

§ 269. In Latin as in most other languages two negatives neutralize each other, and in fact form a strong affirmative, as :

Non nescio or *non ignoro*.

I know very well.

Non nego.

I do not deny or I assert.

Non possum non.

I cannot help—i.e., I must.

In regard to *nihil*, *nullus*, *nemo*, *nunquam*, and *nusquam*, it makes a great difference whether they precede or follow the negative. Thus :—

Non nihil, means “something” ; *nihil non*, everything.

Non nullus, *non nemo*, many a one ; *nullus* or *nemo non*, every one.

Non nunquam, sometimes ; *nunquam non*, always.

Non nusquam, somewhere ; *nusquam non*, everywhere.

NOTE.—When a negative is followed by two copulative clauses, these latter may take *neque*—*neque*, without the first negative being thereby neutralized, as *nihil nec tam inopinatum nec tam insperatum accidere potuit*, nothing could happen either so unforeseen or so unexpected. Sometimes *aut*—*aut* or *vel*—*vel* are used in such sentences instead of *neque*—*neque*, as *ante id tempus nemo aut miles aut eques a Caesare ad Pompeium transierat*, before that time no one either of the infantry or of the cavalry had gone over from Caesar to Pompey.

CHAPTER LIII.

SOME REMARKS ON THE STRUCTURE OF LATIN SENTENCES.

§ 270. As the inflections sufficiently show what function each word performs in a sentence, it is, on the whole, a matter of indifference in what order words are arranged in a sentence. Still words belonging to one another ought not to be separated ; a relative should not be too far removed from its antecedent, and a negative (*non*) when belonging to a whole clause should be placed before the finite verb, or before the auxiliary in a compound tense.

The very freedom in the arrangement of words enables a writer or speaker to assign to each word that position in which it is likely to produce the desired effect. The most important or emphatic word is thus generally placed at the head of a sentence, or, if it be desired to keep the attention of the reader or hearer in a state of suspense, at the end of