evidently died within a couple of years after accepting this assignment.

He wrote the twelve books of *The Training of the Orator* over a three-year period near the end of his life. The friend to whom it is dedicated, Vitruvius Marcellus, was a young senator striving to make his reputation in trial oratory; he reached the consulate in the next decade after the book was published. In the preface, Quintilian takes some pains to make it clear that his work is not just another technical manual or treatise. He writes as an experienced teacher offering a very personal summation of his speciality. For the purposes of this volume, what is most important about his approach is the breadth of his perspective on education: he believed that the training of the orator should be a total education, incorporating all branches of knowledge even more perfectly than did the study of philosophy. Yet the limits of Roman schooling perhaps stand more clearly exposed in this account than anywhere else, for the very reason that Quintilian is describing the best that the system could achieve. In book 1, from which these selections are taken, he characterizes the general education a youth should receive by the age of fifteen or sixteen, when professional training with a teacher of rhetoric would begin. But Quintilian's thinking about education even in the early stages is dominated by the criterion of utility to the future orator, and the course of studies he commends differs significantly from a modern school curriculum.

Preface. Having at length, after twenty years devoted to the training of the young, obtained leisure for study, I was asked by certain of my friends to write something on the art of speaking. For a long time I resisted their entreaties, since I was well aware that some of the most distinguished Greek and Roman writers had bequeathed to posterity a number of works dealing with this subject, to the composition of which they had devoted the utmost care. This seemed to me to be an admirable excuse for my refusal, but served merely to increase their enthusiasm. They urged that previous writers on the subject had expressed different and at times contradictory opinions, between which it was very difficult to choose. They thought therefore that they were justified in imposing on me the task, if not of discovering original views, at least of passing definite judgement on those expressed by my predecessors. I was moved to comply not so much because I felt confidence that I was equal to the task, as because I had a certain compunction about refusing. The subject proved more extensive than I had first imagined; but finally I volunteered to shoulder a task which was on a far larger scale than that which I was originally asked to undertake. I wished on the one hand to oblige my very good friends beyond their requests, and on the