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JOHN P. ALTGELD

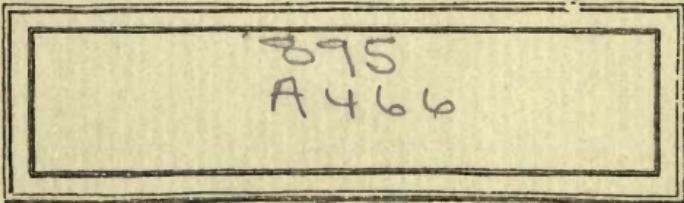
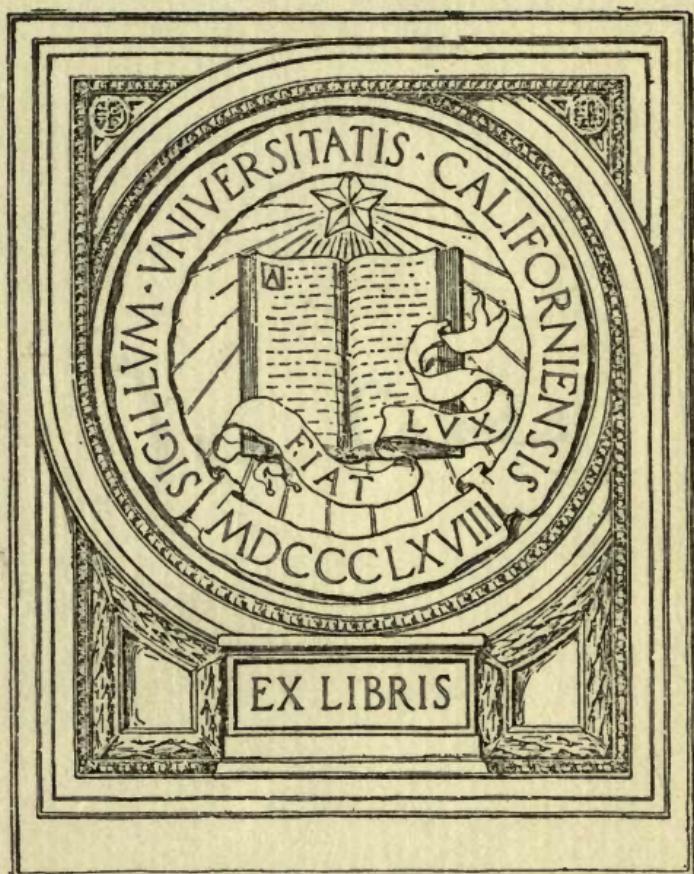
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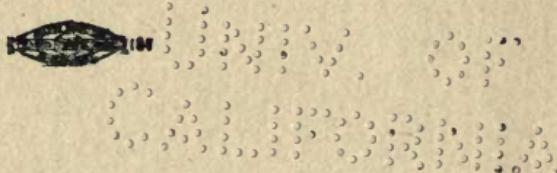
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ORATORY

ITS REQUIREMENTS AND ITS REWARDS

BY

JOHN P. ALTGELD



CHICAGO

CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY

56 FIFTH AVENUE

1901

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JOHN P. ALTGELD

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ORATORY

ITS REQUIREMENTS AND ITS REWARDS.

Oratory is the greatest art known to man and embraces a number of great arts.

In music tradition furnishes the ideas. The poet clothes them in words. The composer sets these to music, and the singer renders them into song.

The orator must be able to do all of these things.

He must furnish the ideas, he must clothe them in words, he must give these a rhythmic arrangement, and he must deliver them with all the care with which a singer sings a song.

Each of these elements is of supreme importance. The ideas must be bright and seem alive. The language must be chaste and expressive. The arrangement must be logical,

ORATORY.

natural and effective. There must be a natural unfolding of the subject-matter.

The delivery requires as much attention to voice and action as is given by a singer.

Labor is the foster mother of oratory, and no man has risen to eminence as an orator without great labor.

KNOWLEDGE.

The orator must have a general knowledge of history, of literature, of religion, of the sciences, of human nature, and of affairs.

He must have a full and special knowledge of the subject he attempts to discuss.

He must present new ideas, or old ideas in a new light. And they must be lofty ideas, that appeal to the nobler sentiments of men.

Mind must commune with mind and soul must talk to soul, or there is no oratory. The soul of the speaker and the soul of the audience must become one.

LANGUAGE.

The intelligent people of America use reasonably pure English.

If the speaker falls below this level he simply disgusts. If he only stands on this level he may be tolerated but will gather no laurels. Men may say, "He makes a strong talk," but this is all. It is not oratory.

If he would delight and chain his audience so that the doors of the soul may be thrown open to him, his language must have the charm of superior excellence. His words must be simple, pure, chaste and crystalline—his sentences clear, epigrammatic and sparkling, and his arrangement logical, forceful and climacteric.

In attempting to acquire a superior command of language it must be borne in mind that words are only the expression of thoughts, and where the thoughts are coarse or careless, and not well arranged, elegance of language is impossible.

On the other hand elevation of thought produces elevation of language. Studying the stars and contemplating nature prepare the soul for great things.

A familiarity with polite literature is also essential and experience has taught that the reading and digesting each day of a half page or a page of some classic author, so as to imbibe his spirit and assimilate his words, will by degrees give elegance of diction and purity and strength of expression.

It is necessary to avoid slang and to be careful as to our use of words in daily intercourse. By degrees we can acquire an entirely new vocabulary.

ARRANGEMENT.

Arrangement is the third essential of oratory. Without it the effort is lost.

The subject-matter should be treated from the point from which it naturally unfolds or

develops. Start with the trunk of the tree, and then take up one branch after another so that the casual hearer can get a general idea of the whole subject, and then of its different branches, and see just what relations they bear to each other.

The heavy, the statistical and historical parts of the subject should come early and form the foundation on which to build. Then the different branches must be arranged with reference to strength and climax—using the strongest toward the last.

It is important to bear in mind that while facts are addressed to the intellect, sentiment alone can stir the soul.

An audience will swallow a whole library of statistics or arguments unmoved—while one divine flash will stir it to its depths.

To prevent facts or arguments from becoming too dry and heavy, they must be garnished with epigrams whose wit enlivens or whose

sentiment inspires. That the audience may leave in high spirit, the close or peroration must appeal to the soul and not to the senses. It must point to the skies and picture the everlasting.

DELIVERY—ACTION.

But when all has been said, *delivery—action*—is the vital essence of oratory. Without effective delivery the ideas, the language and the arrangement are all in vain. There must be no trilling of the r's, no drawl—no tremor—no affectation.

Every word must be uttered with the right volume of voice, the right pitch, the right inflection; and every sentence must have the right cadence. And to these must be added the earnestness that comes from a burning soul.

It has been said that a woman ought not to sing unless her heart is breaking; and it is cer-

tainly true that no man can rise to the heights of oratory unless his soul is on fire.

The feet of the orator must walk in the sun and every fiber in his body must speak to the audience, not in rant, or quaver, but in the simple fervor of the patriot.

GESTURE.

No rule can be given to determine when, where and how to gesture, except possibly the general one—be natural.

Gesture is a part of the art of expression, and, when used without meaning, it simply mars the performance.

Art will not admit of the unnecessary. From the standpoint of art it is no more permissible to have unnecessary gestures in a speech than it is to have unnecessary notes in a song.

Many a fine speech falls short of oratory because its delivery is marred by meaningless gestures.

Thrashing the air with the hands and tearing a passion is a part of rant but not of art.

There should be no gesture until the mind prompts it to emphasize or illustrate an idea.

There must not be a needless gesture, nor a meaningless look. All must fit and work together—not stiffly and with self-consciousness, but simply, naturally, and unconsciously. Neither a king nor an orator should be lavish of gestures. The simplicity of the child is necessary; the slightest embellishment weakens the truth. “Art when seen ceases to be art.”

Oratory is the masculine of music, and to a certain extent is governed by the same laws.

It must have rhythm, cadence, measure, harmony and at times even melody.

Manifestly, such an art can only be mastered by great self-denial and perseverance.

If years of training and effort are necessary to even set foot in the temple of music, far

more is necessary to set foot on the divine platform of oratory.

VOICE.

Voice is as important to the orator as it is to the singer, and it must be trained with the same care. The speaker must be able to use his voice with the same facility that a singer does, or else his achievement will be meager.

He must be able to give it any volume, any pitch and any cadence he chooses, and to change rapidly from one to the other. While music may have greater melody, speech should have equal harmony. Measure, rhythm, cadence, come unconsciously to the man who is master of his subject, has a trained voice, and is simple, earnest and natural in his speech.

The voice of almost every great orator had to be made. Generally it developed during years of practice and effort.

In training the voice it is vital to follow certain well established principles or natural laws.

Ignorance of these laws causes many public speakers to grow hoarse in half an hour. This is because they do not inhale deeply, but take the breath from the top of the lungs and form the voice in the throat. If they would bring the breath from the bottom of the lungs, throw it against the roof of the mouth, and form the voice with the lips, they could talk half a day without feeling any inconvenience in the throat. Strange as it may seem, the diaphragm must be brought into use in talking.

Deep inhalations develop the voice and improve the health. Five minutes' exercise in deep inhalation, practiced several times a day, will greatly increase the strength and volume of the voice and tend to give vigor to the whole system. Care must be taken at first, so as not to produce dizziness.

Then a daily systematic exercise of half an hour in sounding the different letters of the alphabet must be kept up.

Familiarity with the scale in music is essential in this practice, so as to be able to distinguish the different degrees of pitch readily; then run the same letter up and down the scale —first in a whisper, then in a low tone, then gradually increasing the volume until the capacity of the voice is reached.

In all these exercises the breath must be brought from the bottom of the lungs and thrown against the roof of the mouth, and the words formed with the lips. Practice will soon teach the speaker how to use his lips most effectively.

It is not only essential to practice deep inhalation, but also to practice holding the breath, and giving it out at will. In other words, learn to husband the breath and give out no more of it in uttering any word than is necessary.

In music students spend many months and sometimes years, practicing only a few notes, because when they have mastered these the voice is ready for any service.

In this manner the practice of sounding the different letters of the alphabet should be kept up, for it develops the vocal organs to their highest efficiency.

The speaker must never forget that there is a close connection between the stomach and the organs of speech. Whatever affects the stomach unfavorably will at once affect the voice.

TONE.

In forming the voice the principal object is to convert the breath into pure tone.

As in burning gas to produce light and heat, the object is to get a perfect combustion, because light and heat travel with a velocity that gas cannot attain, and thus produce results that cannot be produced by gas in its

unconverted form. So we aim to get a perfect combustion or explosion of the breath into tone, and the more perfect the conversion the more perfect and pure the tone.

Tone or sound travels with a velocity and acquires a power that is impossible for breath. A man could hardly make his breathing heard twenty feet away; but vocalized it creates vibrations that travel to the gates of eternity.

It is therefore not a question as to the volume of breath expended, but of the amount perfectly exploded. The amount of pure tone formed, and its intensity, determine its travelling power. In a whistle, a small amount of air forced through a narrow opening and made to react on itself produces vibrations that are felt miles away.

We frequently see people with small chests whose voices are clear and can be heard a great distance; while others, with powerful lungs, cannot be understood half so far. This

is largely due to perfect explosion of breath into pure tone in the one case, and imperfect explosion in the other. The test of pure tone applied by musicians is to hold a lighted candle to the mouth while running the scale. If the light is not blown out the explosion or conversion is perfect.

I have spoken only of pure tone, because in most cases this is all that an orator needs. When once master of it he can easily give other tones, such as the nasal and gutteral.

ARTICULATION.

Distinct articulation is the diamond of uttered speech. Without it there can be no sparkling sentence and no flashing epigram.

Without distinct articulation, it is difficult to understand a speaker even when near by, and impossible to understand him when a little distance away. The audience has to labor to catch his words, and this destroys the effect.

Without distinct utterance it is impossible to reach the sensibilities and arouse the finer emotions.

Defective articulation admits of absolutely no excuse. Everybody can overcome it by making the requisite effort, and no man has a right to appear before an audience who is not willing to make every effort that is necessary to his success.

We are told that emphasizing vowels makes words carry. While this is true it is no less true that unless the consonants also are distinctly uttered the words cannot be understood.

Daily practice in pronouncing the different letters of the alphabet will rapidly improve the articulation.

WRITING OF SPEECHES.

“In writing are the roots; in writing are the foundations of eloquence.”—*Quintilian*.

Should a speech be written? Yes, emphatically, yes. It should be written several times.

Should it then be read to the audience or should it be committed to memory? Neither. When read it becomes simply an essay and is not an oration; and when committed to memory and then delivered, it is simply declamation and not oratory.

Besides, unless a man has a phenomenal memory, he will not be able to recite a speech, and will break down.

What, then, is the purpose of writing it? It is to become accurately familiar with the subject—to become steeped in it and saturated with it.

We may have a talking knowledge of a subject, but when we undertake to write upon it we soon find that there are many things which we must investigate further. Writing upon a subject tends to make it clear to the mind. It fixes the boundaries, brings to light the subdivisions, their relative importance and their relations to each other.

After we have written upon a subject we have a more accurate conception of it than before. And when we have written upon it the second or third time, ideas come to us that had eluded us before.

Though in the end the written copy be thrown into the fire the writer will be repaid a hundred fold, for when he faces his audience he will be much better qualified. He will be more confident, and therefore more aggressive. Even if he does not use a single sentence of what he had written he will make a much better speech than he otherwise could have made. The subject-matter will be larger, the presentation clearer, and the language more elegant.

After determining definitely what subject to discuss, the best way to prepare a speech is to get a definite idea of the boundaries and natural subdivisions of the subject and the relations they bear to each other. Having these

things once clearly in mind the subject naturally unfolds itself, and the speaker will be carried along step by step, without having committed his speech to memory.

Accuracy in the use of language will in time become a habit, so that when the ideas and their proper arrangement are once fixed in the mind the language will come unconsciously.

We sometimes hear a speaker say that he does not know what he is going to talk about until he gets on his feet. This is a humiliating confession. It is an admission that he has not worked, and it means that it is impossible for him to reach a high standard of art. Generally this class of speakers follow the Frenchman's formula for writing a love-letter: "Begin without knowing what you are going to say, and end without knowing what you have said."

Art does not admit of random touches. It demands entire accuracy. In music the singer is not permitted to be guided by his feelings in dropping or adding notes; the laws of harmony must be followed, and like fidelity is demanded in speech.

The mere fact that a speaker can work himself into a glow of excitement does not by any means prove that he is eloquent. Generally this is simply rant and wearies the audience.

No talk is eloquent unless it reads well. Literary excellence is the very breath of eloquence.

To attain this it is indispensable that the speaker know exactly what he is going to say and how he is going to say it. Otherwise he will fail to make a logical argument, fail to make his sentences epigrammatic, and will consume the time with tiresome repetitions.

The fatal mistake lies in the assumption that by working himself into a glow of excitement

he can deliver himself of ideas, of logic and of language that are not in him. No man can get anything out of himself that is not in him.

All that the inspiration of any occasion can do is to enable a man to rise to his best.

Let it be said again that the inspiration of the greatest occasion cannot help a man to give an audience something he does not possess. He can give it neither wit nor wisdom, neither learning nor eloquence, neither pathos nor beauty.

All that can be expected is that the occasion may enable him to give and to do his best. But the stream will not rise higher than its source, and the very best speech cannot get above the accomplishments of the speaker; hence the necessity of thorough preparation. It is an insult to an intelligent audience for a speaker to appear before it without preparation.

MESSAGE TO AUDIENCE.

Some men are overwhelmed by the thought of trying to prepare a speech. It seems so different from the ordinary affairs of life.

The same men could call on a neighbor in regard to almost any errand and tell him their mission without any embarrassment.

Let such men treat the prospective audience as they would treat the neighbor. Go before it on a special errand. Go before it because they have something definite to say—have a mission to present—and they can talk to an audience almost as easily as to a neighbor. No man should appear before an audience unless he feels that he has a special message for that audience. If he has this feeling, then he can make a good speech.

NEWSPAPERS.

A copy of a speech should be furnished each newspaper when it is desired to have it pub-

lished. It is almost impossible to take a speech in shorthand in the average hall, late at night, and have it printed accurately the following morning.

In the first place shorthand notes have to be taken in poor light. It requires a relay force, so that one reporter can go and write up his copy while the other continues to take notes. The notes have to be transcribed in a hurry, frequently in a poor light, and as many shorthand marks are very similar it is a matter of frequent occurrence that one word is substituted for another. Then the matter has to be set up in a hurry, when there are almost no opportunities for correction. Everything has to be rushed.

Again, until an editor sees a speech he cannot tell how much of it he wants to use. Generally the forms for the press are made up early in the evening, leaving only a little space for new matter that may come in.

Under these circumstances it is unreasonable to expect a paper to get and publish much of any address.

But if it receives a copy of it twenty-four hours ahead of time the editor can examine it and as much of it as he decides to use can be set up with care and published accurately.

In such cases all that is necessary is to write or print at the top of the front page a note stating that it is "the speech of to be delivered at at the hour of o'clock on the day of 19.. and is released after delivery." All honorable editors respect this note, and will refrain from using the copy before it is released.

BREAKFAST-TABLE AUDIENCE.

Modern oratory has to deal with an audience that the ancients knew not of, and that is the breakfast-table audience, which may num-

ber several millions, while the audience at the hall numbered only a few thousand.

To reach this breakfast-table audience, the orator must depend on his facts, his arrangement, and his literary excellence. Neither his voice nor his actions can reach these people.

Unless there is something above the ordinary in his speech the editor will not use it, and the public would pay no attention to it if he did.

The man who wants his speeches published must offer something that rises above the average; and that average in America is already high.

LITERARY EXCELLENCE.

Literary excellence is the robe of immortality without which no speech can live. The ideas may be great and the delivery may be impassioned, but if it lacks literary finish it will be ephemeral. The breakfast-table audi-

ence will not see it, and by the evening of the morrow it will be forgotten.

It was literary excellence that saved us the great speeches of antiquity. Without it they would have faded from the earth even before the generations that heard them.

Ever-living principles, genius in arrangement, and perfection of form, will keep a speech vital to the end of time.

We are told that the Greeks had no grammar. Instead of beginning with the rules as we do, they developed their wonderful language by a constant striving after clearness, brevity, smoothness, and rhythm. The eye and the ear were thus trained to demand excellence. The same practice now will improve any man's speech.

DEMOSTHENES.

As an inspiration to the ambitious I quote the following from Grote's History of Greece, relating to Demosthenes:

"He studied Thucydides with indefatigable labor and attention. According to one account he copied the whole history eight times over with his own hand; according to another, he learned it all by heart so as to be able to rewrite it from memory when the manuscript was accidentally destroyed. How much the composition of Demosthenes was fashioned by the reading of Thucydides, reproducing the daring, majestic and impressive phraseology, yet without the overstrained brevity and involutions of that historian, and striving to blend with it a perspicuity and grace not inferior to Lysias, may be seen illustrated in the elaborate criticism of the rhetor Dionysius. While thus striking out for himself a bold and original style, Demosthenes had still greater difficulties to overcome in regard to the external requisites of an orator. He was not endowed by nature, like Aeschines, with a magnificent voice, nor, like Demades, with a ready flow

of vehement improvisation. His thoughts required to be put together by careful preparation; his voice was bad, even lisping; his breath short, his gesticulation ungraceful; moreover, he was overawed and embarrassed by the manifestations of the multitude.

“The energy and success with which Demosthenes overcame his defects in such a manner as to satisfy a critical assembly like the Athenian, is one of the most memorable circumstances in the general history of self-education. Repeated humiliation and repulse only spurred him on to fresh solitary efforts for improvement. He corrected his defective elocution by speaking with pebbles in his mouth. He prepared himself to overcome the noise of the assembly by declaiming in stormy weather on the seashore at Phaleron. He opened his lungs by running, and extended his powers of holding breath by pronouncing sentences in marching up hill. He sometimes passed two or three

months without interruption in a subterranean chamber, practicing night and day, either in composition or declamation, and shaving one half of his head in order to disqualify himself from going abroad. After several trials without success before the assembly, his courage was on the point of giving way, when Eunomus and other old citizens reassured him by comparing the matter of his speeches to those of Pericles and exhorting him to persevere a little longer in the correction of his external defects. On another occasion he was pouring forth his disappointment to Satyrus, the actor, who undertook to explain to him the causes, desiring him to repeat in his own way a speech out of Sophokles which he, Satyrus, proceeded to repeat after him with suitable accent and delivery. Demosthenes, profoundly struck with the difference, began anew the task of self-improvement, probably taking constant lessons from nature's models. In his unremitting

private practice he devoted himself especially to acquiring a graceful action, keeping watch on all his movements while declaiming before a tall looking-glass. After pertinacious efforts for several years he was rewarded at length with complete success. His delivery became full of decision and vehemence, highly popular with the general body of the assembly, although some critics censured his modulation as artificial and out of nature, and savoring of low stage effects, while others of the same spirit condemned his speeches as overlabored and smelling of the lamp. So great was the importance assigned by Demosthenes himself to these external means of effect, that he is said to have pronounced *action* to be the first, second and third requisite of oratory." (Chap. 87.)

UTILITARIAN TALK.

Outside of the circle of oratory there is a great field of what may be called "utilitarian

talk." It is the world's every-day talk of its ordinary affairs, including politics, business, religion, etc. It includes the average speech-making, lecturing and preaching; and most of us are glad to be even a small factor here.

The American people average higher than any others as all-around talkers and stump speakers. This is due to the nature of our institutions and the fact that all the people participate in the discussions of every public question.

This utilitarian talk is useful, important, and even necessary; but there is no glory won here. It is the work of the every-day draft-horse, indispensable to man's well being; but it is not the every-day draft-horse that commands the world's interest or admiration. He has indeed done the world's work and makes the world his debtor, but he does not stir the blood nor arouse the enthusiasm of men. It is the carefully trained speedy horse that men go miles

to see. Great speed is the result of the highest training.

Let it be understood that the so-called "strong speech," "able speech," "forceful talk," "excellent points," etc., are all of the draft-horse variety. They do not rise to the plane of high excellence; they lack art, and do not constitute oratory.

The knowledge displayed may be ample, the facts may be conclusive, and the fervor of the talker may be great; but so long as exquisite arrangement, elegance of language and high finish are wanting, the effort falls below oratory.

But let no man suppose that a speech should be simply an elegant or nice affair. Dilletanteism simply excites contempt.

The idea I wish to inculcate in the minds of the young is that they must acquire elegance of diction and nicety and accuracy of expression; they must cultivate the voice un-

til they have a perfect command of it; they must accustom the mind to orderly and logical arrangement; and when they wish to discuss a subject get all the facts, not only into the mind, but into the very blood, then pour the whole soul into it, and they will approach oratory.

ABSTEMIOUSNESS.

Self-denial and self-control are essential to achievement. Great endurance is impossible where there is great indulgence. Cold water, temperate habits and exercise give firm fiber and a clear brain.

The appetites give no inspiration and kindle no fires, and their free gratification weakens the body and chokes the soul. Stimulants do not feed, they do not build; they simply borrow of the future; they simply consume.

Oratory demands the greatest possible service by the higher faculties. Where these are

stupefied by indulgence, or the body is weakened by dissipation, no great height can be reached.

All things considered I should say let liquor alone. Under no circumstances touch it just before speaking. Speaking is itself a stimulant; and if a man is master of his subject, the mere act of talking will soon make his soul glow.

If in addition to this he takes an artificial stimulant, the effect of the double stimulation will be to burn up his vitality at once, and at the end of twenty minutes he will be exhausted and will simply gasp and flounder through the remainder of his discourse.

If at the conclusion of the speech the speaker finds that his clothes are wet with perspiration and he is exposed to danger of taking cold, then a little stimulant may be taken to advantage.

But even this must be done with caution, otherwise the stimulant will burn up more vitality and leave him in a still more exhausted condition, so that when he steps on the platform the next day he will do inferior work.

Avoid drinking water during a speech for it will injure the throat. Never wrap or muffle the neck when out of doors for this opens the pores and exposes to cold. Simply turning the overcoat collar up against it is all the protection it needs, and this leaves the air free to circulate around it.

The speaker's vitality must be treated like a bank account. It should be drawn on with great caution and then replenished at once. A recumbent position is necessary for quick restoration. Whenever a speaker has an hour's time during a campaign let him go to bed and sleep if possible.

The exigencies of his art demand excellence. This requires the highest possible service by

every faculty, and if there has been an expenditure of nerve force—whether by labor or by indulgence—which has not been completely replaced, then some of his faculties will not fully respond, and the speech will drop to the grade of mere utilitarian talk.

When on the road during a campaign a speaker must practice as severe a regimen as a prize-fighter who is in training. He must be careful about his diet, his sleep, all his habits. Otherwise the irregularity and exposure incident to such a life will soon so jade him that he will give only a common sort of draft-horse performance. He must be as fastidious about himself and his speech as a prima donna is about herself and her song.

HOSPITALITY.

When on the road, speaking one or more times every day, a speaker cannot accept hospitality. If he does his speeches at once drop

to a lower level. As a rule if he will lock the door of his room at a hotel he can rest better and make himself more free and at home than he can at the house of a friend.

If, after speaking at night, instead of going to bed, he accepts an invitation to the club and chats for an hour and takes a drink or two, his speech the next day will be inferior. *Isolation is the price of greatness, and the stars are all the friends an orator needs.*

HAND-SHAKING.

Always avoid the crowd. Only candidates are required to submit to promiscuous hand-shaking.

A half hour's hand-shaking before speaking will so reduce the vitality, or take the fine edge off the nerve system, as to make the speech tame.

Let the speaker constantly bear in mind that the very people who exhaust him with their

hand-shaking will not forgive him for making a poor speech. He is there to talk, not to shake hands. He should never apologize for being ill, or unprepared. An audience wants to hear a speech, not an apology.

CLOTHES.

The speaker should be so dressed that neither he nor his audience will be made conscious of the fact that he is wearing clothes. He must dress plainly and neatly. New clothes or very poor clothes are apt to attract the consciousness of both speaker and audience, and thus weaken the effect.

CENSORSHIP OF SPEECHES.

Theatrical troupes and opera troupes rehearse almost daily in order to keep up the tone of the performance. While this is not practicable in the case of public speakers, it would greatly increase the reputation of every speaker and help his cause, besides benefiting the pub-

lic, if he could be accompanied by a severe critic who would carefully note his delivery and afterwards require him to rehearse those parts that were not well delivered.

When a speaker has been engaged in a campaign for some days his sentences get as badly out of form as his body; and his words, like his clothes, get road-worn and dusty. The high finish, the delicate touches, the pathos and the fine sentiments disappear. How guard against this?

While he must adapt himself to the needs of the occasion, and cannot always tell just how much time he will have or what topics he can discuss, he can resolve that whatever he does shall be done well.

When both body and mind are tired inspiration lags, and a special effort must be made. The mind needs food on the road as well as the body; and it is necessary for a speaker to read each day at least a page of polite litera-

ture so as to imbibe the spirit of the author, or else read a short discussion of some great principle so as to get elevation of thought, and thus keep his own speech on high ground.

LAWYERS.

“If our sole material for thought is derived from law cases the gloss of our oratory must of necessity be rubbed off, its joints must grow stiff, and the points of its wit be blunted by daily encounters.”

So wrote Quintilian eighteen hundred years ago, and this language has more force to-day than it had then.

The matter-of-fact proceedings in our courts have a constant tendency to sink to the level of wrangling, which makes the countenance hard and the mind crabbed and unfits for great achievement.

To overcome this lowering tendency, the an-

cient advocates studied poetry, dialogue, history, painting, sculpture, nature, and whatever tended to ennable the mind. Nothing better has ever been suggested, and some such course is vital.

Other things being equal the lawyer who does this will in a few years greatly distance his companion who does not do it, for the latter will not only cease to grow but will shrivel.

It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the business of the courts no longer calls for oratory. The style has indeed changed, but the essence is as much in demand as ever.

A clear, forceful, eloquent and convincing talk to either court or jury is more needed now, and will produce greater results and larger rewards, than at any other time in the history of jurisprudence.

GREAT SUBJECT—PETTIFOGGING.

The subject-matter of a speech must be great or there can be no oratory. Great principles of justice, of government, or of human happiness, must be involved.

The speaker must appeal to what is just, what is elevated, and what is noble in man.

A covert defense of wrong, no matter how shrewd or adroit or clever, can never command respect.

Pettifogging is always on a low plane; instead of elevating and ennobling both speaker and audience as oratory does, pettifogging shrivels, belittles, and degrades.

No man who is willing, for fee or reward, for promotion or honors, to act the part of a pettifogger, can ever stand for one moment on the great platform of oratory.

Sincerity and intense earnestness are the essence of oratory, and the mind that is trained to make a plausible defense of a doubtful case

unconsciously loses this essence. *The orator must be absolutely independent, even though he have neither bread to eat nor shoes to wear. Great manhood must go with great oratory.*

In America we have a class of men who are called corporation lawyers. They are men of force, ability and shrewdness, and are employed by the corporations because they are recognized as strong lawyers. (I am not speaking of lobbyists.) Many of these men before entering the service of corporations gave promise of eloquence, but none of them has risen to the plane of oratory. Even when brilliant and on the right side, there is something about their efforts that smacks of insincerity. While these positions have been sought because the salaries are large, I believe the judgment of mankind will be that these able men paid too much for their pottage.

JUSTICE, NOT EXPEDIENCY.

Justice, not expediency, must be the guiding light. The orator must fix his eye on the pole-star of justice, and plough straight thither. The moment he glances toward expediency he falls from his high estate.

The world's great pathos is on the side of the masses who are doing the world's work and making civilization possible. They are the children of God.

The orator must feel their sufferings, their sorrows, and their joys. Here alone does soul respond to soul.

The men who eat bread that is earned by the sweat of other men's brows are unresponsive and incapable of high sentiment or deep pathos.

Wealth and fashion may be inviting and present a beautiful picture, but the divine fires do not burn there.

All the great speeches ever delivered were

protests against injustice and appeals for the public welfare. Generally they were on the losing side. Defeat is often the baptism of immortality. James Russell Lowell summed up the whole history of civilization when he penned the lines:

“Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever
on the throne—

But that scaffold sways the future, and behind
the dim unknown

Standeth God within the shadow, keeping
watch upon his own.”

Let the would-be orator remember that he lives but once in this world, and therefore cannot afford to waste any time or effort on behalf of injustice, for it will pull him down. He breathes the atmosphere of the plane on which he stands, and if that plane be low the poisons will destroy him.

If he would reach the highest estate possible on this earth he must stand resolutely with

his face toward the sun; and when the cry of oppressed humanity calls for sacrifice, he must promptly say, "Here, Lord, am I."

REWARDS.

"But," says a would-be orator, "you are demanding too much; you require a man to be a devotee; you ask him to lay all his ambitions on this altar; you demand abstemiousness and self-sacrifice; you offer no resting-place; you begin and you end with labor. What is the reward you offer? What is the harvest you promise? In what temple of fame shall we abide, or where among the stars shall we dwell?"

Oratory offers the acme of human delight; it offers the nectar that Jupiter sips; it offers the draft that intoxicates the gods, the divine felicity of lifting up and swaying mankind. There is nothing greater on this earth. 'Tis

the breath of the Eternal—the kiss of the Immortal.

Oratory is far above houses and lands, offices and emoluments, possessions and power.

While it may secure all of these it must not for a moment be classed with them. These things offer nothing that is worthy of a high ambition. Enjoyed to their fullest, they leave you hard, wrinkled, and miserable. Get all they can give and the hand will be empty, the mind hungry, and the soul shrivelled.

Oratory is an individual accomplishment, and no vicissitudes of fortune can wrest it from the owner. It points the martyr's path to the future; it guides the reaper's hand in the present, and it turns the face of ambition toward the delectable hills of achievement. One great speech made to an intelligent audience in favor of the rights of man will compensate for a life of labor, will crown a career with glory, and give a joy that is born of the divinities.

IS ORATORY DYING?

On the contrary, it is growing in favor and in importance. At no time in the history of the world did men listen as eagerly as they do in America to-day.

The newspapers, instead of destroying oratory, simply prepare the ground for a higher order of eloquence. They educate the public as to the facts, and thus partially relieve the speaker of dry detail, so that he can devote himself more largely to a discussion of principles than he otherwise could do. At the same time they multiply his audience by the thousand. Once the speaker reached only the people before him; now he reaches millions in addition, so that the orator can now wield an influence that heretofore was impossible.

True, it increases his labor. He must charm not only his hearers, but also delight his readers.

The universal intelligence among the people, and the presence of cultivated women, have tended to give high character to public meetings and to place them far above the audiences of antiquity.

Neither Demosthenes nor Cicero ever saw such inspiring audiences as greet the modern orator.

DEMOCRACY.

Oratory is the child of Democracy. It is the product of Free Institutions; it grows in a republic, it withers in a despotism.

Wherever the citizen can publicly discuss the affairs of government and participate in their control, there oratory flourishes; and where he is denied this right there the stillness of the ages creeps over the land.

Glancing down the highway of nations, we find that oratory first illuminated the skies of Greece, while democratic institutions prevailed

there. Then its flame was seen in the democracy of Rome.

During the eighteenth century oratory burst forth in England—then the only country that was struggling toward constitutional government; and France produced some great examples of forensic power at the beginning of her Revolution.

In Ireland it subsequently became a mighty protest against injustice and oppression.

But it remained for America to give to the world the highest form of the impassioned speech of freedom. Here oratory has been carried to greater heights than anywhere else in the modern world.

Looking over the world to-day we see that not even a whisper comes from the Orient, while the vulgar hand of brute force has choked free speech to death and silenced the voice of oratory in the entire basin of the Mediterranean, where it was once great, and where with

the decadence of oratory came the degradation of the nations. Twenty-seven years ago there was a spasmodic effort to establish a republic in Spain, and the world heard the eloquence of Castelar; but despotism triumphed and degeneracy followed.

On the continent of Europe a brutal officialism, that eats the bread earned by the toil of others, perpetuates injustice and wrong by filling the prisons with the men and the women who dare appeal to a higher law or speak of the rights of man.

It is the English-speaking nations that keep alive the divine flame of oratory, and it is this fact that makes them an invincible force in the world.

The golden ages of the world were the ages of democracy and oratory; and the most brilliant pages of every country's history were written when the voice of free discussion was heard in the land. No people ever reached a

high development among whom this voice was not heard; and every people that strangled it soon sank into degradation and misery.

ORATORY DEVELOPS ORATORY.

As wit develops wit, so oratory develops oratory. The orator must wrestle with the orator, or he will not become great.

Pericles was surrounded by a group of men who disputed every proposition and contested every inch of ground with him.

Demosthenes had to meet a number of men, some of whom were considered his superiors.

In Rome oratory reached its highest excellence in the days of Cicero, who lived among a group of great orators.

In England Chatham had to meet men who taxed all his wonderful resources. Pitt was confronted by Fox, Burke, and Sheridan.

The French group of orators comprised the

men whose names are forever linked with the Revolution.

In America Patrick Henry met fierce debaters in the Assembly and the Courts of Virginia.

Samuel Adams and James Otis were surrounded by a galaxy of brilliant speakers in Massachusetts.

At a later period in our history Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, and John C. Calhoun were not only contemporaries, but were also members of the United States Senate. The great emancipation orators, headed by Phillips and Sumner, were confronted by men of rare ability.

REPETITION.

As a rule no speech is transcendently great when first delivered. While repetition of words or arguments in the same speech is abominable, repetition on different occasions gives power.

All the great speeches of which we have any knowledge were the result of repetition.

After the orator had discussed a question a number of times and from various standpoints, until it cleared and ripened in his mind, then some extraordinary occasion arose which gave him the opportunity and the inspiration to combine all his knowledge and power into one supreme effort.

Before delivering his oration on the Crown Demosthenes had discussed every one of the subjects involved many times.

Patrick Henry had delivered the same speech a hundred times to a hundred different audiences before he overwhelmed the Assembly of Virginia with its fire.

Before delivering his celebrated reply to Hayne, Daniel Webster, on numerous occasions, had discussed every one of the points involved. In fact, he had made a speech in the Senate on the identical subject only a few days

before; and while this speech was able, as all his efforts were, it attracted no attention. Finally the opportunity came which furnished him the inspiration to combine all his arguments, and enabled him to reach the heights of eloquence that were impossible on the prior occasions.

PERICLES.

It is not the purpose of this paper to give biographies of orators, for it would require volumes; but we point a finger toward one mighty model.

Looking at a few of the names that stand out in bold relief against the sky of history, we see "*Pericles*" burning in letters of living light, the greatest man of antiquity, and in some respects the greatest orator. For twenty-three hundred years this name has been a beacon to the sons of men.

During this time, a thousand great captains and tens of thousands of Crœsususes have come and gone, and the world welcomed their rid-dance and forgot them; but every century adds to the luster of Pericles.

He was warrior, statesman, philosopher, orator; more, he was liberal, progressive, and humane; but greater still, he possessed an independence and a lofty graudeur of soul that illumined his age and all subsequent ages; a sublimity that lifted him above his contemporaries and his successors.

Look at these words taken from the funeral oration which he delivered over those who had fallen in defense of their country: "Their glory shall never die; the whole wide world is their sepulchre; their epitaphs are written in the hearts of mankind, and wherever there is speech of noble deeds their names are held in remembrance."

Nothing ever written under the inspiration

of even Chaldean skies surpasses this in grandeur.

He was born and reared an aristocrat, but his great intellect and progressive spirit led him to espouse the cause of the common people. He became the leader of the democracy and made it a ruling power for half a century, creating an Athenian splendor that has dazzled the world. He gathered about him the philosophers and the learned of his time, and thus made the golden age of Greece. He not only fortified Athens, but he beautified her.

During his administration, most of those marvelous structures were erected that have excited the admiration of mankind for thousands of years. He employed the immortal sculptor Phidias in this work, and by this act alone he made the world his debtor.

Pericles was denounced in his time as a demagogue. He was vilified, maligned and abused by the rich and aristocratic class. They

threw his friend Phidias into prison, and forced Pericles to go in person into court and defend the accomplished Aspasia, yet he pursued a lofty and dignified course throughout his entire life, constantly pointing the people to higher standards. He was retiring and simple in his habits, and loved the charms of a refined home so much that he spent all his time there when not engaged in the public service.

It is said that in his whole life he attended but one evening entertainment, preferring to spend that time studying or conversing with cultivated friends. In order not to grow too common, he spoke in public only on great occasions.

His speeches were prepared with scrupulous care. Before rising to speak he used to pray that no inappropriate word might fall from his lips. He was called the greatest of Grecian orators. "The range and compass of his rhetoric were wonderful, extending from the most win-

ning persuasion to overwhelming denunciation."

While Demosthenes, who came nearly a hundred years later, had more action and more force in his delivery, Pericles surpassed him in grandeur; and the flame of his eloquence, as seen through twenty-three hundred years, is whiter.

The people who called Pericles a demagogue died and were buried, and the very dust that covered them is lost. Even the chimney-tops of their houses possessed more of immortality than they.

Pericles died and was buried; and for more than two thousand years, the scholars and statesmen and philosophers of earth have studied his career with admiration and profit; and to-day, more than twenty-three hundred years after his death, the great marching columns of humanity halt not only to listen to the charm of his oratory, but to gaze at the ruins of that

Athens that was built by this demagogue and his prison friend, Phidias.

CONCLUSION.

No age in the world's history ever offered such allurement to ambition, or such a field of usefulness, as this age offers to the orator; for he can sway not only his hearers but the civilized world.

Would he tread the heights of the ideal? Then here is the path of the martyr, thorny and blood-stained, but glorious. Would he direct the vintage of his own time? Then here is the vineyard of humanity calling for men. Is he ambitious? Here is the force that shakes the continents and thrills the nations, that rides upon the centuries and sports with the ages. Here, like Pericles' heroes, he can write his epitaph in the hearts of mankind, and have the whole wide world for a sepulchre.

THE END.

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