

**The voice and public speaking : a book for all who read and speak in public  
/ by J.P. Sandlands.**

**Contributors**

Sandlands, J. P.

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THE VOICE  
AND  
PUBLIC SPEAKING

*A BOOK FOR ALL WHO READ  
AND SPEAK IN PUBLIC*

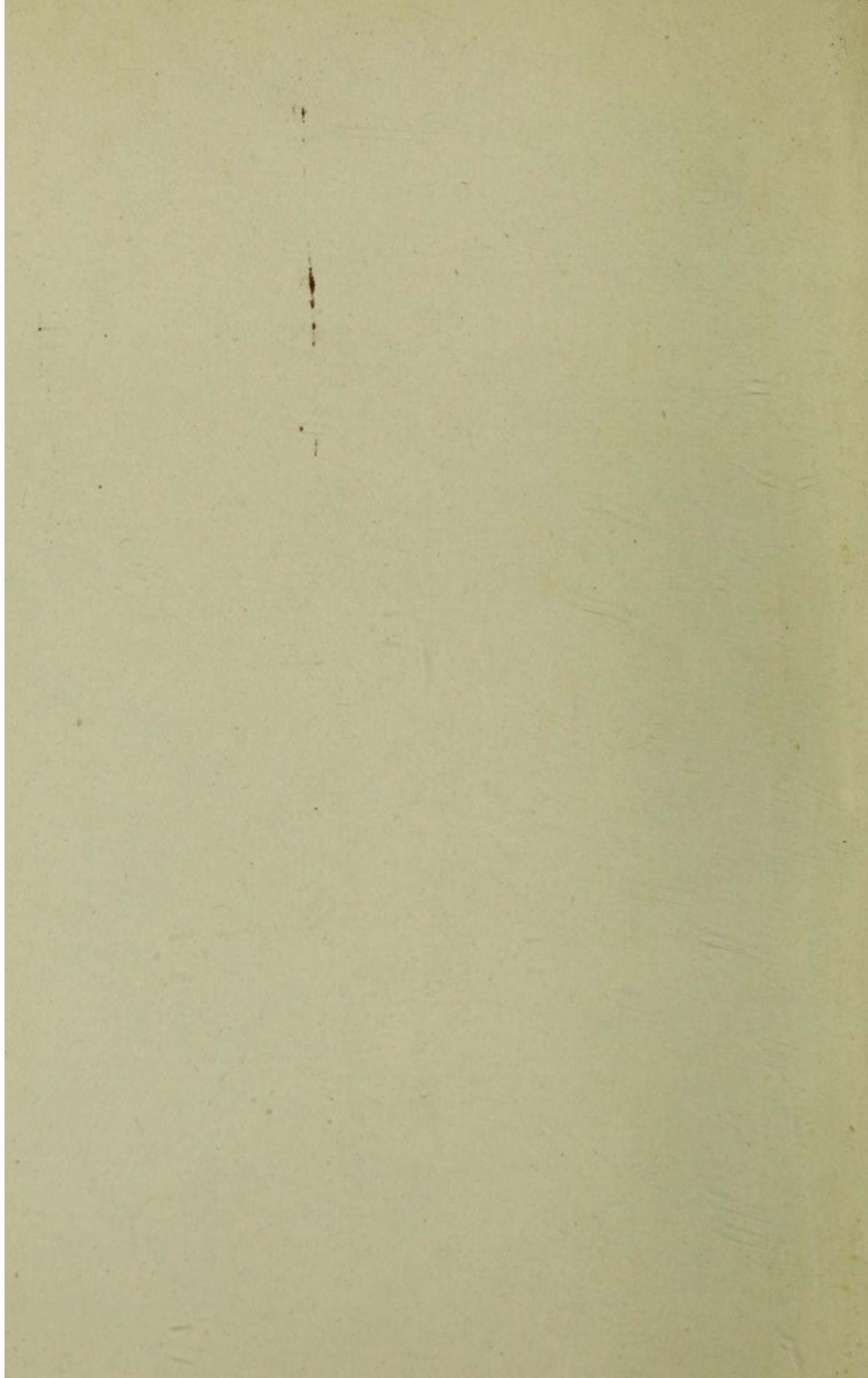
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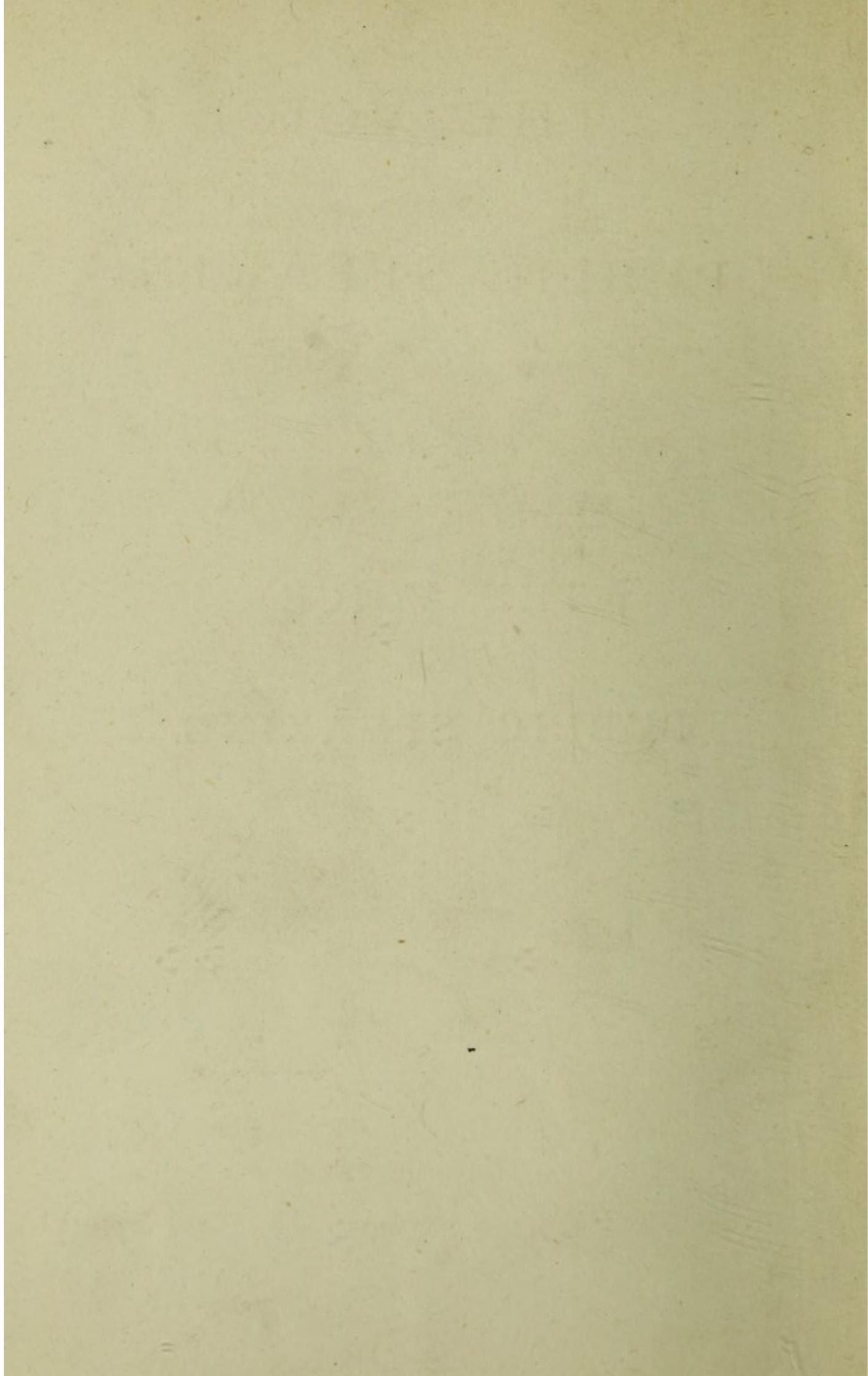
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THE VOICE  
AND  
PUBLIC SPEAKING.



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THE VOICE  
AND  
PUBLIC SPEAKING

*A BOOK FOR ALL WHO READ  
AND SPEAK IN PUBLIC.*

BY  
J. P. SANDLANDS, M.A.,  
VICAR OF BRIGSTOCK.

SECOND THOUSAND.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THERE is room for this little book. No other work, of which I am conscious, goes upon the same lines.

My object is to notice and explain those principles, which, to my mind, underlie the rhetorical art.

I have not written with the view merely of making a book. I have felt that there is a cause, and have taken it up. It may be presumption on my part, but of that I am not the best judge.

The work is not large. I have taken care so far as possible, and without making it too bald, to exclude any matter that was in any way foreign to the subject.

I have written in the simplest language, and this for two reasons, (1) To make things quite clear. (2) To spare, in this busy age, as much as possible, my reader's time.

And now I send it forth with the earnest desire that it will serve its purpose, and enable its readers to grasp the principles it unfolds. I do not send it forth to serve as a substitute for work, but with a view to direct it into proper channels.

Energy must be put forth, if any good is to be accomplished. This little work is calculated, as I intend it, to prevent any waste of that energy.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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THIS edition is considerably improved. I have corrected several errors. I have also added a chapter on extemporaneous speaking. I felt, from the first, that no system could be complete that did not embrace this subject. My simple reason for omitting it in the first edition was inability to arrange my thoughts. This I have now accomplished. I believe and hope that the chapter will be found exceedingly useful. It is short; but this I take to be its chief recommendation. I believe that it contains the principles which, when apprehended and applied, underlie the art.

I take this opportunity of thanking my numerous critics, especially those, as *The Scotsman*, who have recommended the work as a

text-book. It was for this purpose I intended it. Experience convinces me, constantly more and more as I deal with students, that it is of the utmost importance that young men who are preparing in any way for public life, should make themselves acquainted with the principles laid down in it and acquire facility of application by practice. For those whose aim is the ministry, either in our own or other churches, the book is positively invaluable. I say this without any sense of egotism, because I am constantly hearing expressions similar to this-- "Oh, if I had only known twenty years ago, what you tell me, how much better a man I should be to-day!" I could say this of myself, too, and that without blushing.

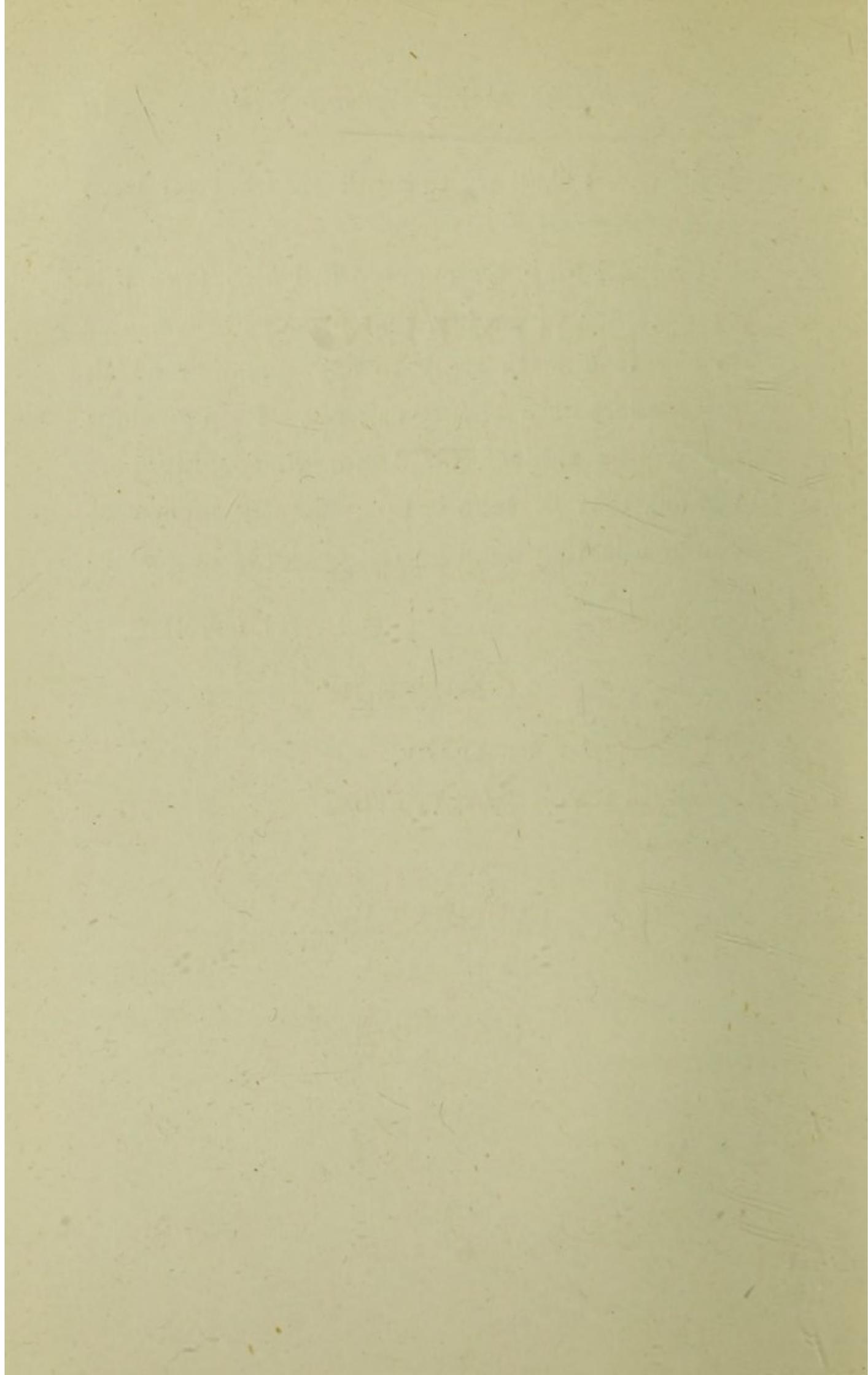
Some of my critics have found fault with things of which they are profoundly ignorant. These I forgive. I sometimes think, however, that it is a pity that authors have not the right of reply. "Pulpit proof" applies to others than those who occupy it. Other critics again have shown me where I was wrong. These I thank

heartily. I shall try to profit by what all have said.

I hope I may be excused if I also take this opportunity of saying, that I shall not consider it any trouble to reply to any question which my readers may wish to ask me. I am anxious about this subject, for I am thoroughly persuaded, that to take it up generally means to confer a lasting boon on the public at large.

J. P. SANDLANDS.

BRIGSTOCK VICARAGE,  
THRAPSTON, *June*, 1880.



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## CHAPTER I.

### *INTRODUCTION.*

I WRITE for public speakers. I wish to take them into my confidence. I feel I can do them good. My object is to help them to speak with greater ease and efficiency.

I shall proceed on the principle, which is rational enough, when properly understood, of first adapting the voice to its work. I take it that this is a safer road to success than the process of laying down a number of rules for reading certain and certain pieces of literature.

When the voice is developed and in a condition to answer the calls made upon it, then it will naturally seek to put its powers into operation. Till this is done, it seems only

reason to conclude that it is perfectly useless to say—This must be done in this way and this must be done in that. Develop the powers of the voice and it will not be satisfied till it find scope for their exercise.

This is a marvellous feature of the human voice, and yet, perhaps, it is more or less common to all the powers we possess. Whenever we develop a power, whatever it be, nothing gives us greater pleasure than the exercise of it. Every artist thinks his own art the most sublime. The painter prefers painting, and the musician music; yet there does seem a diviner charm and more real pleasure in exercising the powers of the voice.

Holding the opinion as I do, that if the voice be developed it will perform its work aright, it will be my object to notice and dilate upon those principles which, when worked out, go to form the voice. It may be taken for granted that the voice is with most people—and not less with many public speakers—all out of order. Its parts need ad-

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justing. When this is accomplished, it only remains to say, Here is the work, do it.

I assume that we have voices. This assumption may seem gratuitous; for whoever doubted the fact? And yet it is quite true that we often hear that the preacher, on Sunday, had a good voice, or that he had no voice. This seems to justify the supposition that the prevalent notions respecting the voice are erroneous, or, at any rate, vulgar, and that, after all, there is not so much wrong in assuming that we have a voice. We affirm the fact and refer all the erroneous opinions of its powers or its feebleness to its being out of order or, otherwise, not altogether as it may be.

But how has it come about that this is so? How does it happen that a good voice is the exception and a bad one the rule? Is nature so clumsy that she performs this part of her work so ill? But nothing justifies our assuming that nature does not give to man the organ of voice as perfect as the other organs she gives him. The rule is that the eye is

perfect. The exception is that it is not. There is not one man in a thousand born blind. So we justly conclude nature has endowed man with the other organs. It cannot be right then to assume that the organ of voice is malformed. The presumption is all the other way. The rule, then, ought to be that good voices obtain and bad ones be scarcely ever met with. And we do not see this.

And this is the reason, We can control the organ of voice. The eye sees, if we open it, and this whether we will or not. We speak of training the eye, but, if we examine closely, we shall find that this training depends, to a very great extent, on a process which is purely mental. We think, when we are sitting in a train, as it first begins to move, that everything about us is moving and that we are sitting still. It appears so to the eye. Our reasoning powers are as quickly set in motion as those of sight, and these, coming in to assist those of sight, soon enable us to see differently. We cannot, so to speak, control our powers of sight.

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We cannot say how we shall see. We must see things as they are. This is exactly the case with hearing. These organs may be called involuntary. They are not altogether dependent on the will. We cannot say whether they shall see and hear or not at pleasure. They see and hear independently of our will.

Now, although nature makes, as a rule, her organs perfect, she allows us to control some, while, with respect to others, she refuses the power. We can and do control the organ of voice. And here lies the secret of so much mischief. The control has been vicious. This control, which we have exercised at will, has all been in the wrong direction.

Let us look at the thing for a minute from this aspect. We all possess the power of imitating. It is a principle of our nature. We imitate instinctively. We do it unconsciously and whether we will or not. There is nothing in which we do it so much as in speaking. We speak like our associates. If they speak badly, we speak badly too. We have only to

think for a minute to see the force of this. We imitate not only as to pronunciation, but as to tone of voice, inflection and everything else. This is more particularly true of children, though not exclusively so. A lad takes his tone from the comrade to whom he is accustomed to look up. It is his way of showing him deference. If his pattern be good, so much the better for him.

It would be a curious and interesting study to trace the development of this principle in all its ramifications. We may see it at work in the different religious bodies. Some way or other it obtains that each has its peculiar characteristics, so that it is not difficult to distinguish them. And this peculiarity does not show itself so much in anything as in the pronunciation of many words. Every denomination has its pet words and its peculiar way of pronunciation. It would, perhaps, be invidious to go into particulars here, yet it may be remarked that the members of a certain denomination may be always recognised by

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the way they pronounce the words "God" and "Lord." They mean it for reverence, yet it is difficult to see how an incorrect pronunciation of a word should be more reverent than a correct one.

I suppose there is no community, whether religious or otherwise, that has not more or less of this characteristic. How many, for instance, educated men in the Church of England pronounce the letter *o* in certain positions as if it were *ow* as in "now"! If we could examine its development we should, I have no doubt, trace it to the influence of one man. And then what must be said of the "my lud" of the legal profession? It can only be accounted for on this principle of imitation, for every lawyer knows that l, o, r, d, spells *lord*, and not *lud*.

We can easily imagine how much good this disposition to imitate would effect, if perfection were the rule, and not the exception. Good voices would be as general as bad ones. We can also see how much mischief it would bring

about when the patterns are universally bad or indifferent. This, I am persuaded, is the main cause of the prevalence of bad voices.

Something more must, however, be said. The vocal organ, unlike the organs of sight and hearing, becomes stronger the more it is exercised. Here is a feature that tells in two ways. It tells for it and against it. If the exercise has been good and judicious, it has been invigorated; if it has not, it has been vitiated. This is obvious. And so we see how these things have been working to bring about a general result. It is, perhaps, more correct to say, that we see that a general bad result has been brought about by these things—and a good voice seems to us more like a freak of nature.

These are the two things which must be rectified—We must learn not to imitate, and we must exercise the voice judiciously.

We must learn not to imitate. This means that we must unlearn very much that we have learnt. We have imitated and acquired many

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bad habits. We have done it without a thought. We have done it instinctively. Now reason is in this, if not in everything, superior to instinct. And our first object will be to direct our thought to what we do. We must observe ourselves ; what we do and how we do it. This is of the highest importance, so much so that it cannot be too much insisted upon. And the remark applies to every particular in the arts of reading and speaking.

But some people strive to imitate. This is judicious if it be desired to cultivate the power of mimicking. It is most injudicious otherwise. The greatest speakers are not those who imitate. Nothing, to my mind, characterises true art more than originality and individuality. The great speaker stands out and apart from his fellows. He is not great because he can successfully imitate a teacher in the art, but because he has struck out a line of thought and action for himself. He creates his ideals and has true notions of his conceptions. He clothes them in language, and gives them utter-

ance after his own mode and manner. He is not a parrot, but a man. He possesses power and feeling. He gives expression to these things in his own way.

If men who imitate only knew how ridiculous they make themselves, they would cease to do it. This cannot be otherwise, because it is wrong in principle ; yet those who do it are not a few. Many men suppose that if they can only imitate great men they will themselves be great. They forget that in following such a course they are sacrificing the main things which constitute greatness. They put another in their place. They only show how great he is, and they are only too successful in showing how little they are.

I once observed a remarkable instance of this very thing. I was in London and was spending the afternoon in one of our public institutions. Amongst other things there was a representation. This was accompanied by explanatory readings. The reader took for his model one of the great men of the day. The imitation

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was accurate. The reader may imagine the rest, and will also fancy how stale and flat it would fall on the ears of those who knew anything of the reader's model.

We must be careful, then, to unlearn all that we have improperly learnt through instinctive imitation. We must be careful not to learn intentionally by imitation. We must seek to originate. We must not let go our individuality.

Speaking is an art. No true artist feels that his genius finds its true and best expression in successfully performing work set him by his master. He has something within him. He feels it and knows it. He wants to bring it out. There his art lies. The true artist sees himself in all his works. This is as true of the speaker as of any other artist.

But the speaker's genius cannot display itself, because it lacks an outlet. It is pent up. It is there. It seeks to come out; but he has never opened up the way. He is like a pianist without an instrument, or a painter without his

colours. He cannot display his powers ; his soul is locked up. The voice is his instrument. He could play upon it ; but it is out of order. It has no power and it is out of tune.

Some people, recognising the extent of this serious state of things and wishing to apply a remedy, have laid down certain and certain rules for the speaker's guidance. Rules are well enough in their way, but there is something better. Rules may produce better mechanical work, and, perhaps, they do, at times, something more. They imply that a thing must be done in a certain way, and that it must not be done in a certain other way. Yet it is better to go to work on principles. A principle is more comprehensive than a rule. It goes deeper. It is, in fact, the reason of the rule. When we feel and know the principle we can better appreciate the reason for it.

This fact we shall keep steadily in view as we proceed with our work. Our endeavour will be to bring out to the fore, those principles which form the basis of the rhetorical art.

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This art consists mainly of two elements. It has a body and a soul. The mechanical part constitutes the body, the expression is the soul of it. The nerve-force, if the term is liked better, is the soul of it. This is a something that cannot be accurately described. It can be felt. It is the fire burning within, showing itself and kindling warmth and ardour in the heart of the hearers.

These parts aid and assist each other. "Mens sana in corpore sano" applies here. It is an object at which the speaker should aim. The parts interact. They are nothing apart. Our object will be to remove the deformities, and give grace and ease to the body, and to call out the latent fire within.

It is passing strange that these things receive so little attention. There was a time, but it is almost out of mind, when they were considered of the first importance. This was the case with the ancients. The Greeks and Romans could not make too much of them. They have left us some evidence of their powers to speak and

move large audiences at their will. We see it in that strange and bewitching power, by which Demosthenes shook the throne of Macedon to its foundations. We see it also in that persuasive eloquence by which Cicero balanced the tottering Roman Republic amidst its thousand and one convulsions. But it must be remarked we see it only in part. The true force of eloquence cannot be accurately described. It must be heard to be felt and understood. No amount of description, whether by pen or pencil, can give us an adequate idea of the Falls of Niagara. We must see them if we would know what they are. It is exactly so with true eloquence. It is a power which can be better felt than described. The ancients could not hand down their eloquence to us. They might try to make us feel that they knew what it was, and this they have done ; but that which Demosthenes called the first, the second, and third part of it, so far as it relates to them, has died with them. We have no idea of it.

But we are men no less than they are. We

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have the same, or at least an equal, force of character, and we possess also the same, or at least equal, mental powers. It remains, then, for us only to do as they did to produce the same results. We must feel that we possess powers and we must labour to make a way for them to display themselves.

We live in days of progress. Every art and science is advancing. Civilization makes rapid strides. The press is almost omnipotent. It does much of the work that is properly within the province of the public speaker, and this because he does not keep pace with the times. People are becoming impatient of the public speaker and he is losing ground. It is true that a little stir has been made here and there, in the matter ; but it is so little that its influence is scarcely felt.

It is only reason to suppose that the public speaker would be glad to find a remedy for all this. He should at least be glad to speak with greater ease to himself and with greater benefit to his audience. The intelligent speaker would

feel, and does feel, that this at least should be his aim. Yet facts go to show that he does not accomplish it. The reason is not far to seek. It is all owing to want of thought. It has never occurred to him that there is a power within him, latent it may be, but still there, which he has only to call into action, and it will display itself. This power, like all our other powers, needs only a little care and attention. If properly nursed and trained it will grow and flourish as everything else in us does. Most public speakers, it must be confessed, have spoken all their life long, in their way of it, and have never thought that there was either room or occasion for improvement. The *matter* of their discourses has engrossed all their attention, and so it has never dawned on their consciousness that they can speak otherwise than they do. This must be the cause, for it is inconceivable how it could be otherwise. Patience, perseverance, courage, and well-directed effort would bring out the power they possess. Then why allow it to lie dormant?

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Time would be saved. Physical discomfort would be removed. Power would be economised. Learning could be more readily imparted. And last, though not least, a fund of inexhaustible pleasure both for speaker and hearer would be opened up. These are advantages that are surely not to be despised. They are worth securing when the attainment costs proportionately so little.

I speak from experience, and I say it without fear of contradiction, if speakers only knew what they could do for themselves, and how much they could draw out of themselves, by giving a little time and attention to a few principles, they would be almost beside themselves with delight. I shall endeavour, so far as it is possible in writing, to direct their energy towards the successful realization of these principles. I do not fear the result, if what I shall say be carefully marked. It stands to common sense, of course, that a speaker cannot be made in a day, any more than Rome could be built in that time. As in everything else that commands approval,

so in this, there must be well-directed and continuous effort. Where there is this well-directed and continuous effort, there will be a corresponding result. And in nothing so much as this is it so marked. Nothing develops so rapidly as the voice under careful management, and the fire within is as easily kindled. It is only necessary to apply the match at the right point. I will answer for it that those who think of these things, and put their soul, so to speak, into it, will be surprised at the results. They will wonder, too, how it came about that they have not attended to these things before. Now they blame Nature. They cannot speak because she has not been bountiful to them with her gifts. The truth is, they have not used her right. This will appear as we proceed.

There is nothing more clear to my mind than that want of information, arising mainly from want of thought, accounts for all the bad reading and speaking—and it is not a little—that obtains. Clerical sore throat, wherever it

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exists, may be attributed to the same cause. There need not be any bad or indifferent reading, and ill effects should be unknown. If a speaker would exercise his vocal organ properly, he would not feel any physical discomfort. The voice is capable of more work than any other organ we have. Its exercise, far from causing weariness or lassitude, should promote health. It is, moreover, a constant source of pleasure, so that it is plain that he who labours in speaking has not put his vocal organ into working order. The ordinary human voice, when properly adjusted and developed, is capable of filling, without weariness or discomfort, the largest building. I am perfectly aware of the extent of the facts I am asserting. I know what I say and what it means, but I am not at all conscious of exaggeration.

But if all this be true, then it seems to be of the first importance that the voice and its training should receive more attention than it does. We ought to have in all our public schools and colleges a professor whose special duty it should

be to attend to the voice. We cannot infuse genius. It may, however, be excited and called into action. We cannot give the soul of oratory, but we can remind ourselves that we may have it, only that it is lying dormant within us. The case is far different with the voice. It is capable of training almost *ad libitum et ad infinitum*. And when its powers are developed, the fire within will play upon them. It is not reason to expect that it can play upon powers that are pent up.

It is remarkable that while we attend to the education and full development of all our powers, we forget the voice. We train physically. We educate the mental faculties. These things are right. But while we attend to these things, we ought not to neglect the voice. It ought to be trained and fitted for its work. We do not think the time misspent which is given to training for boating and racing, although it runs away with many hours that might otherwise be given to profitable reading. It is a great matter to excel in these things, and it

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cannot be done without time and attention. This is more or less the case with athletic sports generally. Gymnastics are good and useful—nay, absolutely necessary—for everything else but the voice! This is the exact state of things. We seek to bring out every power we possess but our vocal powers. We have no vocal gymnastics, and, as a consequence, we have no voices. If, by accident or otherwise, one appears amongst us, we are surprised, and look upon it as a prodigy—a thing that can only occasionally happen. “I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.” We should see, and we might see, a state of things the exact contrary of all this. Every speaker may have a voice, full, clear, bright, and powerful, if he would go to work in the right way.

But we need not stop here, for the observation is of more extensive application. If the public speaker’s voice may be improved, much to his own comfort and pleasure, as well as that of his audience, why not improve the voice for conversation as well? There is no reason

against the process. The thing is practicable, and ought to be done. We hear every species of noise, from the croaking of a toad to the roaring of a bull, in the human voice. These deformities may all be removed and replaced by elegancies. There is a peculiar charm in a good voice, even in conversation, which few other things can inspire. Then why not seek to make good voices—tuneful voices—the rule and not the exception?

I feel very strongly on this point. It seems to me to be of such vast importance in every way, that I cannot but use my feeble powers to call attention to it. I know how difficult it is to make people think about anything whose appearance is novel. This has always been so, and I confess that I have my fears that I shall not receive that hearing which the subject deserves. I am conscious that I am trying to call attention to a most important subject, and this from every aspect; and so, in spite of difficulties, persevere.

The cry is universal against the bad reading

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and indifferent speaking that obtain, and not without good cause. It is too true that few of those whose duty it is to read and speak in public do their work well. I saw from an article that appeared in the *Courrier de l'Europe*, that reading in France is generally bad too. This is what was said:—"En France elle [reading] n'a pas même la valeur d'un art d'agrément; on la regarde comme une curiosité comme un luxe, parfois même comme une prétention." This is testimony to a deplorable state of things—a state of things which is no worse in France than in England. It is true. I have myself met with *pasteurs* in France who have complained of their sufferings from *mal à la gorge*. Some assured me that all, more or less, suffered, and in some cases work had to be given up entirely. It had often to be suspended. The pronunciation of the French language, being produced for the most part in the front of the mouth, has a greater tendency to cause irritation in the throat than our own. The manipulation, so to speak, of the sound

takes place at a greater distance from the vocal organ. The actions of production and manipulation ought to be distinct in every case. They are not either with the English or the French : but as the distance is greater in the latter, so the friction is greater. We shall see this more clearly as we proceed.

If every speaker had a trained voice, there would not be so much waste. As things are, as is evident, the waste is most profuse. Many a sermon and many a public speech is utterly lost in the delivery. And many, again, though not entirely ineffective, fail to attain their object. The matter is good enough, but the manner is all wrong. It must be, then, worth the while to give some attention to it. To put it roughly, it might be said that after the voice is fitted for its work, the manner of delivery should occupy in study at least as much as a sixth of the time given to the preparation of the matter. This is speaking generally. It will not always apply, for often it will require much more.

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Every artist who performs in public owes his success to constant study continued through many years. The public singer who gains applause, does it as the result of many years' hard work. His attention has been directed to the development of his voice and the study of music. There has been a process of mental and mechanical training. He has neglected neither, and to this he owes his success. He knows that if he will succeed, he must work. The conditions are everywhere the same. The public speaker, then, cannot hope to produce satisfactory results under other conditions than these. The thing must be acknowledged and worked out, or we may not hope for improvement.

There are some people who object, and do not scruple to aver their objection, to give any attention to delivery at all. These people are not wise; and if they will allow me to say so, do not know what they are talking about. If the objection has any weight at all, it tells equally against any preparation whatever. It

education be right, it is right in its last application. And so it *will* be right to develop the vocal powers as well as the mental powers. Then is it not right to make one's work more effective? Is it not right to spare one's self unnecessary fatigue? Is it not right to have some regard for the ears and feelings of one's hearers? To say nothing of the personal, and perhaps more selfish, aspect, of seeking one's health, ease, and comfort, these questions suggest abundant reasons for regarding the objection as in the highest degree absurd.

And let it not be supposed that this training develops a stagey reader. It does nothing of the kind. A stagey reader is one who reads or recites after the model which he fancies best befits the stage. He is stagey for the same reason that so many of our public men are bad readers—he has not learnt better. A speaker whose voice is well developed, and whose control over it is perfect, if he has any fire in him, will make the

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powers of his voice answer to his call after his own ideals. He will follow no master, for he has mastered himself.

Some of the most successful men have been those who have given special attention to the subject under discussion. This must be so, because nature does not make so much difference between men as we are sometimes disposed to think. The great and principal reason that one man excels another is that he works harder. Work decides this question as it determines many others. The great speakers amongst statesmen, as amongst preachers, have been, as a rule, the hardest workers; and they have laboured at the manner as well as at the matter. Whitefield owed his success to his oratorical power. The late Dr. Guthrie acknowledged that he owed much of his pulpit efficiency to his having, while young, given special attention to the study of elocution. He trained his voice, and knew how to manage it.

Earnestness is thought to be sufficient for a

speaker. If a man but be in earnest, the rest may be excused. This observation has been made by one in authority. I would like to ask him if it would have been enough for us if our soldiers had been in earnest, and nothing more, when they were sent out to subdue the Zulus? Did they not require to understand the art of war? And was it not necessary that they should be well supplied with powder and shot? Discipline and training are among the first requisites. They must also have abundant material. Earnestness cannot take the place of these things. It is an important element, we readily admit—an element the absence of which may spoil all the rest,—but nevertheless an element which cannot atone for the want of everything besides. It is exactly so here. Mind, matter, and manner make up the speaker. Eliminate either element, and you have an abortion. Train, acquire, and discipline, and you approach perfection. Our business is with the latter element. Our object will be to improve it in

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many ways. It is wrong, or, to say the least, it is not right.

I think now that we have made out a good case and shown, to a demonstration, that there is very much too much bad reading and speaking, and there is, in consequence, much useful work to be done. We have shown, too, that the objections against it are absurd. I have asserted, with some show of conviction, that the work may be done. Our next object will be to see how. And here I must ask for a patient hearing. I must ask also, that what shall be said, be taken on credit till it is well tried. I may be permitted to say as Plato said to his would-be pupil, "There is no royal road to learning." I have no specific to offer, and I do not believe that any one has, for making a good speaker all in a minute. It cannot be done. It takes time. The principles that will be brought under notice should each in their turn be well apprehended and worked out. This should be done little by little, one at a time. Then by-and-by the whole may be

practised continuously and at the same time. These principles, it will be found, when thoroughly grasped and fixed, will operate of themselves. Their effect will soon be perceptible, and it will be very marked. Then let us to our business.

## CHAPTER II.

### *BREATHING.*

THE better a speaker can breathe, the better he can speak. To manage the breath properly is a principle which underlies the whole art of vocal emission. Its importance is such that some have regarded it as the great secret of elocution. It is quite true that much more depends upon it than is generally supposed. It will, I have no doubt, be a new thing for many to be told that the first thing to learn in the art of speaking or reading is that of breathing. To breathe is to live. Yes, truly, and there is the point to be noted; because that which suffices for the purposes of life merely, may not suffice for something more. To breathe to live is one thing, and to breathe for the purposes of vocal emission is another.

We cannot speak or read well unless we can breathe well. We cannot breathe well unless we have learnt. These assertions may sound a little strange, not to say ridiculous ; yet, as we shall see as we proceed, they are anything but either the one or the other. Indeed, the assertions cannot be made with too much force or their importance be easily exaggerated. Breathing for the purpose of vocal emission is an art—a talent if you will—anything, so long as it is regarded as an invaluable accomplishment. It is a thing to be acquired, but only as the result of seeking it with some perseverance and energy.

If we look at things as they present themselves to us, we shall discover that, in our ordinary breathing, we take in and give out the air in a constant and regular way. There is, so to speak, a stream of air running in and running out of our lungs. This stream varies but little. It is constant, equal, and regular. This suffices for the purposes of life.

When we speak we make a peculiar use of

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the air. It is true that we do it after the breathing has performed its proper functions, or, to speak more correctly, as it performs them. We have an organ—an instrument—in our throats on which we wish to play. This instrument is played upon after the same fashion as any other wind instrument—a *cornet-à-piston*, for instance. When we breathe for the ordinary purposes of life, the air passes through this instrument, quietly and easily, as it would, under similar circumstances, pass through any other wind instrument, and causes no sound. It is important to mark this fact, because, although it is simple enough, it will presently appear that breathing for vocal purposes is a thing that has to be learnt.

When we emit vocal sounds, when we vocalize that is, we do something with the air which differs very much from our ordinary breathing. We condense and compress the air in our lungs, and then we force it against the instrument in our throats. It is in this way that vocal sound is produced. It is true, as is

clear, that we use the same air as the air we breathe, but the use is over and above what is required for the purposes of life. The action of the air on the instrument in the throat is very similar to its action on any wind instrument. The peculiar mode or manner by which the air is compressed and jerked, so to speak, upon the voice of a musical instrument, is acquired only by practice. To do it successfully is a great point gained by the learner. The term is, I believe, to lip or tongue the instrument.

The point to observe here is, that more air has been expended in causing this vocal emission than is required for ordinary expiration. Hence it follows that for constant speaking the ordinary, regular, and equal flow of air is not sufficient. In other words, the air taken in during the process of ordinary breathing does not suffice for speaking. We must take in a stock. We must reserve it. We must economise it. We must not waste it. Here are things to be learnt. It is clear we do

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nothing of the kind naturally. There is no occasion.

In public speaking it is often very necessary to make large demands on this stock. Our speaking is often loud, full, earnest, energetic. Energetic speaking would very soon exhaust the little we have from our normal mode of breathing, and we should be, as the French say, *épuisé*. We should be breathless and gasping. It is obvious, then, that if we will make large demands, we must lay in large supplies.

But, in order to be very clear, it will be better to divide the art of breathing into its two component parts, and treat them separately. Breathing consists, as reflection shows, of two parts, which may be properly termed inspiration and expiration. Each of these requires special and careful attention, the one no less than the other. And first let us speak of inspiration. This is the art of taking in the air in breathing.

It is scarcely necessary to remind ourselves that we are speaking of breathing for the

purposes of vocal emission, or in other words, voice production. But we may remind ourselves of a principle that is at the basis of all true vocal emission, and it is this—deep inflation is the first condition of it. It is utterly impossible to exaggerate the importance of paying due regard to this fundamental principle. I would strongly advise every speaker to read it over and over again, and impress it for ever on his mind. It cannot, I am fully convinced, be too much insisted upon. It is a principle which should be constantly recognised. The speaker, whenever he opens his mouth in public, should do so on this principle. But it will escape him unless he is very careful. We will try, therefore, to fix it. This we will do by first seeking the reason of it.

If we breathe with the higher part of our lungs only, we cannot take in a stock of air. The lungs are a very curious piece of mechanism, and, withal, very accommodating. We may use them in part or in whole at will. Our stock depends upon the way in which we use them,

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whether partially or wholly. It is plain that they contain more air when filled than they do when only partially filled. Physiologists tell us that when we breathe with the upper part of our lungs, we take in but a third of the quantity of air that they are capable of holding. They tell us, too, that this way of breathing—and, let it be remarked, it is very prevalent—is very injurious to health, producing chest diseases, etc. This is only a logical conclusion; for if an organ be overworked and overstrained in one part, and not at all exercised in the other, no other result can be expected. But this apart. Breathing in this way only provides a scanty supply, which is as soon exhausted as called upon. The supply is small; the call upon it comparatively large. The stock is scarcely laid in, before it is all gone. As so a constant process of exhaustion and returning again to fresh efforts to seek for more is ever going on. Many speakers know what this means and how much fatigue it occasions. Nothing wears and tears a speaker to pieces more than this. The

mental effort is nothing in comparison; and yet there should be nothing of the kind. The only fatigue a public speaker should ever feel is mental fatigue, unless it may be that he sometimes suffers from nervous exhaustion. There should not be and there need not be any physical depression.

But this fatigue does not tell upon the speaker only; it is felt by the audience too. There is, as every public speaker knows, a certain undefinable something which unites the speaker with his audience. This something is the telegraph wire which conveys the messages to the audience and returns with the replies. It never fails to do its work accurately. It is in this way that the speaker is kept *en rapport* with his audience. What he feels, they feel. If he is in earnest, they are in earnest. If he is sad, they are sad. If he is interested, they are interested. And if he is fatigued, they are wearied. Then the speaker may just as well finish, for no more good can be done. This feeling of weariness is uppermost, and maintains

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its position. The audience wish for nothing so much as to go.

But now how can the art of inspiration, the art of taking in the breath, be acquired? Exercise, frequent exercise, alone can accomplish it. The exercise must be the following, regarded quite as a gymnastic exercise:—Stand upright, not bolt upright, stiff, straight as a poker, but easily upright. Take in the breath [inspire] quietly. Let the stream of air be continuous, equal, and long. At first let it out in the way we shall presently describe, without any sound. The point to attend to is the duration of the inspiration. The exercise should be continued till its duration is several seconds long. It will at first be difficult, but practice makes this, as it does most other things, easier. This exercise, simple though it seems, is a most important one. Its accomplishment constitutes one of the secrets of successful speaking. The reason is obvious on reflection, for exercise strengthens, as a rule, all the muscles of the organs it calls into play.

It is advisable, when practising the exercise, to think of it as strengthening and invigorating our breathing powers.

A little aching about the chest will be caused and felt when this exercise is first practised. This need not be regarded as in any way serious. It should, indeed, be taken rather to indicate that the exercise has been effectual. We have been using muscles—straining them indeed—which, perhaps, since the day we were born have never been called into action. It would be strange if there were no reaction, no resistance, no rebellion. The next time the exercise is performed there will be less pain; and by-and-by, as the work is continued, the pain will pass away altogether. It is just what the cricketer experiences the first practice of the season. He is full of aches and pains when he goes to bed, and the next day he is so stiff he can scarcely move. The reason is obvious. He has been straining nerves and muscles that have been, so to speak, lying unused through the whole winter. The next

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day's exercise does not tire him so much, and by-and-by he is equal to any exertion. The cases are parallel.

But now, there are two passages by which the air may enter the lungs—the nostrils and the mouth; which of these should be used? Some people have gone so far as to say that the great secret of elocution lay in breathing through the nostrils. And we must admit that there is much to be said in its favour. It promotes health. It is not safe to breathe through the mouth when leaving a heated room on a damp night. The air is filtered and warmed as it passes through the nostrils into the lungs, and so rendered less liable to be injurious. But how does this affect speaking? Not at all directly. So far as actual speaking goes, it does not matter, if other things are equal, which way we take in the breath. The point to aim at is a deep inflation, filling up and down and through and out, till there is absolutely no room left for another atom of air. In practising the exercise, however,

it will be better to take the air through the nostrils for this reason—we cannot take it in so rapidly. This is an important point, for whatever we take in slowly we can give out slowly. I would say, then, make a point of taking in the breath through the nostrils in all exercises performed with the view of strengthening the lungs and of acquiring the art of breathing.

For the same reason, it would be advisable to take in the breath through the nostrils before beginning to speak or read. Let the speaker or reader, before commencing, stand quietly, and calmly pass in review all that lies before him, and in the meantime fill up. He will find other advantages in doing so as he proceeds—advantages not easily over-estimated. I will not mention them, as they very clearly manifest themselves.

I would also advise the speaker or reader to take breath through his nostrils, as far as he can, whenever he is called upon to speak or read in the open air, especially when the

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atmosphere is charged with moisture or other mischievous matter. If the building is full of smoke or unpleasant odour from gas, or otherwise, it would also be prudent to breathe through the nostrils. It will be found, after considerable practice, that it is possible to take in sufficient breath for reading a very long passage. I have myself read in the churchyard, on a cold afternoon, the whole of the Lord's prayer, after a single inspiration. This is a gymnastic feat, if I may be allowed to say so, that is better practised apart than thought of at such times ; though I must also remark that the practice is the occasion of it and suggests it.

But with all that may be said in its favour, and it is much, breathing through the nostrils is not generally practicable. I say this after some experience, not altogether personal. And if it is not practicable, it is not worth while advocating its use for speaking, however beneficial it may be in other respects. I have seen it remarked by some good authorities,

that it prevents dryness in the mouth; but I must take exception to the remark, as it is not founded on fact. The reason for dryness in the mouth no longer exists when the speaker thinks how he shall speak and prepares himself accordingly. Fear, anxiety, nervousness, and such like things cause this dryness. The speaker, under such conditions, breathes short and fast. Inspiration follows inspiration with almost lightning speed. The little air that has been taken in, as we shall see more fully presently, has been withal wasted. The conditions are such as cannot but cause dryness in the mouth. Remove the cause, and the effect will be gone too. Take in deep inflations, and there will be no dryness in the mouth. It does not matter in the least whether by the nostrils or the mouth. Whichever is more practicable is better, and generally in the course of speaking, it will be more practicable through the mouth. It is more natural for the air to rush into the lungs through the largest opening, which, of course, is the mouth.

I saw it recommended in a French work which I once read, to breathe [inspire] after the open vowels. The reason given for this was, that, the mouth being more open, less time would be occupied in the act, and a deeper inflation could also be accomplished. This is true. It is also true that it is more practicable in French than in our own language. We have already noticed that the French pronounce, or rather manipulate the tone, nearer the front of the mouth than the English, and so render breathing, in speaking, more difficult. Here, to my mind, is discovered one of the main elements, for rhetorical purposes, of the grandeur of the English language. The tone of voice is, in consequence of this fact, fuller and richer. Perhaps as we cannot adopt the Frenchman's rule, our own will be better: Breathe often and wherever you can, in reading or speaking; economise, and never exhaust.

Before leaving this part of the subject it will be necessary to notice another very simple

and yet very useful exercise. It is this: Hold the breath, after a deep inflation, for several seconds before letting it go. This, too, must be regarded as a gymnastic exercise. There is no real advantage resulting directly from any of the gymnastic exercises,—running, leaping, vaulting, balancing, climbing, throwing, dragging, pushing, lifting, carrying, wrestling, jumping, skating, dancing,—swimming, boxing, riding, driving, or fencing, yet the practice of the whole constitutes the perfect athlete. So this little exercise is, perhaps, not very much good in itself, yet it exercises the lungs in a very essential manner. It enlarges their capacity for becoming a reservoir. Like all other gymnastic exercises, it gives strength and agility. It gives control over the breath, and this is an important point; for it, like a high-spirited horse, must be kept well in hand, or it will run away.

We turn now to the other part of breathing, which we have described as expiration. We have insisted again and again upon slow and

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deep inflation ; and this because it is impossible to magnify too much its importance. We have said and now repeat it, Breathe slowly, regularly, and deeply. A bad reader does none of these things, because he neither knows how nor wherefore. He does not take in enough, and he lets out too much. He has never learnt how to take in or how to give out. Both actions need to be made perfect by exercise. Let us now see how to practise expiration—letting out the breath.

When we have taken in a deep inflation and held it for several seconds, after the manner above described, our object must be to let it out gently, continuously, and regularly. We must aim at making the expiration as long as possible. At first it will not last longer than two or three seconds, but practice, energetic practice, will make it easy, and we shall be able to give out breath by-and-by for almost half a minute. This is a gymnastic feat that is quite worth while acquiring. This exercise should be persisted in till something can be

accomplished. It should not be given up after the first attempt, because success can only be obtained as the result of perseverance.

We may vary this exercise by emitting sound. It is of little consequence what the sound is, so long as it is not unpleasant. I have found it a very useful exercise to sit down to the piano with my pupils, and ask them to sing notes as I strike them. I begin generally with lower C, and go upwards. I strike the notes in succession, and ask them to sing them and hold each note as long as possible. There are other advantages, as we shall see presently, in performing this exercise. It should be continued with patience and energy till a note nearly half a minute long can be made. The student must not be disheartened if at first he should not succeed to his satisfaction. It is an exercise that may be continued for years with profit. The accomplished speaker, indeed, will find it useful to perform at stated times all the exercises we are giving. It will not be time wasted, as it keeps the voice in order

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and up to its work ; and in this way it lessens the fatigue of actual speaking.

We shall have to notice something presently about the mouth. We may here say that it will be necessary, in practising this exercise, to open the mouth well, all over the face, and to take care that no breath come out with the sound. This latter particular is most important ; because if we let out breath as well as sound, we not only more quickly exhaust our stock, but we spoil the tone of the voice. We make it harsh and rough and furry. But how can we tell that nothing but sound comes out of the mouth ? We may know by the tone of the voice. We may also certify ourselves respecting it by singing with a lighted candle before our mouth. If there is breath, the candle will flicker ; if not, it will burn in its usual way. I am indebted to a French gentleman for this test, and I believe it is a very good one.

There will be little difficulty in managing the breath while speaking if these exercises

are constantly practised. They give control. But a speaker should not have to think of these things while actually at work. His thoughts must necessarily be otherwise occupied. True. Yet we break a horse in before we mount him for riding. If we tried to ride him in his wild and unsubdued state we should probably break our necks. We ride without fear when the horse is properly in hand, under the control of bit and curb. We do not think of breaking him in, he is fit for riding already. So when the breath is properly under control we do not think of it in this way while speaking. We use it for the purpose we require it, and it answers to our call.

Yes, but I am not sure whether it is not a good thing for a speaker to be obliged to think of these things when about to speak and in actual speaking. It takes his thoughts off himself. It often happens when a speaker rises to address an audience, that his thoughts gravitate to his toes, and this because they are all about himself. Yet he need only as a rule

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think of his posture at the outset. He should stand freely erect, that the lungs may have room to play, and take in a deep inflation. This he should do slowly, and as it is the first, through the nostrils. We can give out slowly, as we have already observed, what we take in slowly. The speaker should make a rule, from which he should never vary, of taking in a good stock before beginning to speak. After this he may leave his breathing to take care of itself, if he have well practised the exercises.

The importance of breathing is so great that many other things might be said to insist upon it. We have treated of it first on this account. If its importance is felt and is acted upon, the difference in speaking in every way will soon be recognised. It will be seen that too much cannot be said of it.

But I must ask that too much may not be expected all at once. The art of speaking to my mind is one of the finest, if not the finest, of all the arts. It cannot, then, be acquired in a day. It takes time. A week's exercise

does not, can not, make the accomplished athlete; and so with everything else that stands out and above the ordinary. It grows. It is the outcome of constant energy directed towards a well-defined end.

The student must take it on credit that his work will not be without result. He must have patience and wait for it. He will not be disappointed. Work determines this as it does many other things. The more energetic the work, the better the result. The gymnast strains every muscle and every nerve to attain his ideal. The vocal gymnast must not do less, for he need not and will not labour in vain. The lungs may, by diligent exercise, be strengthened, brought under control, and made subservient to all the purposes of voice production. It is true that the action of the lungs is for the most part involuntary; yet it is also true that we may direct our attention to them, and make them do our bidding. For health's sake we may do this with advantage, but for speaking it must be done.

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One last word before we quit this subject for another. Nature yields to our demands. She gives us what we ask, and almost all we ask. If we wish to make a particular use of any member of our body, she says, Give me time, and seek it in the right way, and you shall have it. We may see this illustrated in the case of the blacksmith. His work is very laborious, but it is for the most part work that calls the muscles of his arms into play. There nature seems to concentrate all her forces, and the "muscles of his brawny arms" are, therefore, not only subject of song, but deservedly so. The conditions are everywhere similar. The speaker requires to draw largely on his lungs, and so he must exercise them vigorously, energetically,—violently, if you will,—any way so long as he pulls them well up to their work. If he exact what he requires he will get it.

## CHAPTER III.

### *THE MOUTH.*

THE mouth in speaking, as in singing, should be well opened. We may not think it important to pay attention to the mouth at all, either in speaking or singing; but we shall see, as we proceed, that the mouth requires it as much as anything else.

We English people do not generally open our mouths sufficiently when we speak. There are reasons for this which are not far to seek. The atmosphere of our country is damp and often cold. In many parts it is much impregnated with gases, dirt, and smoke. We do not often experience the pleasure of drinking in the soft, clear, warm and pure air of sunnier climes. If we did we should open our mouths to drink in large supplies. As

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it is, we close our mouths and take in no more than we can avoid. Hence it is that we have contracted the habit of speaking with our mouths almost closed. There are several reasons, as we have already seen, for our breathing with our mouths closed; but there are no good reasons for our speaking in this way. The reasons, indeed, are all against it.

There is, however, another circumstance which, perhaps more than this, contributes to form the habit of speaking with the mouth scarcely opened—the superabundance of consonants in our language. We have many more consonants than vowels in English. This is not the case with the languages of sunnier climes. There the vowels predominate. The languages of Italy and the coasts of the Mediterranean, for instance, rejoice in a superabundance of vowel tone. In these languages the vowels are related to the consonants in pretty much the same proportion as the consonants to the vowels in our own. It is easy to see how all this would affect the vocal

organs. In warm climates the abundance of vowel tone leads people to open the mouth, while in cold climates exactly the reverse obtains.

It may be, indeed it is, owing to the climate that we find such differences in this respect in languages. It is, therefore, quite within the province of the nature of things to speak of the Italian language as too soft for our cold climate. It is so in reality, and here we see the reason. We allow that the Italians are right in so describing it, and, further, they are right in regarding it as the language of song. It is this in a pre-eminent degree, inasmuch as it induces the habit of opening the mouth.

Thus then, while the languages have been modified by climatic influences, and we are too ready to give way to the influences, it has come about that we have contracted the habit, and this universally, of keeping our mouths almost closed when speaking. The two things have so interacted as to bring

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about a state of things which has not only impaired the quality of the voice, but has lessened its power. It is flattened and roughened, and cannot travel so well.

We lay it down as a principle that, for proper and effective voice production, and the attainment of those qualities of roundness, fulness, sweetness and clearness, so essential to the voice of a public speaker, it is necessary to acquire the habit of opening the mouth well in speaking. The public speaker must fight against the habit which, as an Englishman, he has contracted. It cannot be done without some effort and energy, care and attention ; but, with these, it may be done effectually.

It is obvious that, if sound is to proceed from our mouth, it must have room to pass. Some one has put it in this way : "If you want to leave the room you must open the door."

It may appear a very simple matter to speak about and to make so much of. It is so, a

very simple matter and a very little thing withal. Yet it is a little thing we do not observe to do, and we ought. Little things must not be despised or disregarded. Little things go to make great things, and it is attention to each that constitutes perfection in the whole. The man who excels is he who pays unwearied attention to little things.

Open the mouth—involves a principle and is a maxim to be adopted. Sound must have room to proceed from its starting point, if it is to reach the distant ear in a full, sonorous and agreeable form.

But now how much should the mouth be opened? Is it possible to give particular directions? It may be possible, but the process would be somewhat tedious and not very profitable after all. We shall have something to notice by and by respecting the formation of the vowels and consonants; but here we are speaking quite independently of what we shall say then. The rule to observe is, as we have already intimated, to open the mouth

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wide. We might almost say as wide as possible. There is but little fear of overdoing this, and so we may venture to make it a rule to open the mouth in speaking and singing as much as we can. Attention to articulation will prevent our overdoing it. It is of the greatest importance to attend to this rule in practising the exercises that have been mentioned, as well as those which are to follow.

But while we lay it down as a principle that, for voice production, the mouth must be well opened, we must guard against opening the mouth ungainly. This must, as everything else, be done gracefully. We must not open the mouth too much lengthways, or otherwise, but proportionately, so to speak, all over the face.

The habit of opening the mouth well in speaking can only be acquired by practice. This may, to some extent, be done independently of other exercises and with special regard to it. I believe that the surest road to success is by attending to one thing at a

time. For this reason I should strongly recommend the student to acquire control over the muscles of his mouth by giving special attention to it. This he may do by frequently opening his mouth to its widest limits, taking care of course that, in the process, he does not distort his features. He may continue the practice till he tire himself. Constant use gives strength. Great facility in opening the mouth is thus acquired, and a good, open and free passage is formed for our words to issue forth and present themselves in a manner at once intelligible and pleasant to our hearers.

In the foregoing chapter we have laid great stress on the management of the breath. We have seen, as I hope clearly, that it is the first condition of true voice production. Here we reiterate, and its importance is its justification, that we must let the voice out when produced. There appears, indeed, a wonderful sympathy between the mouth and the larynx, and a deformity in one produces a like result in the other. But, any way, our hearers are not in

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our stomachs, and so there is no reason for forcing the sound back down our throats, but, on the contrary, every reason for allowing it—making for it—a free passage outwards.

While we have been, in this chapter, insisting upon the importance of opening the mouth in speaking, we must be careful to remember that the remark applies to the whole of the mouth—the back as well as the front. Our aim must be to make the mouth globular. It must be, as far as possible, of the same shape at the root and about and above it as at the tip of the tongue. It is difficult to make this quite clear by writing. Perhaps it will aid us a little to observe, that the parts about the base of the tongue must be averted—opened out—as much as possible. The sound must not be obtruded, jolted against anything in its passage outward.

A careful attention to this point will prevent the awkward and inelegant manner, common enough with some speakers, of opening the mouth too much laterally or perpendicu-

larly. Its appearance does not commend itself, and the effect is anything but pleasant. For this reason, then, in addition to others, it is desirable to correct all faults.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *THE VOICE.*

THIS chapter will be devoted to a consideration of the voice. The sense of the verb, from which the word is derived, is "to drive out." The voice then is the sound driven out, through the mouth, after having been produced in the throat. This is the sense in which we shall understand the word throughout this chapter.

We shall not treat of the vocal organ. Its construction and functions are very lucidly explained in many works on physiology. It does not, in any way, afford assistance to the development of the vocal powers to study the construction of the organ itself. It would appear that, although much is known, not enough is known to be of any material help.

This opinion will be at variance with that of many who treat on this and kindred subjects. It is, however, not hastily formed, but is the result of having given much thought to the subject. Yet we do not think a gymnast requires to understand the anatomy of his legs in order to perfect himself in his art, and we are not reproached for our opinion. The conditions are the same. The vocal gymnast is not any more expert from understanding the construction of the larynx. The information may be useful for other things, but it does not help in this.

The object of this chapter is to enable those, who wish, so to strengthen their voice as to speak with clearness and distinctness in the largest public buildings. The object is attainable. It may be acquired by faithfully putting in practice what will be here prescribed. The first condition—the vocal organ—nature has provided: the other conditions—patience, diligence, and perseverance—we must ourselves provide. And here, perhaps, it is well to remind

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ourselves that these last conditions have contributed more to make men to differ, *inter se*, than anything which nature has done. We may regard this as generally true, and so make up our minds to excel by dint of labour. Labour is one of the first conditions of excellence.

It would not further our object to classify the voices. The vocal organ is pretty much the same in all human beings. Its construction in the female is precisely the same as in the male. Nature revels in variety and no less here than elsewhere, yet the variety is more in the *relation* of the parts than in the *construction* of the parts. The conductor of an orchestra requires to know and be able to distinguish things that differ, for the purpose of grouping the voices. He would otherwise mix the tenors and basses, etc., etc., up together. Our object is to strengthen the voice, particularly for the purpose of speaking. And this, whether it be tenor or bass or what not.

We must not, however, overlook the fact

that the exercise which strengthens the vocal organ for singing does so also for speaking. Running and walking, leaping and jumping—all pedestrian exercise, indeed, helps to strengthen the muscles of the legs and feet. This must be so, because in each case the same parts are exercised. So it is with all vocal exercises. We have not two organs—one for singing and another for speaking. We have but one. We sing and speak with the same instrument. And so it follows that, if the vocal organ is exercised, it is strengthened for all purposes. This fact is obvious enough when we reflect, yet it does not occur to us. We act as if the contrary were true.

The question, whether there is any advantage in learning to sing, might be put with much propriety here. And we must answer, "Much every way." Hence the reason and apology for much that will be said in this chapter.

A speaker needs certain qualities of voice, and his aim and object should be to acquire

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them. These qualities are clearness, smoothness, volume, and intensity.

We must, for the sake of clearness, repeat things that have been said already. We have already spoken of breathing and opening the mouth. These are the two extreme parts of the action of speaking. The actual production of voice occupies a middle position. Each of these parts requires individual attention that they may all be alike good. They interact and influence each other. It will effect no good purpose, therefore, if we do not attend to the extremes as well as what comes between. It may, indeed, almost be said that attention—accurate attention—to breathing and opening the mouth would insure the right use of the vocal organ.

It is matter of observation that want of attention to these two very simple things accounts for much of the defective speaking which we hear. If public speakers would only learn to breathe properly and open their mouths well, they would accomplish much of that

which is necessary to form and fit the vocal organ for its work.

But now how about the middle part—the voice? Let it be first remarked, that speakers do not, for the most part, produce vocal tone in the right way. This is a very general and sweeping assertion. It is none the less true. It is very difficult to make it clear, yet something may be said by way of attempt. It is easier to show by pattern than describe in writing. It appears, then, that people generally—I am speaking from observation—speak with the air that is lying about the mouth. Public speakers, as well as others, do this. The air is not driven from the lungs, as it ought to be, and forced, from beneath, against the vocal organ, being manipulated in its passage through the mouth. The lungs are the proper reservoir of the stuff of which vocal sound is made. These ought to supply it. Instead of this however, the air is forced in all directions and from any quarter against the vocal organ. The result is, as may be imagined, every pos-

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sible species of noise. This habit is as general as it is pernicious. And yet, although it has been felt in some quarters that something was wrong, nothing has been done to correct it.

If this point is clear, and I hope it is, we shall have accomplished something. It is a great matter, and a step in the right direction, to know clearly what we want to do. Our object, then, is to remove this bad habit and replace it by a good one. The thing is quite possible. It comes as the result of patience and perseverance. It is worth all the trouble.

We often hear the expressions "head voice," "chest voice," "throat voice," etc. To my mind these terms only serve to illustrate our point. We have but one organ of voice, and that is not in our head or chest, but in our throat. There tone should be produced by propelling the air from the lungs against it. The air should not be forced against it from any other quarter. We produce the different notes by contracting or expanding the larynx, but we should never think of propelling the air by

any other means than the lungs. This is a point that cannot be insisted upon too much. It constitutes one of the secrets of true vocal emission. We must discard those terms as implying only the existence of defects. Our aim must be to produce true vocal tone.

Three things mainly have to do with producing vocal tone—the lungs, the vocal organ, and the mouth. If these be properly adjusted and rightly discharge their functions, the result is tone which pleases the ear; otherwise, we have noises which are anything but agreeable.

Now if we had not the organ of voice we could not live. The question then of producing beautiful tone, in an easy and effective manner, is simply one of adjustment of parts and strengthening these parts by exercise. This is obvious.

We have noticed the way by which the two parts—functions if you will—the lungs and mouth, may be adjusted. We come now to speak of the vocal organ. This is a much more difficult matter, because, in order to make

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things quite clear, it is necessary to give a pattern of what is right and contrast it with what is wrong. And then our habits of speaking are not all bad alike, but variously. We may assume, however, that most public speakers, having never given the subject any thought, do not produce vocal tone aright. And assuming the fact, we may point out what will, if judiciously and diligently applied, remedy the defects.

The speaker's first aim should be to strike the vocal organ perpendicularly from beneath. When the breathing has been faithfully practised, this can be readily accomplished ; but it will require very careful watching. The action of the air on the larynx must be something like a straight ball on the middle wicket. It must be decisive and plump. It is the correct eye and the strong arm of the bowler that gives it this precision. There must be something of this kind in the speaker's aim. He must collect his force, after the manner above described, and then give direction to it. Attention must

be constantly paid to this until it becomes a habit to do it correctly.

It will assist the student very much to remind himself that the elements of spoken words are two—vowels and consonants. These may again, for convenience, be described as tones and manipulations. The tones are produced by the vocal organ. The manipulations are effected mainly by the different parts of the mouth.

We may dismiss for the present the manipulations and reserve them for special treatment in another chapter, only let it be distinctly remembered that the vocal organ should only be required to produce vowel-tones, and that it is the province of the mouth to manipulate them. It is plain, if this is so, that each should receive a special treatment.

Tones, used in the sense above specified, are represented by the vowels and by various combinations of the vowels. These are produced by the vocal organ. We now relate the instrument to its work—the vocal organ and tones

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represented by vowels. We want to produce these tones in the most effective and pleasing manner, with perfect ease, by means of this instrument. This is the main thing to be accomplished—to prepare the instrument for its work.

Without entering into the *rationale* of the thing, we shall now notice those exercises, which, from experience, we know are calculated to effect this.

The following is a very useful exercise:—Sit down to the piano. Strike lower C. Sing it to the vowel A—pronounced after the Italian—*ah*. Breathe very deeply. Hold it out as long as possible. When this has been well done, sing all the notes, in succession, in like manner. Do it to the full compass of the voice. Then do it over and over again to all the vowels. There is, however, a special point to be aimed at, and this is to obtain what singers call the “clear shock of the glottis.” This shock is somewhat explosive in its nature. It is a great point gained. It indicates that the air is properly

propelled from the lungs. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to describe it on paper. It is often recommended to sing the syllables *ska* and *ka*—pronounced *skah* and *kah*—to the notes of the scale after the manner described above. The advice is very good. But it will be necessary to hit the letters *s* and *k* very smartly and fearlessly. A great effort should be made and the effect should be carefully watched. It is only by constant practice that this can be acquired. When we remember that for years we have been under the influence of a habit whose effect has been pernicious, we shall not be surprised at this. We must not, however, suppose that as much time is needed to correct what is wrong as we have taken to superinduce it. An organ prefers to be right rather than wrong, and readily yields to well-directed effort to readjust it.

The “shock of the glottis” is readily distinguished when produced. It differs very essentially from ordinary vocal sound—from vocal sound that generally obtains. It may be re-

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cognised by a sensible vibration in the throat, about the vocal organ. I fear, however, that it must be confessed, the only safe way to obtain it is by the assistance of a voice-trainer. It is so difficult—nay, impossible—to represent on paper, whereas a pattern is readily given by the living voice. Yet, notwithstanding, I would recommend, where assistance is not forthcoming, to continue the exercises till it is effected.

Signor Garcia makes some very excellent remarks on this “clear shock of the glottis,” and, as they may be useful to the student, and serve to make the matter clearer, I will quote from him: “Keep,”—he is recommending a way by which, as he apprehends, the “clear shock of the glottis” may be obtained,—“Keep the tongue relaxed and motionless, avert the base of the pillars, and render the whole throat supple. In this position breathe slowly and long. After being thus prepared, without stiffening either the larynx or any other part of the body, calmly and with ease attack the tones very nearly by a

slight motion of the glottis on the vowel A very clear; this motion of the glottis is to be prepared by closing it, which momentarily arrests and accumulates the air in this passage; then, as suddenly as the pulling of the trigger, it must be opened by a loud and vigorous shock, like the action of the lips energetically pronouncing the letter P. This lesson," he says, "should be insisted on, as it is the basis of all teaching. I again recommend the shock of the glottis as the only means of attaining the sounds purely and without bungling."

When the speaker has accomplished this, he need have no more fear of clerical sore throat. The "clear shock of the glottis" argues the adjustment of the parts of the voice. The speaker who has succeeded in obtaining it, may flatter himself that, having put right what was wrong, he will feel no more physical discomfort from his efforts. If he is the rector or vicar of a large parish, and his duties involve an extensive use of his voice, he will be able to discharge the whole comfortably. He need not

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fear breaking down, or wonder how he will manage, if his curate—so useful, and in fact, indispensable for reading prayers!—should turn up rough and leave him. I am speaking from experience, and I think that is worth something. I have no hesitation in saying, that the voice will bear an incalculable amount of work when in working order; but otherwise not.

I have known speakers—clergymen generally—who have tried to give themselves ease in their work by what they have called, “resting their voices.” In so doing they have sputtered the air all over their mouth, producing every species of feeble squeaking. Instead of resting their voices they have been twisting and distorting the vocal organ in all directions. The action, it is true, has not been energetic, but it has been intensely awkward. Energetic action, if properly directed, does not fatigue, while feeble action, improperly sustained, wears and tears immensely—and this often in proportion as the action is feeble. This is only what we may reasonably expect; for, if the action be

energetic, it follows that the air will be forced more from its proper reservoir—the lungs; whereas, in feeble action, the air is, as we have described above, sputtered against the vocal organ. In other words, energy means deeper breathing and less distortion; feebleness means less breath and more distortion.

Adjust the parts. Use them right. The result will be satisfactory. There will be no pain, no languor, no weariness. I mean all this, of course, as a consequence of the actual fact of speaking. I do not refer to other causes which are also put in operation. If, on the other hand, the parts be not adjusted and rightly used, pain, fatigue and languor follow, as effect follows cause.

The exercise which we have given above, and which we have recommended as being calculated to effect the “clear shock of the glottis,” is of great service, whether we use it for the purpose of training the voice for speaking or singing. It must be regarded in every way as gymnastic, and treated as such. The object

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is to strengthen and otherwise improve the vocal organ. The exercise is calculated, amongst others of course, to produce all the qualities of voice we need.

It will give variety and also further our object to have recourse to other exercises. We might instance many, but it will suffice to give the best. The student will find out others, and the solfeggi of a singing tutor will assist him in making a choice.

Another useful exercise is this—sit down to the piano. Sing while you strike the notes. Begin on C. Play three notes in succession. Then begin on D, and do the same thing. Continue this as far as the compass of the voice will allow. Then return in the same way.

The following exercise may also be practised to advantage—Sit down to the piano. Begin on C. Play and sing four and then five notes in succession, after the manner described in the last exercise.

Make a point of practising these exercises with energy, almost with violence. Exercise,

to be of any service, must be smart. This is true of all exercise whose object is the development of power. It may be advisable to sing softly for the purpose of training the ear, but for the voice, the training must be severe. The gymnast, when he wishes to train for walking, does not creep listlessly along ; but he exerts himself, puts forth all his force, and strains every nerve. The conditions are the same. We must train hard. We need not fear any bad results. There will be at first a little aching in the throat—there must be, if the exercise is to be of any service—but it will soon pass off.

But are there no speaking exercises for strengthening the voice? There are. We must first readjust the organ. Language has put it out of order. It is, perhaps, more correct to say that our mode of speaking has done this. There is nothing like the exercises we have just noticed for rectifying the mischief. We must, therefore, practise these first. Hence the reason for treating of them first. When

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these exercises have been well practised, then the following may be practised with advantage. Take all the broad vowel sounds: *a* as in father, *oy* as in boy, *o* as in tone, *ou* as in thou, *oi* as spoil, *aw* as in saw, and pronounce them with as much force as possible. Take in a deep breath. Open the mouth well all over the face. Draw out the tone as long and as loud as possible. Take at first a low key. Then raise it each time a little higher, or let it fall a little lower.

We shall give exercises in future chapters, which will all tend to strengthen the voice. The exercises on breathing and opening the mouth will also do this. Our object and aim must be, if we will make progress, to strengthen and otherwise supple the several parts which are concerned in the production of voice. This is our reason for treating of the parts distinctly and separately. They must receive individual training. Constant care and attention must be given to them. The student must feel that he has not only to remove bad habits, but to induce good ones, and that with respect to each.

It is obvious that he can do this better by attending to one thing at a time. It will be a work of time. It cannot be done in a day. In such a case, all the world would be artists.

I should strongly recommend the student to practise very faithfully and well what has been hitherto prescribed, before proceeding further. Our object now will be to give power over words, to enable the speaker to do exactly what he likes with them. Or, in other words, as we have been trying to put his voice in order, to adjust the parts, so we shall now try to enable him to be master of his voice, to bring it under control, and to make it do his bidding in every way. If we succeed, and I doubt not we shall with perseverance, we shall have opened up for ourselves a constant source of pleasure. What has been done, may be done. We have all the material to work upon. A good voice is not altogether a freak of nature. It is a thing within the reach of all who will go the right way to seek it. The things here recommended have answered before, and as the conditions are the same, they will do so again.

## CHAPTER V.

### *ARTICULATION.*

IT might be more advantageous to write this chapter under the head of manipulation. We have taken the liberty of using this word to describe the action performed by the various parts of the mouth on the sound as it proceeds from the vocal organ. This is not, we acknowledge, the ordinary meaning of the word, yet it conveys, as well as any other, the idea of the process under consideration. The production of the vocal tone and the working of it up into parts (its manipulation) are two distinct things. They must be so regarded and so treated. If this is done, it is of little consequence by what names we distinguish them. Articulation is the word generally used to describe this latter process. It is a good word, and with the further

elucidation supplied by manipulation, will answer our purpose very well.

We are proceeding on the plan, sensible enough when thought out, of reducing things to their elements, and treating each separately; so we are careful to distinguish the production of tone from the breaking of it up into its many parts. Producing tone and articulation are two distinct things. The recognition of this, and acting upon it, constitute one of the secrets of good speaking.

We are in a position to manipulate tone—to articulate—if we have given some attention to the production of the vowel sounds. The order of our practice is: breathe, open the mouth, produce the vowel sounds, articulate. This last is the thing we are now going to consider.

Clear articulation is of the first importance. We cannot make too much of it. The want of it is a thing which people will not tolerate in a speaker. It is almost the first thing remarked. People like to "hear every word." They will not go to hear a speaker if they cannot "tell

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what he says." There is no question then as to the necessity of acquiring it.

Then, many inconveniences arise from the want of power to articulate. This may be seen from the following story, for which a London paper is responsible. A famous London preacher gave out from the pulpit one Sunday evening, that on the following Sunday evening he would preach from the subject, "The aspects of hell." The said Sunday evening came, and long before the time for beginning service, the church was filled to overflowing. The ordinary congregation, much to their displeasure, were put out of their seats, and otherwise rendered uncomfortable. The preacher could not understand what all the commotion meant, until he was reminded of his notice on the preceding Sunday evening. Then his mistake dawned upon him. He did what he could to set matters right. When he went into the pulpit, he observed that an apology was due to the congregation from him. He had been misunderstood to say that he was going to preach on the

aspects of hell, whereas his subject was the aspects of health. The final letters of the last word had been dropped, and hence the awkward mistake.

An articulation is, as its name implies, a little joint. It is a break in the flow of sound. It is also something more. It is a connecting link with what follows. The qualities of correct articulation are distinctness, crispness, neatness and smoothness. We must seek to attain these qualities. It will be our object to show how they may be attained.

The exercises which we have already practised will have given volume and intensity to our voice, so that we shall now be in a position to fill the largest building with it. This is a great point gained, but it is not enough. We must also be able to articulate. We cannot be heard with advantage until we have acquired the qualities just indicated. All this is work of pure mechanism, and is simply a matter of time.

To accomplish our purpose, we must examine

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the letters that constitute the articulations. These are, of course, the consonants.

The consonants have not the powers which their names seem to imply. A consonant, as we have before observed, marks a break in the flow of sound. It is not the sign of a vocal tone, but only of a mechanical operation on that tone. Its name seems to imply the contrary. Thus for instance, we name the letter B as if it possessed vocal power. Yet we really name it by the aid of the vowel E. It is open to question whether it would not greatly aid children learning to read to teach them only the powers of the consonants. It is a matter of fact and experience that, if we will articulate distinctly, we must not only study the powers of the consonants, but practise them apart from the vowels. The organs of articulation must receive individual attention, just as we have advised it with the vocal organ.

We articulate with the lips, teeth, palate, and with the tip, middle and back of the tongue. These are properly termed the organs of articu-

lation. We must, in speaking, be conscious that we are making use of them. We must, in short, lip and tongue and teeth our words well. The palate and teeth are stationary, and of course cannot in themselves be improved. Our practice, with respect to them, is limited to the acquirement of facility. The case is far different with the others. We can exercise them *ad libitum*, and improve them, by strengthening the muscles and otherwise, almost in the same proportion.

It will further our purpose best first to classify the consonants and then to notice how they are severally produced. In doing this, I must ask the student to bear with me and to take for granted what will be said, without inquiring too much into the *rationale*, until he has practised the several exercises set forth. When he has carefully studied and practised, then he may freely give his opinion. It is obvious that we are not in a position to give a correct judgment until we have fairly tried what is recommended.

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The consonants, then, may be classified as follows :—

Strong labials—*j, g, and sh.*

Weak labials—*m, b, p.*

Tooth-labials—*v, f, ph.*

Sibilants—*s, x, z.*

Linguals (Tip-tongue)—*n, l, d, t, r.*

Linguals (Root-tongue)—*k, q, c, g.*

Every one knows, of course, how he produces the articulations of which these letters are the signs. And so also every one can distinguish one from the other. It would appear as if there were no necessity to go any further or even to have done as much as this : but it is really not so. We must do something more. The great reason for it is that it calls our attention to the specified organ and teaches us to exercise it properly. What we are going to lay down plays a very important part in producing the accomplished speaker. The great charm of some people's speaking is this clear articulation produced by similar exercises to those recommended below. We shall notice now how

the articulations are produced, and teach the student to practise the manner recommended apart from vowels and then with them.

To produce the strong labials *j, g, sh*—Elongate the lips, almost close the mouth, press the teeth, and force the air out smartly: *j, g, join*. The same movement will suffice for *sh*, only that it must be more forcible, *sh, short*. Practise these movements.

To produce the weak labials, *m, b, p*—Join the lips, press them forcibly together, intensify the force as you proceed from *m* through *b* to *p*. The ratio of the force is 1, 2, 3, *m, b, p*. Man, book, paper Practise this.

To produce the tooth labials, *v, f, ph*—Bring the upper teeth against the middle of the lower lip, forcibly for *v*, and doubly so for *f*, and *ph*. Vain, far, phial. Practise this.

To produce the tooth sibilants, *s, t, x, z*—Press the teeth, bring the lips together, wrap them well round the teeth, then force the air out violently. *S, x, z. Sand, Xenophon, zebra.* Practise this.

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To produce the linguals (tip-tongue) *n, l, d, t, r*—Place the tip of the tongue against the extremity of the palate, near the teeth. The order of the force is, *n, l, d, t, r*. Now, loud, dog, tar, run. Practise this.

To produce the linguals (root-tongue) *k, q, c, g*—Raise the tongue near the root and strike the palate forcibly, almost from the throat, *K, q, c, g*. King, queen, cat, go. Practise this.

The letter *h* is nothing but a strong breathing. It is produced by compressing the throat a little.

These exercises must be faithfully practised. Care must be taken to acquire the articulations quite independently of the words. In practising, exaggerate as much as possible. He who can produce a loud tone can also produce a soft tone; so he who can articulate very distinctly can articulate distinctly. “*Qui peut le plus, peut le moins.*”

I have seen it recommended, when practising articulation, to place corks between the teeth. Demosthenes is said to have practised on the

sea-shore with pebbles in his mouth. We do not know where he placed them. I do not think it a good plan to place corks between the teeth, because they impede the movements of the organs of speech. They keep the mouth open, it is true, but it is an advantage which does not make up for the inconvenience. A better plan is to place little balls of gutta percha between the cheeks and the teeth. This plan renders speaking more difficult without impeding the organs. It intensifies the exertion and so strengthens the muscles proportionately. When this plan is adopted, four balls should be used, two of which should be larger than the others. The smaller balls should be placed behind the larger ones. This practice will greatly facilitate the acquirement of articulation. I submit that this was the plan Demosthenes adopted.

When these exercises have been continued for some time, it would be advantageous to take any piece and read it backwards. I do not know of any practice more calculated to produce clear articulation than this. In per-

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forming it, great care should be taken to let each word stand out, above and apart from its neighbours. It will also be necessary that each letter in the syllable and each syllable in the word should be distinctly heard. And here we may lay down a very good rule—Let every letter and every syllable be distinctly heard, unless there be some good reason against it. Take care to enunciate each word as loud as conveniently possible. Breathe between each word. It would be a good practice, and would vary the above, to elongate the syllables as much as possible and also to read in several keys, or in other words, with the different kinds of pitch of which the voice is capable.

This, like many of the exercises, is very tedious, but it pays well. It has also the advantage of breaking off the habit, which most speakers have fallen into, of reading every species of composition after the same fashion—with the same inflections, modulation, etc., etc. The speaker acquires, by means of it, power over the words; so much so, that he can take

them and do pretty much as he pleases with them. This is a thing at which every speaker should aim. It is a power, which more than any other, enables him to avoid monotony and to give that variety which is no less pleasing to himself than it is gratifying to his hearers.

There is another great advantage in this practice—it renders it easy to mark off distinctly each word from the other. Many speakers have allowed, through carelessness or otherwise, the habit to grow upon them of running one word into the other, so as to render it difficult to know where the break comes. Letters of a like or similar formation have a sort of affinity for each other, so that when they occur they have a tendency to be lost in one. This is illustrated by the ease with which a final letter runs into an initial letter of the same or similar kind. In these cases either the final letter or the initial one is quite lost. We are familiar with some examples of this sort of thing. “Make lean our hearts” may sometimes be heard; where “make clean” ought to be

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“Here rendeth” for “here endeth” is also of common occurrence. We could illustrate this habit by other examples not too difficult to call to mind. The above exercise is the best cure I know for this vicious tendency. For this reason, therefore, as well as for others, I strongly advise the practice of it.

It would be good practice, and would produce good results, for every public speaker to adopt before speaking. If what he is going to say is in manuscript it will be advantageous to practise with it. Never mind if the process is tedious. Remember the part which articulation plays in speaking is immense. It is articulation, and articulation alone, which is the soul of clearness, energy, passion and vehemence—qualities without which all speaking must be insipid and flat. It atones for the want of many things, but nothing makes up for it. Some speakers, knowing this and acting upon it, cover by means of it all the deficiencies of their voices—feebleness, roughness, etc. Holding as I do that it is possible for all, speak-

ing generally, to acquire good voices, I do not insist upon articulation as a means to this end; but I say this to show its power and importance.

M. Legouvé sets forth the importance of articulation so well that I am tempted to transcribe what he says—"S'il s'agit des consonnes, la science de la prononciation est la science d'articulation. Il n'en est pas de plus difficile et de plus utile. Peu de personnes naissent avec une articulation complètement bonne. Chez les unes elle est dure, chez les autres elle est molle, chez ceux-là elle est sourde. Le travail, un travail assidu et méthodique, peut corriger ces défauts et le peut seul. Par quel moyen? En voici un fort ingénieux, que tout le monde peut mettre en pratique, et qui est le résultat d'une observation. Vous avez un secret important à confier à un ami, mais vous craignez d'être entendu, la porte de la chambre, où vous êtes, se trouvant ouverte et quelqu'un étant dans la pièce voisine. Vous approcherez-vous de votre ami et lui parlerez-vous à l'oreille?

Non. Vous ne l'osez pas, de peur d'être surpris dans cette position qui vous trahirait. Qu'allez-vous donc faire? Le voici : je cite les paroles textuelles du maître des maîtres, de M. Régnier. Vous vous mettez en face de votre ami, et là, en employant le moins de son possible, en parlant tous bas, vous chargez vos paroles à ses yeux en même temps qu'à son oreille, car il vous regarde parler autant, qu'il vous écoute parler ; l'articulation a alors double besogne ; elle fait l'office du son lui-même, et dans ce but, elle est forcée de dessiner nettement les mots et d'appuyer fortement sur chaque syllabe pour la faire entrer dans l'esprit de votre auditeur. Eh bien, voilà le moyen infallible de corriger toutes les duretés de l'articulation. Soumettez-vous pendant quelques mois à cet exercice, et une pareille gymnastique aura si bien assoupli et fortifié vos muscles articulateurs qu'ils repondront par leur élasticité à tous les mouvements de la pensée et à toutes les difficultés de la diction."

M. Legouvé makes much, but not too much,

of the importance of articulation. The exercise he recommends of speaking with the strongest articulation and the least sound—speaking to the eyes rather than to the ears—is but another way of putting what we have been trying to say. It would, however, be rather difficult to accomplish, but it may follow, as an exercise, on what has been said. We may assure ourselves that we cannot become too skilful in this respect. It occurs to me that there is another advantage in this distinct articulation. The audience sees the movements of the mouth, and so the two senses, seeing and hearing, are brought into play. The one helps the other and so they cannot fail to understand.

It is on this principle M. Legouvé's deaf mutes are taught to speak. On one occasion I was present during a lesson. The pupils read on the lips of their master. The articulation was distinctly marked and they saw it. It is a work requiring much patience; but that success attends it, may be seen from the

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fact that I heard one of the pupils, a youth of eighteen, demonstrate on the black-board, and speaking distinctly, a proposition from the third book of Euclid. It is evident then that articulation plays a most important part in speaking.

The manifest importance of the subject leads one to linger over it and insist upon it over and over again. I hope I have done this with good results. I do not wish to mislead. I do not say, therefore, that it is easily accomplished. It comes only as the result of well directed labour. It has been my object to give the direction. If the student will give the labour, then all will be well. It will not be labour in vain. He will be, I am sure, amply rewarded.

I cannot but fear, notwithstanding, and I hope my saying it will be kindly excused, that the amount of labour requisite will not be given. We, such is our perversity in this respect, will not allow ourselves to be persuaded that it is at all necessary. We have

read and talked in our present fashion so long that we cannot be led to think that improvement is possible. I feel so strongly against the existing prejudices that I would gladly, if I could, lead a crusade to oppose it and put it down. I hope every intelligent student who reads these pages and profits by them, will imbibe this spirit and be disposed to go and do likewise. There is a cause. With such a language as ours—rich, full, powerful as it is—we ought to be a nation of orators. Here, as it appears to me, we indicate a line of conduct, the pursuit of which will give ample scope for a vast amount of patriotism. I do not think that a greater good can be effected amongst speakers than by enforcing attention to these things. It means power. I am persuaded, if they take it up as they ought, their influence will be intensified a hundred-fold.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *PRONUNCIATION.*

IT might be thought that, after what we have said in the preceding chapters, there would, and could be, nothing to say under this head. We have given directions for the due production of the vowels and we have noticed the power of the consonants and explained how to acquire the facility of using them properly : what more remains to be done? How does pronunciation differ from articulation? Is there any difference and what is it?

We admit very readily that for most readers there is not much necessity for this chapter. Educated people know *what* should be if they do not know *how* it should be. Yet we cannot be too well fortified against mistakes. This must be my apology for this chapter, which shall not be long.

Pronunciation is a more comprehensive term than articulation. It comprises the power to do three things well. These are, to produce the vowels correctly (voice production properly so called), to attain power over the consonants (articulation), and lastly to effect these two conjointly. It is obvious that a speaker may have the power of doing either of the former well without being able to accomplish the latter satisfactorily. And further, while he may be able to produce fully and forcibly the vowel sounds, and to make and conceal the many joints represented by the consonants, he may be mistaken respecting the variations and modifications which custom, habit, derivation, etc., sanction and enjoin; or he may not, from want of attention, be able to distinguish "things that differ." It is the province of pronunciation to come to his assistance.

Pronunciation deals with individual words. The consonants are the frame-work of words. They also give them their shape and form.

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The vowels are things upon which they perform their operation. If the vowels always and under all circumstances represented the same tone, and the consonants always the same kind of break and tie, it would be an easy matter to acquire a correct pronunciation; but, as we have already indicated, this is very far from being the case, for many things contribute to make a great variety of modifications.

Pronunciation is a thing about which an audience is more choice than anything. It will not tolerate faults, while on the other hand it is not slow to express its warm approval of the beauty of perfection. This fact is everywhere recognised. Its effect is such as to mar, or utterly spoil, whatever is good, if delivered with a faulty pronunciation, and to approve, on the other hand, much that is indifferent if it is only properly delivered. Nothing seems to offend an audience so soon as incorrect pronunciation. Perhaps it is owing to the fact that people like to criticise, and here the work is comparatively easy. It is not a difficult

matter to correct the principal faults in pronunciation, and we shall now proceed to do it

We have already laid down a rule for pronunciation which we may now with advantage recall. It is this: Every letter as well as every syllable in a word should be distinctly heard, unless there be some special reason against it. This rule is invariably broken, by some speakers, in two ways. It is transgressed by not observing the special reason which forms an exception to the rule. It is also violated, and this more frequently, by not giving each letter in a word its proper force.

Now, for instance, we must not apply our rule in the pronunciation of harden, heathen, heaven. Custom, or something else (whatever it is, does not matter) requires the words to be pronounced as if written hard'n, heath'n, heav'n. The same thing obtains with fallen and stolen. Garden, burden, and their derivations are treated in a similar manner.

But our rule must have full force with such words as: sudden, kitchen, hyphen, chicken,

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jerken, aspen, patten, sloven, etc. We must take care to pronounce them as written.

The rule is sometimes applied to devil and evil; but it is better to suppress the vowel and say dev'l, ev'l. We must apply the rule and pronounce as written such words as : pencil, cavil, and Latin.

Custom, too, requires that burial, apostle, epistle, folk, idol and some others should be pronounced as if written ber-ri-al, apos-sl, epis-sl, foke, idul, etc.

Forehead, waistcoat, and primer, delight in a curious pronunciation. Pronounce as if written, for-ed, west-cut, and primmer.

There is a bishop in the English Church who applies our rule to sacrament and sacrifice. He invariably says s̄acrament and s̄acrifice, with a very long *a*: but analogy is against him. We pronounce sacred with *ā* long—s̄acred; but the derivations are properly pronounced with *ă* short—s̄acrament, s̄acrifice.

Pronounce grandeur, soldier, verdure and some other words with *d* pronounced as *j*.

Omit the *h* in heir, heiress, herb, honest, honour, hostler, hour, humour, and also in their derivatives.

The *h* should never be sounded where it does not exist. Many people, and not altogether amongst the uneducated, can scarcely utter a word beginning with a vowel, especially in public, without using the aspirate. This sometimes occasions very awkward mistakes. I may be pardoned for relating a very funny, if not very edifying incident. I was going through one of our cathedrals with a friend. We were in the library, and, while there, some gentleman came in and asked for Macaulay's works. The library is very large and very well arranged. The books are in nests of shelves. The nests are lettered, and the shelves are numbered. The verger, who was somewhat consequential, scratched his head, and said with an air of importance, which only vergers can assume, "Let me see, Macaulay is not in M or N, he is in L." And he aspirated these letters so forcibly, especially the last one, that my

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friend and myself could not help smiling, my friend afterwards observing, "He put poor Macaulay in a very warm place."

This habit of aspirating words that have no *h* is scarcely worse than that of always dropping it. This is a fault not altogether confined to the uneducated. It is a fault which our Scotch and Irish friends never commit. It is, however, not so prevalent as it was. The misplacing of the *h* has come to be regarded as one of the main evidences of a deficient education. We do not, therefore, hear as we used formerly, "Wy op ye so, ye igh ills." The *h* is carefully supplied.

We must, however, notice another and a very prevalent fault in the pronunciation of this letter. With many it is invariably dropped after the letter *w*. Such words as when, while, where, are pronounced as if written wen, wile, were. Our rule must be applied in all these cases, and the *h* must be duly aspirated.

In nauseate, censure, issue, etc., the *s* must be pronounced as *sh*. In occasion, pleasure, etc., the *s* must be pronounced as *zh*.

Pronounce crucifixion, anxious, etc., with *x*, as *ksh*.

*C* has sometimes the power of *sh*, as in ocean, social, associate, etc.

*O* is pronounced like *u* in tub, in comfort, company, among, mongrel, tongue, etc.

When *u* comes after *r*, it has the sound of *ou*, as in brute, rule, cruel, etc.

The *a* must be somewhat modified in such words as combat, vineyard, workman, etc.

The *i* and *y*, too, must be modified in such words as imagine, hypocrisy, opposite, respite, etc.

We must modify, as position and other things suggest, the little words, the, to, your, for, and my. The vowel of the definite article should always be distinctly heard when it comes before a word whose initial letter is a vowel.

The *e* of the termination *ed* of past participles should not be heard, save only when the past participle is used as an adjective. There are sometimes two forms of the past participle,

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thus, learned and learnt. The latter form is the participle ; the former is the adjective. In these cases the *ed* should be distinctly heard. The rule must not be made general with respect to other past participles used as adjectives. Euphony and custom must guide us here. It is not a good plan, at least, I do not think so, to mark distinctly this participial ending in reading the Bible and the Liturgy. In some cases, as for instance, in aged, blessed, cursed, winged, used as adjectives, the *e* must by no means be suppressed. The *e* should also be distinctly heard in adverbs derived from these adjectives, as unfeignedly.

Drop the *o* in bacon, beacon, deacon, pardon, capon.

Pronounce bade and have without the final *e*, bad, häv.

Iron should be pronounced as if written iurn and libertines as libertins.

Many must be pronounced menny, but not so manifold. It must be pronounced as written.

Doctors differ about the pronunciation of

either and neither. These are words whose pronunciation admits of a little choice. There is as much reason, so it would seem, for taking either way, but favour seems to lean towards *ēēther* and *nēēther*. Though following the analogy of the German *ei* I prefer *īther* and *nīther*.

There is also a diversity of opinion respecting the pronunciation of prophecy and prophesy. I prefer to pronounce them as spelt, because there is no reason against it. We do not vary the pronunciation of practice and practise. If it be right to say *prof-fe-se* and *prof-fe-si*, surely there cannot be any objection to our saying *practis* and *practize*. We don't do this, then why do it in the other case?

Soften and often, etc., should be pronounced as if written *sof-fn*, *of-fn*. Solace as *sol-las*.

Pronounce venison, *venzn*; victuals, *vittlz*; wicked, *wickid*; womb, *woom*; wrath, *rawth*.

The student will doubtless mark many other deviations from our rule. Custom, analogy, and derivation will aid him in discovering them.

We proceed now to notice some words which

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are sometimes mispronounced, and this because our rule is not applied.

We should not pronounce catch, gather, thanks, get,—ketch, gether, thenks, git, but as they are written.

So bisect, direct, obey, oblige, should be pronounced as written, and not buh-sect, duh-rect, ub-bey, ub-blige, etc.

The pronunciation of the following terminations is more or less faulty with many speakers. They should all be pronounced as written: viz., ible, il, isy, ity, el, emn, ence, ent, es, eth, ip, it, ite, ow, age, nd, ngth, tal, cal, et, xt, ace, ain, ate, en, ng, aw, etc. So we must not say vis-ubble, fam-ully, hypoc-russy, char-utty, gospul, solumn, patiunce, silunt, wishuz, goodnuss or goodniss, sinnuth, worshup, spirut, infinut or infinite (English sound of i), windur, cabbidge, husban, strenth, capitle, periodicle, aspec, nex, furniss, certin, advocut, suddn, singin, laur, etc.

The letter *r* should have its full force. It should not be trilled too much. The Scotch

and Irish do this; but we must not imitate them. We must, by no means, drop it altogether as some English are in the habit of doing. This letter *r* has two sounds. It is smooth at the end of words, as in bar, storm, etc., and also at the end of a syllable if it is not followed by a vowel. It is rough elsewhere. Such faults as, fust, mussy, pehaps, peform, etc., must be carefully avoided. Some people are sadly deficient in the articulation of this letter. It is often, however, the result of affectation; but when it is not so, a little practice, after the manner recommended in a previous chapter, will remedy all faults.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *THE KEY-TONE.*

THE pianist would require, as a matter of the first importance, that his instrument should be in tune. He would not, otherwise, sit down to play before an audience ; he would not offend their ears or torture his own nerves. If he have a good instrument, in perfect tune, and he have thorough control over it, he may reasonably expect all to go well. The speaker should, for his own comfort and the pleasure and benefit of his audience, perform under similar conditions. We have indicated in order some of the things which are calculated to bring about this most desirable state of affairs, and now we proceed to point out another.

The student will pardon me if I reiterate what I have already said, viz., that it is most

important to keep up the practice. Our motto must be, if we will succeed, Practise, practise, practise. *Actio, actio, actio*, was Cicero's direction, and we have always been accustomed to regard him as a great authority in these matters. I have no doubt that we render this word of his best when we translate as I have done. It seems to me that the word embraces all that requires to be done in order to make the accomplished speaker. I know that some have rendered it by the corresponding word in English. I cannot think that Cicero had the same thought in his mind as *action* calls up in ours. Action, as we understand it, forms a necessary part of oratory; but I do not think any of us would be prepared to allow that it is all or even the chief part of speaking. To develop this power, to the neglect of every other branch of the art, would be to produce an ill-proportioned, not to say a deformed, speaker. This is a fault, then, that an orator of Cicero's power would not be likely to commit. What, then, could he mean but just what we have

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pointed out. *Actio, actio, actio.* Practise, practise, practise; ay, and let it extend to every branch of the art.

Our aim and object hitherto has been the formation of the voice. It is still the same. This chapter will be devoted to a subject which is very intimately connected with it. I am writing it under the head of "The Key-tone." A better title might have been selected. I shall presently explain what I mean, so that it will be of little importance.

We must distinguish it from the expression key-note in music. There are as many key-notes in music as there are notes, and every species of music is written in each of the keys. The key, of which the key-note is the sign, is determined, for the most part, by the whim or bias of the composer, rather than by the character of the composition. This is not the case with the key-tone in speaking or reading; for there the character of the matter should always determine the key-tone.

There is, however, a point of resemblance

between the key-tone and the key-note and this we must mark. It is this—A composition written in a certain key admits of all the degrees of soft and loud; so in reading or speaking, whatever the key-tone, the degrees of loudness may vary from pianissimo to fortissimo. This makes it clear that the key-tone is not meant to describe different degrees of softness or loudness. It has always special reference to height or depth of tone.

It is a matter of experience that the voice, if well and properly cultivated, will give an almost endless variety of depth and height of tone. It is because of this, that this matter is sometimes spoken of under the name of pitch. We may pitch or set the voice low or high at pleasure, if we have only given the subject attention and exercised ourselves in those things which give us the facility.

I like the expression key-tone better, because, to my mind, it suggests the idea of assimilating the voice to the matter. We must tone the voice to it, or rather, to speak more correctly,

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it (the matter) tones the voice to itself. There is something more it does—at least it does this with me—it speaks of the nerve-force, the under-current of feeling, its kind and intensity, which should accompany it. It is a more forcible expression, inasmuch as it more correctly suggests that there is something more to do than merely set the voice high or low.

It is sometimes spoken of under the term modulation. This word is more properly a musical term and serves to describe the transition from one key to another. If used in connection with speaking, it should be used, as it may be very properly, in a similar sense.

Tone is sometimes used to describe the quality of sound. Thus we speak of the tone of a piano and say it is brilliant, soft, harsh, etc. The word, however, admits of the sense in which we have here used it. And, as we shall always use it in conjunction with the word key, we need not make any mistake with respect to the thing intended.

Now, before we proceed further, let us im-

press upon our minds the fact that there is such a thing as that which we describe by the expression—key-tone. We have power over it. We can determine it at will. When we have, by exercise, given suppleness, agility and flexibility to the voice, we can, by thinking, vary this key-tone *ad libitum*. By this I mean that we have power to pass from one key-tone to another (to modulate) at discretion. And this power is of incalculable service to the speaker. It is a power, too, which affords immense pleasure both to the speaker and hearer.

And yet it is a thing about which a speaker almost never thinks. It is the last thing which occurs to him as necessary. He never says, as he should, What shall be the key-tone in which I shall deliver this passage? It is a little thing, perhaps; yet it is one of those little things which play an important part in making up perfection. Let us illustrate this. Any rude mason can rough hew the figure of a lion out of a block of marble: but any rude mason cannot bring out all the features. The skill of

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the artist is required for these things. We must not then despise little things, and, if the key-tone be a little thing, we must regard it as a very important little thing.

The power of acquiring the key-tone and that of modulation, passing from one key-tone to another, enter very largely into the cultivation of the speaking voice. There are three principal key-tones. These are the high, low and middle key-tones. Between these tones, as well as above and below them, there is a great variety. The speaker should be able to fall on any tone the moment he has it in his mind, and he should also be able easily to pass from any one to any other.

Now, it is a matter of experience, that the voice, when not under control, will readily pass from a low note to a high one. The contrary can only be accomplished by a cultivated voice. It is a very common occurrence for a speaker to rise higher and higher as he proceeds, especially if he warms to his subject, till he finds himself exhausted with the effort of speaking.

He does not know what is wrong. He stops, takes a little water, begins again and presently finds himself in the same predicament. It is unpleasant and very fatiguing. The truth is, his voice is not under control. It runs away with him. It is just as if he were riding an unbroken steed that will not brook bit and curb. What is to be done is obvious. He must break it in.

And now for the process. It is somewhat difficult to describe, but we shall, perhaps, be able to accomplish something. It may here be remarked that the exercises help each other. They accomplish their specific purpose and something more. So that, if the exercises have been faithfully and diligently practised, the work now will not be beyond our power.

If we can take a single word and pronounce it in any key-tone and with any degree of softness or loudness, we can do the same with a sentence, and if with a sentence with a series also. Our object then is simplified. We will practise on one word.

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In order to acquire the power of choosing our key-tone and changing it at pleasure, we must give our ear a little training as well as our voice. A good exercise is this:—Sit down to the piano. Strike any note within the compass of your voice. Take the hand off the piano, and let the sound die out. Then sing the note from memory. Strike another note at any interval, so long as it is within the compass of your voice, and sing it in the same manner. Continue the exercise on different notes. Test yourself, by striking the note while singing, whether you are right. This exercise might be varied, and withal rendered useful for other purposes, by holding out the note as long as possible. The object is twofold,—to train the ear to appreciate the difference between high and low notes, and also to acquire the facility of passing from one key-tone to another. We must not forget to keep the mouth well open, and to take in the breath very deeply. The exercise should be varied by singing now one syllable and now another.

The syllable *kah* is a good one, as its tendency is to open the mouth. *Ska*, again, is a useful syllable, as, by forcibly articulating the *s* and *k*, the "clear shock of the glottis" is produced. This exercise is nothing, unless it is gymnastic. It must be energetic, not to say, violent. Gentle exercise, whatever some may say, is, for our purpose of no use whatever. The athlete does not take gentle exercise. He leaves this for the convalescent invalid; while he puts himself earnestly to his work and trains with all his might. I do not know a more useful exercise than this, and I earnestly advise the student to practise it well. Sing loud. Make a big noise. Prolong it as much as you can. If you can make a big noise, you can make a little one. If the student finds that he does not make much progress in distinguishing one note from another, he will do well to sing his notes softly to the syllable *koo*. It is not at all a bad practice to vary the exercise in this way. It is, indeed, advantageous for ear exercise.

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When this exercise has been faithfully practised and considerable progress made, the student may proceed with this one:—Take a list of words, with a full vowel sound, as now, thou, plough, fall, tall, small, tone, moan, cone, toil, spoil, coil, far, tar, mar, park, dark, shark, boy, toy, coy, fame, name, shame, etc., etc., and repeat them very slowly in succession. Do this as loud as possible on the lowest key-tone of your voice. Elongate the vowel-sounds as much as you can. Pay special attention to the consonants, and hit them, so to speak, very smartly on the head. Don't be afraid. Exaggerate the powers of the final consonants. Let each word stand out and apart from the other. Aim at the steeple and you will hit the church.

After practising the exercise on the lowest key-tone, take it on the highest and then on the middle. It will not be advisable to do more than these three for some time, but, when the ear has become quite accustomed to them and the voice can take them up

readily, the intermediate key-tones and the very highest and the very lowest may be practised.

Work this up well and effectively, then take a single word—any word will do—and put it through the key-tones. Modulation, which is certainly one of the sweetest charms of oratory as it is of music, will, after this, become natural and comparatively easy. This is the chief end to be gained by the exercises we have been describing. It cannot, of course, be attained all at once. It comes as the result of practice. Let the voice be able to do and it will instantly make for itself the opportunities. It seems to me to be the greatest absurdity to talk of and advise the speaking and reading of certain and certain pieces in such and such key-tones until the voice can do it. Fit the voice, by training, for its work, and it will naturally seek the work to do. Demand of it work that it cannot do, and miserable failure is the result. The voice is an instrument deformed, as we have seen,

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for the most part by habit induced by imitation. We always put other instruments in tune before we play upon them. Reason would seem to suggest that we should do likewise with the voice. There is this difference, however, between the voice and other instruments,—when in tune, it induces the player to perform, while other instruments are entirely subservient to the will of the performer. There is no *rapport de sentiments* between them as between the speaker and his voice. Let singers say if this is not so. And so this power of modulating has a peculiar charm, and affords a distinct pleasure to the speaker. This is not all, as we shall presently see.

Mr. Spurgeon, I think it is, who compares a monotonous speaker to a drummer beating constantly on the same part of his drum. He says that just as the drummer soon wears a hole through the drum-head, so the speaker very soon wearies his throat with speaking. The comparison is so far just; but only so far. It would be possible for a speaker, with

a trained voice, to speak for any length of time, if he chose, on the same key-tone, and feel no injury. He would not do it, however, for his voice would naturally seek variation in the power of modulation which it had acquired. But the comparison is true in another sense. The monotonous speaker very soon beats a hole, if we may so say, through the drum of the ears of his audience. This is a more serious matter. A dull, heavy, unvaried tone of voice tells very soon and very unmistakably on an audience. It tires, wearies and disgusts an audience beyond measure. The remedy is here. It is in the power of modulation. It is worth the while then, as it is within our reach, to set to in good earnest and acquire it.

I have known speakers who have felt that there was a something that they required to know and they have not known what it was. They have, in their speaking, been carried away with the impetuosity of their thoughts, and they have raised their voices higher and

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higher. It may be that they were able to attain their climax, but, when this was done, they had no ladder by which to descend from their great height. This is by no means an uncommon occurrence. Here modulation comes to their aid. It suggests to them at once the next key-tone and the exercises, which have secured it, afford the necessary means of descending.

There is, however, another feature. Speakers often experience in their discourses, as well written as extempore, that certain and certain passages should be spoken in a different key-tone from certain and certain others. They feel, at least, something like this. Now the fact of having acquired the power of speaking in any key-tone, at will, and passing from one to another will suggest the propriety of determining the key-tone in which every passage, or part of a passage, should be spoken.

Hence it follows that no speaker or reader should ever think of beginning to speak or read without determining his key-tone. The

character of that to which he is to give expression will determine this for him. Speaking generally, solemn subjects will suggest low key-tones and less serious higher key-tones. But here there is large room for the exercise of discretion. The *speaker* will not, if he is wise, as a rule, speak in public, without having first well digested his matter and determined its character. It is impossible to convey clearly to others that which is hazy with us. Clear ideas alone can be intelligibly imparted. The *reader* is in a different position—I do not say better. It is quite within his power to digest his matter and determine his key-tones beforehand. This he should always make a point of doing. It does not matter how simple the character of the piece may be, this must never be omitted. I have little sympathy with those who think they can do anything offhand. If reading and speaking are worth doing at all, they are worth doing well. To do things well takes time, and involves the preparation of matter and manner. I do

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not, therefore, advise that these things should be done with the least trouble possible, but with the most that can be given them. A reader, therefore, in my opinion, should practise beforehand that which he is going to give in public. He should go over it a number of times with different tones, and be well satisfied that those, upon which he has fixed, are the best. This involves, as is readily seen, very much labour; but unless we are disposed to bestow it, we should be careful to consider whether we should not act more wisely by ceasing to make an infliction upon our hearers. I hope I shall not be considered harsh when I make these remarks, but rather be credited with a desire of prompting ourselves to do our work in the best way possible. All this by the way.

It occurs to me that I may very advantageously treat a kindred subject here—that of movement. I call the rate of movement a kindred subject to that of the key-tone. I do this because it is determined by the same

conditions. The character of the piece determines the key-tone and the modulation. It is exactly so with the rate of movement. It is not necessary, therefore, to go into an elaborate description of it or of its application. The intelligent student will be able to apply it himself, when once he has well apprehended that there is such a thing. I do not think, indeed, that he could apply the principle which underlies the reason for the key-tone, without also applying that which underlies and determines the rate of movement. If his words express grief, pathos, melancholy, dejection and other similar feelings of depression, his key-tone will be low and his movement slow; while, on the other hand, if they express that which is elevated, his key-tone will be high and his rate of movement quick. The rate of movement, then, will for the most part vary with the key-tone.

I have, hitherto, carefully avoided the introduction of extracts. I do so still, I do not wish to enlarge this little work unnecessarily.

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I wish merely to notice as briefly as possible, the principles which, to my mind, underlie the rhetorical art, and to explain their application. I am almost tempted here to deviate from the plan which I have adopted. I think, however, I need not do more than make a few suggestions. Let the student, then, make some extracts for himself, learn them by heart, and practise them. For the low key-tones he may make extracts from the "Paradise Lost," or he may take such pieces as "The Burial of Sir John Moore." For practising on a higher key-tone with a quicker movement, such pieces as Browning's "Good News from Ghent" will serve his purpose. And for the middle-key and moderate rate of movement any ordinary extracts will suit. It is important to remember that when a principle is once grasped and applied thoroughly, in one instance, it will ever afterwards suggest its own application. It is on this account that I have tried to extract the principles from their interlacings and interactions and bring them out individually to the fore in

order that special attention may be given to each. And if the student will only give the attention which their importance requires to each and to one at a time, he will have reason to be satisfied with the result. My object has been ever to keep in view the fact that the student must exercise his intelligence. Here I have ventured only to make suggestions as to his use of key-tones and the selection of the rate of movement. He must exercise his own discretion. Speaking, as it appears to me,—the same may be said to a very great extent of reading too,—is nothing, if it be not the embodiment, so far as possible, of that which is in the soul of the speaker. But all this will appear more fully as we proceed with the following chapters. Yet, I may further observe that, unless a speaker or reader is to be a mere machine, he must shape his own course. It is the mind that gives shape and form to our discourses. We cannot be too much impressed with this fact; because this leads us to build up the reader and speaker on the only solid foundation.

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Principles constitute this foundation—the principles we have been inculcating. And if this be so, those rules for raising the voice at such a word and lowering it at such another word, etc., etc., etc., *ad infinitum*, are only just so much nonsense. When the principle is fixed, the mind gives it the direction and so rules only thwart its operation. Minds are differently constituted, so that we do not find any two alike. It cannot be expected, therefore, that the outcome of any two should be exactly alike. I would not recommend, therefore, that any reader or speaker should take any man, even the best and most accomplished in the art, as his model. I would rather recommend that he should acquire those principles for himself which have, in their application, made his model great. This is a safer road to success.

We have digressed a little in this chapter and entered rather into what will be properly the province of another. Our object hitherto should have been with the voice, and we have done something more. Yet I hope the di-

gression will not have impaired our object materially, and that now the student has considerably developed his vocal powers. If the exercises have been carefully and faithfully practised, our work has not been altogether unsuccessful. The student will now be in a position to fill the largest building with his voice, and this without any physical discomfort. I say physical discomfort, because I do not wish to be understood to say that it is possible to speak without feeling any fatigue. No man can be in earnest without drawing upon his vital resources, and this in proportion to his earnestness. But this is a very different thing from that weariness which many speakers feel, after every little exertion, on any public occasion—fatigue purely and entirely physical—arising from a misuse of the vocal powers.

Our work is not yet done, for our object is not attained. Now that we have put the instrument in tune, we must begin to play. It is apparent by this time that the voice is not so readily fitted for its work as an instrument is

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tuned: yet there is this advantage in it, that, when it is in tune, it suggests to us how we should play upon it. It almost, indeed, performs itself. Our work has taken time, but it has well repaid us. There is no royal road to learning. All must travel along the same road. There is but one to success and that is steady industry. It is within reach of all and at the same cost.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *WORD-GROUPING.*

WE have, in previous chapters, been more or less concerned with words. Our object has been to develop the powers of the voice and to bring it under control. We have, in doing this, made some use of words, but we have only dealt with them individually and we have made them subservient to our purpose. Words are, so to speak, the speaker's tools, and they have been our tools. If we have used them efficiently, they have served to give fulness and clearness to the voice. The voice improves under the work it has to do : and this, notwithstanding it is purely mechanical. We could not expect that our work should be other than this, so long as we confined ourselves to individual words. We proceed now to deal with

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words connected with other words. We enter, therefore, on a sphere more properly intellectual. We shall be occupied, in this chapter, with a principle which, in operation, constitutes one of the chief ornaments of public speaking. It is the principle which is embodied in the words which stand at the head of this chapter—word-grouping.

Words are the signs of ideas. They have no meaning, and are nothing but sound, save only as they represent ideas. Let us illustrate this by inventing a word. We can do this, as is very obvious, at pleasure. Our new word shall be *minagona*. It means nothing and can mean nothing. We have not seen it before and it calls up no idea. It excites no interest and no curiosity. We may repeat it as often as we like and still it remains sound and nothing more. This is plain.

But, by common consent, it may mean something. Under certain circumstances, it might be made to represent an idea. Thus, for instance, if I had sufficient influence, I might

be the means of bringing it about that it should be used to imply that words have no meaning save only as we know the ideas which they represent. In this case it would henceforth appear in dictionaries thus: *Minagona*, the name which describes the necessity of conceiving ideas before it is possible to know the meaning of words. All this by the way. And yet it was in some such way as this that the word *quiz* was invented. It is said, I do not know just now on what authority, that some one made a bet that he would invent a new word. He caused q, u, i, z—quiz—to be written simultaneously in large letters in all the principal parts of the country. One fine morning the word met every one's gaze at every turn, and there was a general inquiry as to what it could mean. It is easy to see how the word would come to describe the action of prying into, with an extreme desire to know, things which do not much concern us. And to this there was universal consent.

It is not my intention to discuss the origin

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of languages. The question is very interesting, but it would be out of place here. I do not mean to imply that languages have originated in this principle of common consent; though there can be no doubt that it has had something to do in extending their number. What I wish to remark is, and hence the point, that, although language is not altogether conventional, and men may not attach any ideas they choose to words; yet it is by something like common consent that the same word generally calls up the same idea. Thus, for instance, the word *horse*, whenever uttered by English people, calls before the mind's eye the animal that goes by that name. The word *cheval* brings the same animal before the minds of Frenchmen. *Pferd* before those of Germans, and *cavallo* before those of Italians. It is by common consent or sufferance that we English people allow the word *horse*, and not *cheval*, *Pferd*, or *cavallo*, to call up at once into the mind's presence chamber a certain animal and not another which does not go by that name. This

is a simple fact, but it involves a principle. It is a principle which is of very great importance and which consequently should be constantly borne in mind. This principle may be thus expressed—In speaking, reading, and talking, the ideas represented by our words should be clearly and vividly before our minds.

Words are things of air. They are impalpable. How much better and happier we should often be, if we, remembering that they are but too frequently spoken without any conception of their meaning, regarded them in this light! But my business now is to philosophise and not to moralise. Words, then, are not absolutely necessary to our conception of ideas. It is true that by their means we are taught new ideas and that we could not, without them, either admit them into our minds or revolve them, when admitted. It is also true, as we have indicated above, that words are not exactly conventional, for then we could change them at will and make them mean anything we chose. Yet the connection between the word

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and the idea is not absolute. In this case, we should only have one set of words, one universal language, and misunderstandings would be impossible. The mind is concerned first with the idea. The word or words is the means it chooses to convey it to others. We may regard it, then, as a law of our nature that the mind deals first—is first concerned—with ideas. This does, in no way, preclude the interaction of ideas and language. There is no doubt of this. It would, indeed, be very difficult to determine how far it would be possible for the mind to entertain ideas without the use of words, as also how far the mind is indebted to language for its ideas. We indicate here a delightful study—one we could pursue with some interest and, perhaps, profit, if it were not beside our special purpose.

The mind, then, is first at home with ideas. These are, so to speak, its natural element. The mind is so busy, too, with ideas that it is almost never entirely free from them. We wake and think. We sleep and dream. We cannot,

when conscious, do what we will, banish all ideas from our minds. We may and we do determine what train of ideas shall be allowed to pass through our minds; but we cannot do more than this. If any one think otherwise let him undeceive himself by trying to recall an hour in his active life when no idea was present to his mind—when it was a perfect blank.

Words, then, are the means by which we call up ideas into the minds of those whom we address: and ours are English words. But ideas are of various importance, as also the parts which constitute them. They are inter-related, and cor-related in a thousand different ways. Yet they fall into natural groups. They are represented by words which also fall into groups.

If words are the signs of ideas and the mind clings first to ideas, then the speaker should never utter a word without having a due conception of the idea, or part of an idea, which it represents. We shall have more to say on this point in our next chapter. If, further, ideas fall into groups, and the words by which they

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are represented likewise do the same, then it follows that these groups should be distinctly marked off. They should not be allowed to run disorderly into each other. And if, also, these groups have a relative importance, this should be distinctly marked.

Let us illustrate our meaning. The speaker is an artist and so also is the painter. The speaker's materials are airy and impalpable. The painter's are visible and tangible. The speaker's art consists in giving embodiment to ideas which reach the mind through the avenues of the senses and the affections. The painter's art displays itself in representing ideas which reach the mind through the powers of vision. They are akin, then, in this, that they both seek to convey ideas. The perfection of each is proportionate to its faithfulness to the idea it represents. The painter's idea may be complex. It may consist of many parts, all of which are not of the same importance. There is in every work of art one or more main features and many subordinate ones. The painter takes care

that this appears in the embodiment of his idea—in the expression of his conception. He does not throw his figures promiscuously and at random, on the canvass. He studies every particular carefully. He arranges everything with due regard to faithfulness. Each figure and each group of figures is related to every other figure and every other group of figures. He is most painstaking. He has a due conception of his idea and feels it. His aim is to be true to it. Form and colour are his chief aids. This is quite like what should be in the speaker. His ideas are many and they are inter-related and cor-related. Some are of more importance than others. He ought, therefore, to arrange them and give them their shape and colour in accordance with their relative importance. His words represent ideas just as really as the painter's figures. He should take care that they are faithful to their originals. His aim must be to call up in the minds of his hearers the same ideas as he has in his own mind, and that he do this faithfully and in truth to the nature and order of things.

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Ideas, then, fall into natural groups. The parts are distinct. Words by which they are expressed also fall into natural groups. We have dealt with individual words, and now our business is with the groups into which they arrange themselves.

Now it is a fact that the principle expressed by our name—*word-grouping*—is not generally recognised. It is not allowed to operate as it ought. Few speakers seem to be aware of its existence. And yet it is an important principle. Musicians mark it in their compositions under the name of phrasing.

A polysyllabic word is a good illustration of its mechanical structure. Let us take such a word and see how its letters fall into groups. The word *circumlocution* will serve our purpose. The letters of which it is composed fall into these groups—we call them syllables—*circumlocution*. There are five groups. If we examine them we shall find that they are not all of the same importance and are not equally accented. This principle is very like the prin-

ciple which should be applied to words. Words must be grouped in this way.

But now the question arises, How must the principle be applied? And have not writers and compositors done this for us? Are not the stops—comma, semicolon, etc., etc.,—the very things which, so to speak, syllabalise the words? No, emphatically no. The stops answer the purpose for which they are intended very well. They do not answer a purpose for which they are not intended. The purpose of the stops is grammatical and not rhetorical. They serve the purpose of enabling the writer to convey his meaning to the reader. They do not serve the purpose of enabling the reader to convey his meaning to the hearer. The rule to observe with regard to the stops is as aids to the grammatical structure. They ought not to be made to serve any further purpose.

The old system, insisted upon years ago, of teaching pupils to count one at every comma, two at a semicolon, and so on, must not be thought of. Its application would be simply

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ridiculous. There is something better that we can do. We should use the stops to arrive at the meaning and when this is done, we do our word-grouping and make our pauses. And in this discretion must be our guide.

Word-grouping must be, from the nature of the case, to a very great extent, arbitrary. Our anatomy of language; owing to its imperfection, cannot be compared to our anatomy of a man or any lower animal. Here our materials are more tangible. We know the shape and dimensions of the parts. We know, too, where these parts begin and end. We understand their proportions so exactly that, although the parts be never so far removed, we could fit them all together in their proper places. Now we cannot so easily determine where the several parts of an idea begin and end, because we may not be all at one as to how much properly belongs to the parts. Take a sentence by way of illustration—The hostler fed the horse. To my mind the best way to group the words of that sentence would be as follows: The hostler—

fed—the horse. I should put the words in the order of subject, verb, and object. Others might prefer to regard the sentence as subject and predicate, and so would arrange the words in two groups thus: The hostler—fed the horse. Here is room for the exercise of discretion. There are instances in which this latter mode of grouping would be preferable.

The diversities to which this discretionary power would give rise would not be very great or very material. Where the principle is recognised and put in practice the results would be pretty much the same, as also the general effect. So long as men's minds are differently constituted they will not all see alike. It is not necessary that they should. It is much more important that their intelligence should be exercised.

I do not wish to lay down rules for applying the principle of word-grouping. My object is, as I have already stated, to notice and dilate upon the principles, which, to my mind, underlie the art of speaking, and to leave it to the

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intelligence of the student to apply them. Yet before proceeding to give a further reason, if it be not a development of the reason already given, for applying this principle, I might be allowed to say how I would proceed to group the following. It will be seen at once that the dash is intended to mark off the several groups:—

“A chieftain—to the highlands—bound—cries—Boatman—do not tarry—and I’ll give thee—a silver pound—to row us—o’er the ferry.—Now—who be ye—would cross Lochgyle—this dark—and stormy water?—Oh—I’m the chief—of Ulva’s Isle—and this—Lord Ullin’s daughter.”

I do not say that this is the best way of grouping words. So much depends on the way in which they occur to the mind on reading them over. There are a hundred little things which go to influence our choice. I have separated, for instance, dark and stormy from water. This seems necessary to give effect as well as to represent the idea adequately. Yet, although the adjective is a picturing word, it would not

be always advisable to separate it from the noun to which it is joined. Then again, I have, in some instances, grouped the object with its verb, as in "row us." It would be advisable, under other circumstances, not to do this. It appears, then, that discretion must be, to a very great extent, the intelligent reader's guide in applying the principle of word-grouping.

But what now, supposing it to be a principle which has its existence in reality and not merely in the imagination, what is the special advantage of its application? If it is a principle it does not require any justification; and, perhaps, enough has been said to show that it is a principle. We may, however, say it allows the speaker to measure the relative importance of each idea or part of an idea and to give its expression accordingly

It is obvious that the groups, when marked off, will present two principal aspects to the mind of the speaker. These will be distinctness, and relative importance. He will know where each group begins and ends, and also

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which should receive greater prominence and which less.

Some speakers and readers speak and read with the same ups and downs, the same risings and fallings, whatever the character of their utterances. This is obviously wrong. This word-grouping is one of the means by which it may be cured. If a speaker group his words, the principle on which he does it will induce him to express each group in that key-tone and with that nerve-force, which he conceives necessary to give them clear and accurate embodiment. Here, perhaps, more than anywhere, the individuality of the speaker shows itself. For, I suppose, it would be difficult to find two men so exactly constituted as to possess no possibility of variation. All differ more or less in their conceptions of ideas and of their relative importance. This must be so until a standard of exactness has been established, and this will never be. Besides, it is not desirable for many reasons, that men, and least of all speakers, should be made on the same model.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *NERVE-FORCE.*

M. LEGOUVÉ tells a good story of the way in which he learnt to read. It is worth while transcribing it, for it is very suggestive. Lest it should suffer by translation, it shall be given in his own words. "Elle [Mlle. Mars] me donna un jour une leçon admirable. Elle arriva à la répétition, un peu fatiguée, un peu préoccupée et mal disposée à se livrer tout entière à son rôle. On commence le second acte ; vient une scène qui demandait beaucoup d'énergie. Elle la répéta sans donner de voix, sans faire à peine de mouvements ; eh bien ! pourtant, tous les effets, toutes les intentions, toutes les nuances du sentiment, furent exprimées et visibles. C'était comme un tableau vu d'un peu plus loin, comme un morceau de

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musique entendu à quelque distance ; on eût dit certains pastels, un peu palis par le temps, mais où chaque ton garde sa nuance, chaque contour sa valeur, où tout enfin reste complet dans sa mesure. Ce petit fait fut pour moi une révélation. Je compris sur quelles bases fixes s'appuyait l'art de la diction, puisque une grande artiste pouvait éteindre, si j'ose ainsi parler, son personnage, sans lui rien faire perdre, ni de ses proportions, ni de son ensemble, ni de son relief."

We have given the name of nerve-force to this thing which M. Legouvé saw and which taught him how to read. It may not be the best name and, perhaps, not correct. I am quite willing to abandon it for a better. I have called it by this name because it seems to me to be the true one. I do not generally feel any physical weariness after the greatest efforts of speaking ; but I sometimes feel nervous exhaustion. I conclude, therefore, that I have been spending nerve-force. It will, however, be of little consequence by what name we

call it, if we apprehend the thing and earn how to dispense it.

Whatever it is and by whatsoever name it is called, it is the life and soul of oratory. It is that thing which gives to what we say the aspect of reality. The speaker feels it and the hearers recognise it ; but we do not know exactly whence it comes or how it is infused.

It is something like electricity or animal magnetism. We see it only in its manifestations—effects. We do not see the thing itself. We know, too, how to excite it ; but we cannot well define its source.

M. Legouvé saw this thing, or, to speak more correctly, saw its working, apart from that which embodies it. He saw the soul, if we may so speak, distinct and in a measure separated from the body. It had come out of its tent and displayed its powers to him in a way he had never before witnessed. He was able to study it and mark its operations the more easily. He recognised this grand fact

and impressed upon his mind indelibly, that the speaker must feel that he has a power—a strange and often withal a bewitching power within—and that his art consists in displaying this power.

Many people have their peculiar notions respecting what constitutes the art of reading and speaking. One man thinks the secret lies in the art of breathing. Another holds that the whole of it is involved in clear, clean and crisp articulation. Another, misinterpreting Cicero's maxim, "actio, actio, actio," conceives that action comprises the whole essence of it. From the quotation we have made, it is evident M. Legouvé thinks that the whole of oratory is in its soul, in other words—the nerve-force.

Our friends are all so far right. The secret does not lie in any one of these things, but in the whole. There can, however, be but one opinion of M. Legouvé's notion, for oratory is nothing without its soul. Yet the soul cannot manifest itself save only as the paths

outward are such as to admit an easy passage. We will put this another way.

We will suppose the student to have perfected his mechanism. His voice is full, clear, bright, and sonorous. He has removed from it all roughness, furriness and harshness. He has brought it under thorough control. He understands how to fall upon any key-tone at will, and can move from one to another with ease. He can manage his breath with respect both to inspiration and expiration. His hearers do not perceive that he labours to catch his breath. His pronunciation is pure and his articulation is neat and crisp. He understands word-grouping and does it effectively. He possesses thorough control over himself and is never nervous. Has he done all he should to constitute himself a perfect speaker? Is there now nothing wanting? He is perfect mechanically. The lines of work, which we have indicated, if they have been pursued faithfully, have effected this. And, by the way, I may here observe that the work required to

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bring about this mechanical perfection is necessary to keep it up. The student must give himself a little constant practice or he will become rusty. But in another respect the work is far from complete. It is, perhaps, only just begun. He enters now a world which he can never thoroughly explore—a mine which he can never entirely exhaust. Supposing that he has done all that may be done, after the manner above indicated, he is only a correct reader—a correct speaker—he is not yet an artist. The whole realm of thought—his own thought as well as that embodied in language—lies before him and his art consists in giving expression to it in real, living words. Here then we enter, it is clear, a very large sphere—a sphere, too, which each for the most part must explore alone.

This opinion, I know, will be at variance with that of many in authority. It will, I have no doubt, be the subject of ridicule. This does not disturb me, and I am glad to think that there are some, also in authority,

who have expressed similar opinions. Morin, for instance, writes: "En lisant, c'est l'esprit non l'oreille, qui donne le ton et l'inflexion." It is the mind which, in reading, gives the [key] tone and the inflexion and not the ear. He has some further sensible remarks on this point, and he shall speak in his own words. "Je veux, je dois seulement dire franchement ce que le travail et une longue expérience pratique m'ont surabondamment prouvé; qu'il est impossible de noter la parole. Tous ces savans écrivains ont cru qu'ils se feraient bien comprendre en créant des méthodes, spirituelles sans aucun doute, mais certainement nulles comme véritable résultat. Tous ces signes pour baisser, élever, diminuer, enfler la voix, ne sont que des guides trompeurs, de véritables obstacles. Au lieu d'aider à atteindre le but, ils aveuglent et ils en éloignent à jamais. On devient déclamateur; on y gagne une diction monotone, insupportable, incorrigible."

This, strong language though it be, describes exactly the state of the case. There are many

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professors, whose systems,—condemned, so justly as I think, by Morin,—have borne the fruits he deprecates so strongly. Their directions, rules and suggestions are, indeed, what he describes “des guides trompeurs et de véritables obstacles”—misleading guides and real obstacles. These professors, if there is any consolation in the fact, leave their mark on their pupils. It is very easy to see who has been their instructor.

The reason for this is not far to seek. This nerve-force is in-born. It is the soul, as we have seen, of oratory. It receives its direction from the intelligence of the speaker. It is the extreme of folly, therefore, for any, but the speaker himself, to seek to control it. Its existence may be described, its powers and their manifestations explained, but further than this we may not go. If more is attempted, it can only be with the miserable result of producing a mechanical speaker.

Further. The nerve-force which a speaker infuses into his discourse, is commensurate

with his conception of the ideas he wishes to express. He depends upon his intelligence—his mental power—for an accurate conception of his ideas. Mental power may only be developed, it cannot be imparted. The development depends largely, if not mainly, on individual exertion. And so it cannot be the province of a teacher to indicate the course which should be given to the nerve-force.

I am here insisting upon a principle which, to my mind, must be recognised and allowed to operate, by him who wishes to acquire the art of speaking and reading. I do not know if I have made things quite clear. I should, therefore, say here that the above remarks do not preclude a teacher's giving a pattern of the way in which he conceives a given piece should be read or a discourse be delivered, provided always he give his reasons for everything he does, and also that his pupils be made to feel and understand those reasons. Our object is to guard against becoming mere parrots.

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This is a very important point. We will hear M. Morin speak upon it, for he is very strong and his language unmistakable. "Comment peut-on, alors, sans recourir à l'intelligence, saisir matériellement cette nuance impalpable et la marquer en signe visible, compréhensible pour tous? C'est impossible. L'élève, sans intelligence pourra-t-il, en le lisant, comprendre l'homme de génie? Non. Notez-lui tous les mots en barre, en double ou triple barre, faites-lui enfler la voix, faites la lui baisser . . . ce sera une véritable mécanique, voilà tout:"—a machine and that is all—"de sa bouche sortira un son, mais point de sens. Si l'élève est intelligent, s'il veut se soumettre à ce diapason de la parole, son esprit disparaîtra. Ses inflexions, justes quand il parle, lorsqu'il exprime ce qu'il éprouve, ce qu'il sent, deviendront, comme celles de l'élève inintelligent, des sons vides de sens et d'esprit; jamais il ne pourra se faire apprécier ni comprendre."

All this is quite true. By whatever name

we call the thing, we must never forget that it is the mind alone which gives the intensity to the display of nerve-force in speaking. The physical organs generate the body of speech, the mind gives it life—reality. The teacher can give material aid in training the physical organs. This is his province. He is, however, almost powerless in the other sphere. He may assist in rendering the mechanism perfect, but he cannot get up the steam. At most he can only stir up the fire.

But is it, indeed, true that no further help of any kind can be rendered to the diligent student? Must he learn alone? I take it, that the help he may receive is such as any intelligent person may give, other things being equal, as readily as the professor of elocution. His great aim and object should be to obtain clear, correct and precise ideas of things. He must store his mind with well-defined facts. He must develop his powers of conception. He must, in short, instruct and educate himself. Nothing can come out unless there be

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something in, and this not without having learnt the way. Then, above all, the speaker must have an intense love for his work. He must be enthusiastic about his subject. It is of such things as these that this nerve-force is generated. "My heart was hot within me, and while I was thus musing the fire kindled, and at last I spake with my tongue."

I do not know, I do not pretend to be able to ascertain, but I should think that most men, if not all, possess a fund of this nerve-force. If they have none and they feel it, they should not attempt to learn the art of speaking. It is clearly not their province. I cannot, however, think that there is such a phenomenon in nature as a man devoid entirely of this thing. Wherever it does not manifest itself, the reason must be sought rather in the fact that it has not been called into action than in that it does not exist. There is an inexhaustible supply of electricity in nature. It was discovered by accident. We do not now perceive its existence save only

as we call it into operation by some exciting cause. And then we see it only in its effects. We do not see the thing itself. It appears to me that it is precisely so with this nerve-force. It is in men. When it is excited, called up so to speak and put into operation, we see it, but only in its effects.

This seems to indicate the way in which to proceed with it. We have satisfied ourselves that we possess it. This is the first step. If this be not effected, we can only hope to perfect ourselves mechanically. This is true, if we even admit that we can successfully imitate one who is recognised as amongst the most skilful in the art. When, then, we have satisfied ourselves that we possess a fund of this nerve-force, we first say to ourselves, I must conceive correct ideas. I must fully realize the meaning of words—know exactly what ideas they are intended to represent. There must be nothing hazy, indistinct or incomplete in my conception of things. Then I must take care that the nerve-force gives the

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same form, colour and hue to the ideas which they have when I have called them up into the presence chamber of my mind. Ideas must be intensely real with me, and I must present them to my hearers so that they may feel this reality.

This nerve-force, then, is evidently a power. It is not a way or manner of doing anything. If it be a power—a power in-born—it is clear that it cannot be imparted. Attention may be directed to it, and in some sort it may be excited, but this is the most that may be done.

But if it be a power, the speaker must take care to make it do its work properly. Of this he must himself be the best judge. He should also take care not to waste it. And here we must remind ourselves that the expending of this nerve-force is the thing that tells upon us. It is the fire, it is true, that sets our hearers all aglow; but it is also, so to speak, the fire that consumes ourselves. We should be careful not to expend it too lavishly; yet, perhaps, there is not too much fear.

Speaking and reading, however good mechanically, must, more or less, without this nerve-force, fall dull, heavy and flat on the ears of any audience. A sermon, even though it be written in the finest language, on the most solemn subject, without this thing, fails to excite any feelings in the hearers. And how many sermons of this kind are constantly preached! This is the state of things that obtains to a very sad and deplorable extent. The preacher ascends the pulpit stairs. He opens his manuscript. He knows very little about it, for he has merely read it through. He is supposed to be going to preach, but he will do nothing of the kind. Preaching implies many things of which he has no just conception. It implies the delivery of a message, by a messenger, charged with it by one in authority. The conditions are such—ought to be such—as to call up into earnest operation all the nerve-force in his soul. Instead of this, he reads, as any schoolboy, of ordinary capacity, would do. There is no fire, no soul,

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no life. The preacher knows only what he reads and as he reads. He has not carefully read over his sermon beforehand in his study, and "suited the action to the word and the word to the action." He scarcely lifts his eyes from the paper. He has no conception and no idea. His effort is mechanical and the effect is scarcely better. This is preaching in the nineteenth century—in the age of boasted progress and enlightenment. We do not wonder that there be a cry for short sermons, or a disposition on the part of the preachers to yield to the general wish.

We cannot, it must be acknowledged, be too earnest in calling and giving attention to these things. If there were no remedy, we might be justified in allowing things to take their course; but with our remedy at hand it is not expedient, to say the least, that we should do nothing. Our wiser plan is to develop our own powers, and try to persuade others that it is quite within their reach to do the same.

There are many writers on elocution who have tried to bring about the same results at which we have been aiming, in this chapter, by giving rules for what they call the expression of feeling. These rules are very many and very tedious in their application. They have constituted many a volume. These rules are for the most part intended to direct the powers inherent in the head, face, eyes, body, hands, arms, etc., etc. We are carefully instructed when we should raise the head, lower it, turn it aside and throw it back. We are directed how to move each muscle of the face and which way the eye should look and not look. The movements of the body, arms, and hands are accurately indicated. All this, as has been well said by M. Morin, is just so much nonsense. The time spent in acquiring it is just so much time wasted. Some few general directions may be given, as we shall see later on, but these minute directions as they are endless in their nature, so they are impossible in their application.

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Then we are treated to long discussions upon the ways and manners the various emotions—joy, pleasure, cheerfulness, love, affection, sympathy, pity, devotion, veneration, gravity, seriousness, perplexity, attention, wonder, amazement, admiration, appeal, persuasion, hope, desire, tranquillity, acquiescence, negation, raillery, irony, anxiety, dejection, grief, misery, despair, fear, terror, horror, meditation, abstraction, reverie, vexation, ill-temper, determination, shame, etc.,—show themselves. To take an example out of all this—joy is represented as “expressing itself by clapping the hands, leaping,” etc., etc. All this may, for other purposes, have some value; but for the practical purpose of speaking it has none whatever. Feeling, true genuine feeling, does not find expression by rule. We have already said, and now repeat it, that a speaker does not speak by rule or a reader read by rule. Who would ever think of making a child glad and then give it directions about the manifestation of its pleasure? “You must laugh just so much and

these parts of your face must beam with delight." The thing is ridiculous, but not less so these rules. A better thing to do, as it appears to me, is to excite the feeling and let it express itself in its natural way. For the most part the various causes of emotions operate on similar lines and will show themselves alike. It is better to think of the principle than to give directions respecting the way and manner feeling should show itself.

Let us hear what M. Legouvé has to say on this point: "Un général monte à cheval un jour de bataille. Que faut-il avant tout? Qu'il sache monter à cheval. Obligé de se porter vivement sur tous les points de l'action, pour faire exécuter les mouvements, il doit avoir dans sa monture un instrument docile, qu'il gouverne sans s'en apercevoir; s'il lui fallait s'occuper d'elle, il ne pourrait pas s'occuper de son plan. Un général a donc eu nécessairement deux maîtres; un homme de guerre et un écuyer. Tel est précisément le fait de l'orateur, sa voix est son cheval;

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c'est son instrument de combat ; s'il veut qu'elle ne le trahisse pas pendant l'action, il faut qu'un travail antérieur et distinct lui ait enseigné l'art de s'en servir. On ne peut pas apprendre à la fois à penser et à parler. Les études de diction, les exercices de la voix, sont d'autant plus efficaces qu'ils portent sur les idées des autres ; on s'y donne alors tout entier. . . . Préparez-vous ! Armez-vous ! Rappelez-vous qu'on n'est maître du public que quand on est maître de soi ; qu'on n'est maître de soi que quand on est maître de sa voix, et prenez un maître de lecture ! Je me trompe, prenez-en deux. Qui veut savoir sérieusement une chose doit toujours adjoindre à son professeur un répétiteur, c'est lui-même."

M. Legouvé speaks with that enthusiasm which shows him to be in love with his subject. He says in effect, train your voice. Learn to think. Then, but not before, you may hope to speak. Nerve-force depends for right direction on accurate thought.

This is a safer plan and, as I take it, a

quicker road to perfection than the other. The rules which our professors elaborate so profusely, may make, and in many cases, perhaps, do make better mechanical speakers and readers than we should otherwise possess; but, as this plan appeals more to the intelligence, and involves the exercise of thought, it must have for result an artist who maintains his originality and individuality.

Then further we are treated to long dissertations on emphasis, inflexion, and punctuation. The principle of word-grouping, which we have treated at some length, dispenses with the first and last of these three things. This principle should be applied very carefully for some time till the habit is well fixed. It will then suggest its own application. The very fact of applying the principle will lead the reader to emphasise the groups that require it. The principle of emphasis will be as easy in its application as that of accent in syllabification. Then with respect to the rising and falling inflection, about which some professors have made so much

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stir, his intelligence will be the best guide. Where we use the falling inflection, the French use the rising inflection. It must, therefore, be owing to the genius of the language, and I must be pardoned, if, for this reason, I assert that the intelligent reader will not go far wrong. He will instinctively adopt the proper inflection—the one natural to the language.

## CHAPTER X.

### *ACTION.*

OUR treatise would be, more or less, incomplete without some remarks under this head. It is plain, from what has been said in the previous chapter on nerve-force, that we shall not be at all disposed to lay down hard and fast rules for the movements of the different parts of the body in reading and speaking. What we shall say, therefore, will be with the view rather of correcting what is wrong than of insisting upon what is right. Action, to be true, must be natural. It must be directed by the intelligence and not be formed by rules. Wherever there is graceless action, it is owing to one or other of these two things: want of thought,—the intelligence has not been directed to it,—

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or the imposition of rules. Either of these two things will sufficiently explain all graceless action.

Some speakers impart the impression that their usual occupation is that of a draper. They appear, while speaking, to be following it, measuring out as they do yards of cloth. Others again might be blacksmiths, from the manner, though not always "measured and slow," in which they bring their right hand down on the object nearest them. All this, and much more like it, is simply the effect of never having given the subject any thought. In all such cases, the speaker is but following an impulse of his nature. He is musical and conceives that he should speak with regular rhythm; but a moment's thought would lead him to see that he may safely leave the rhythm to take care of itself and allow his action to be governed by something else.

Now the first condition of graceful action is a well-trained body. Movements must be awkward if the joints are stiff. Gymnastic exercises

are then the best cure for all inelegancies in the display of action. I need, therefore, here to do no more than advise a free use of the dumb-bells. The exercise is useful for other purposes.

Action is not the whole of oratory. We have seen that it is a misinterpretation of the maxim—*actio, actio, actio*—to refer it to our meaning of the word. It is possible to err in giving too much and also in giving too little. We may, for instance, give too much action in reading. As a general rule we must be careful to watch ourselves and restrain action in ordinary reading, and suppress it altogether in reading the Scriptures. This does not preclude our reading as much as possible without looking at the book. We should never read in public, without having previously studied what we are going to read. We must make a work of conscience of our reading, and feel that we must do it well. No work can be well done without previous preparation. If we know well what we are reading and have practised it beforehand—and

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we can never do anything so well as that we cannot do it better, so that too much practice is impossible—we shall be able to read with an occasional glance at the book, and be free to address ourselves to our hearers. We must acquire the power of doing this, if we will make ourselves effective readers.

But what is the principle to adopt in speaking or reciting? We cannot give a better than that enunciated in the words which Shakespeare puts into Hamlet's mouth: "Let your discretion be your tutor, suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you overstep not the modesty of nature."

A better principle than this cannot be laid down. The speaker's intelligence must be his guide. It appears, to my mind, to be absurd to give rules for the direction of every action, for that which would suit one speaker would be inelegant in another. Each speaker must judge for himself and, if he do but judge, he will not go far wrong. Suppose for instance that he is

describing something sublime, lofty, heavenly, will he direct his eye to the ground, throw a gloom over his face, or point downward with his hand? Every speaker knows that he will do the exact contrary. He will raise his head, he will look upwards and point in the same direction, perhaps with one hand, perhaps with both, and his countenance will beam with delight. If he is describing something low and grovelling, something base and inferior, his hands will not be raised, his countenance will not be bright, his eyes will not be sparkling, but his hands will be lowered, his eyes dull and heavy, and his countenance sad. All this is natural. So further, if he desire to impart some idea of distance or vastness, he will not describe with his fore-finger an imaginary little circle in front of him and quite within the capacity of his own dimensions. With both arms and with hands stretched out he will attempt the impossible. And so also with the emotions—the expression of conscious virtue, of tender sentiment, of heartfelt emotion, will not be accompanied with

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gestures expressive of horror or guilt or despair; but the hand will be raised and gently placed over the heart, and the countenance will beam with joy.

Public speakers do find, notwithstanding all that may be said, very much difficulty in maintaining any posture or performing any gesture which to them seems necessary to give effect to the sense which they wish to convey. There is nothing, perhaps, more difficult than to stand still. The cure for this is not to think about it when speaking, but to practise it well beforehand. If a speaker needs to know how to stand still, he must practise it. He will find it irksome at first; but practice makes everything easy. Others again are puzzled to know what to do with their hands. It feels awkward to let them hang by their sides. Now nothing appears awkward to our hearers, unless it feels so to us. The cure then is practice. It is often very expressive to allow the hands to hang carelessly down by the sides, and practice makes it easy.

In order to make everything easy the speaker should make a point of practising every posture and gesture he may think he shall require apart from speaking. His gymnastics will render all his movements graceful. Then he may safely leave the time and the occasion to call up the right one. The probabilities are, if he require to think, at the time of speaking, how he will "suit the action to the word and the word to the action," he will run off the rails. He must be master of himself and of his actions and not need to think of it while speaking.

I do not think it at all necessary to take up the reader's time with giving minute directions for correcting all the inelegancies of gesture, which are for the most part the result of undeveloped physical power. These are deficient in what an architect would describe as clearness of outline. Gymnastic exercises, and especially exercise with the dumb-bells, will set all this right. If he has been accustomed to describe his circular and other movements from the elbows, this exercise will soon teach him that

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the shoulder is the proper centre. This will also rectify all other awkward movements.

I have thus endeavoured, in my humble way, to set forth briefly and clearly the principles which, in operation, constitute the public reader and speaker. Let it not be supposed, however, that it will suffice to read them over merely. Artists are not so easily made. Time must be given. Attention—close and steady—must be paid. Energy—devout effort well-directed—every qualification, indeed, which a sound mind with a love for the work, can bring to bear upon it, must be called into operation. It is an art, to the learning of which a life-time may be readily devoted, and still much would be left unlearnt. I have no patience with those charlatans who profess to provide specifics for all defects and to indicate an easy road to success. There is no such specific and no easy road. One thing at a time and well done—careful watching in the development—a clear and well-defined aim and object, with the qualifications above mentioned, bring about the

wished-for result. It is at such a price art is purchased. This is well, because, as everything else that is noble and elevating, it is, on the same conditions, within the reach of all.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING.*

WE have but few extemporaneous speakers. These few are by no means confined to our pulpits. By extemporaneous speaking we here understand the art of speaking without a manuscript. Most speakers require some extraneous help. This help sometimes takes the shape of a discourse fully written out, or of notes more or less copious.

All, with but few exceptions, admit that extemporaneous speaking is the best and most effective. There is reason for this. We see it illustrated in the effect which a fluent extemporaneous speaker produces on his audience. While he speaks the audience listens, but if he makes a quotation, the greater part will suspend their attention till the reading is

finished. We cannot gainsay the fact, that reading does not arrest and maintain the attention as completely as speaking. It is quite true, and I admit it freely, that much may be said on both sides of the question; but still the fact remains, that some way or other, only extemporaneous speaking tells effectively in large audiences. The major part prefer to see a speaker dispense with extraneous help.

If this be so, how is it that we have not more extemporaneous speakers? Why are speakers so few and readers so many? The state of things should be the exact contrary of the actual: why is it not? Further, Is there any remedy? And why is the remedy not applied? If there is any fault, whose is it? It is easier to ask questions than to answer them; yet something may be said.

The truth must be told. We have not given sufficient attention to these things. We have not tried to train men for public speaking. Extemporaneous speaking is an art. It must be so regarded, and it has not been. It de-

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pende on principles as other arts do. These principles have not been brought to the front; they have been shamefully neglected.

Other arts can be acquired; why not the art of extemporaneous speaking? It is true that the cost is considerable; but it is worth it all. The price may be forthcoming, for it comprises only such things as most men can command. We give the price for other arts without scruple and without grudging, why not for this? The price is the same in every case—careful training and continuous practice.

Is this true? Is it not true? The objection embodied in the expression, "Poeta nascitur non fit" is supposed to be a complete and decisive answer. But is it? Is it absolutely true that the orator is born? I venture to suggest that there may be the stuff of which public speakers are made in more men than we are disposed to think or allow. Take the arts and examine the capabilities of those who practise them, and what will be the results? They who are most proficient are exactly those

who have taken the most pains, and practised the art most diligently. The conditions are everywhere the same. What follows then but precisely that which experience would indicate; the art of extemporaneous speaking is not acquired, for the simple reason that it is not sought. Every art requires, and must have, patient, persevering practice from every one who seeks to be proficient. The higher the art, the greater is the degree in which this obtains.

All art is based on principles which may be more or less clearly defined. The art of extemporaneous speaking is no exception. These principles must be clearly apprehended, thoroughly understood, and carefully applied. The object aimed at in the former chapters of this little book, has been to enable the student to do all this with many of the principles. Our object is still the same. The principles upon which we have hitherto dilated have a special reference to the development of vocal power, and of shaping and colouring it

after the method suggested by a well-trained and well-stored mind. I have called them first principles, because experience has led me to see that the voice will not answer to the calls which the mind makes upon it, unless it has been brought under the control of the speaker, and its powers duly and properly developed. Supposing these principles to have been carefully studied in all their bearings and faithfully applied, what further principles remain to be brought out? Or, in other words, what still remains to be done in order to become extemporaneous speakers? Our object now is to ascertain this if possible.

And here, perhaps, it is as well to grant that it is a large subject, and seems to require an elaborate treatment. I say *seems*, because that it is all. I think that most things can be reduced in bulk and produced and represented in a simple and more intelligible form than we generally find them. Authors, as a rule, when they sit down to deal with any subject feel that they must write a book, and they

further ply their wits very hard to do so. It is quite possible, I grant, to write a book on this subject, but it is also possible to reduce the thing to a nutshell. I do not wish to waste my reader's time, but still, and for this reason, I must ask that he regard every word as meaning something. I think if he do this, and seek to profit by it, the advantage to be gained will be quite equal to that which would result from reading an elaborate treatise.

To accomplish our purpose then, and set ourselves running on the lines which will result in our becoming successful extemporaneous speakers, we must acquire those principles which will enable us, (1) to make thought yield thought, and (2) link or connect those thoughts in a consecutive order. What are those principles? How can we acquire and apply them? Let us take things in order, and see first how we can make thought yield thought.

Where nothing is, thence nothing may or can be expected. This is self-evident, and is everywhere true. The farmer, for instance,

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goes on the supposition that there is no gain-saying it. He knows very well that if he puts nothing in the ground he cannot expect anything good out of it. If he is to reap a crop, he must plough deep, manure well and otherwise prepare the ground; then sow the seed. This is not all. He must watch the seed when it begins to spring up, and through its progress to maturity. He must clean out the weeds, and loosen the ground to let in the sun and the rain. He puts in and upon the ground material and labour and, as a consequence, to a great extent at least, receives something in return. Yes, but that which he receives is very different in kind from that which he puts in? Exactly so. And here is our point—it is born of the soil, and that because it has been enriched.

There are many analogies between the physical and mental world. Here is one. Seeds would never grow save under conditions more or less favourable. Thoughts will not grow unless provision of the right kind be made for

their growth. The choicest seeds need the greatest care, and so the best thoughts need the most encouragement.

The mind then is the soil, so to speak, in which thoughts germinate and grow. It is remarkable that the root of our word cultivation was first applied to land and then to the mind. Hence we have the word *cultus* describing the outcome of the mind towards Deity, the worthiest object of all our mental training. The word may now be used of either. The analogy still holds. Whether it be with the land or with the mind, we must have the cultivation, if we will have what we want. We must suppose that in the case of the mind the cultivation has been bestowed. We need not enter into the questions, how? or to what extent?

We must admit that the process, though simple, is not easy. Somebody has well said, "It is easier to hammer out iron than thought." This is true, and is entirely owing to our disposition to take things easily. We shall see

this presently. The first condition is a mind. We possess this. The second condition is cultivation. We ought to possess this. In these days, it is quite within our reach. The third condition is determination. This, it must be confessed, is very difficult to acquire and hard to maintain. We are naturally very lazy. Ideas, as we have seen, are the mind's element. It lives in them and delights in them as birds do in the air or fishes in water. It will live in this element whether we will or not. The only power that we possess over the mind in this respect is to choose our ideas. Here is our difficulty, and here is the reason for our third condition. The mind is easily satisfied, and generally ideas that come readiest are the most acceptable. It is hard to control and will not submit to be a servant. We must bring it into subjection and teach it to do our bidding. Then it will do faithful work. This explains how it is that our pens are often so indisposed to work. We require to exercise a little wholesome discipline over ourselves.

Now where these conditions are, it appears to me that thought will germinate more rapidly than any seed which the farmer sows in his ground. I may be wrong, but I cannot help thinking that it rather resembles mushroom spawn than any seed.

Lay the thought in the mind then. Let it take root. The thought need not be new. It may be borrowed. Here, of course, those of us who are preachers will at once recur to the Bible and call up the innumerable thoughts that lie there embedded in the shape of texts. The thought may be one of these texts. When the thought is there, then force the powers of the mind to bear upon it. Concentrate their whole strength upon it. Let them operate in all their many ways and give them free scope. Only keep the mind to its work. Don't let it run off to other matters. In this way it will be trained to bring the right material for the nurture, growth, and full development of the idea.

Now, in order to divest ourselves as much as possible of all hindrances to the growth of

thought and encourage it as much as possible, we must take care to remember, what we have already said, that words are not absolutely necessary to the apprehension or conception of thought. Words are only the speaker's tools. They are not ideas. They represent and serve to convey ideas. We must in every case try to see our ideas apart from words. We might, perhaps, best describe this as the exercise of mental vision. I believe that more depends upon this habit than any other. If students would remember this when getting up their work, their progress would be much more rapid and satisfactory.

There is a further advantage in fixing this habit of seeing thought-ideas—apart from words. It prevents speakers repeating themselves. How many do this! The same thought is given in a certain way and then dressed up in another fashion and repeated. The audience—the speaker should not forget—remembers only ideas, if they remember at all, and will recognise that the idea is the same

though presented in another way. They will feel cheated and will resent accordingly.

When a thought, in the shape of a text or otherwise, has been thus treated, it will begin to grow. It will branch out in numerous ways; then other ramifications will appear, and then, too, there will be a quantity of offshoots. Sometimes a text presents itself under a complex aspect. The mind, as soon as it is busied upon it, concentrating all its powers, begins to distinguish its parts and define them accurately. Then it runs after all its connections. It is a law of our minds that thought seeks kindred thought. "Birds of a feather flock together." The saying holds here. We can easily, on reflecting a little, see this illustrated.

Now let us see how all that we have said will bear on a particular text—"how we can make it yield thought." Let us take 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give

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me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." Let this text be buried in the mind and take root and grow. It will throw off thought on all sides. It is, if we may be allowed the expression, a very fruitful piece of mushroom spawn. The first thought that will grow out of it is, that an old Christian wrote it a little before his death. Out of this will grow the thought that all must die. From this, the thought that there are many kinds of death. Here we shall begin to classify death-bed scenes :—(1) Of men who have lived without thinking and without feeling, and who die as they have lived—"as the beast that perisheth." (2) Of men who have lived for pleasure and have quickly danced out their merry life, and would fain cry for an hour to make some amends for wasted years. (3) Of men who have lived only to blaspheme the God of heaven, and who are now filled with remorse for their evil deeds. (4) Of men, who, like the apostle, die as they have lived in humble reliance and confident trust in a gracious and

mighty Saviour. These death-bed scenes admit of much picturing, and when seen mentally admit of easy reproduction. All this leads up to the next thought, taking the shape of a question—How can we make our death like (4), happy? It is plain that the wish, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his," cannot be realized, unless the life be also that of the righteous too. The answer is clearly given in the text. This, too, arranges itself under distinct heads. It is the clear outcome of what is found as germs in the text. The apostle could look forward with hope, because he could look backward with satisfaction. Here then are the thoughts: (1) "I have fought a good fight." (2) "I have finished my course." (3) "I have kept the faith." Each of these thought-seeds has only to be put into the mind-soil for a short time to produce abundantly. "Fought" will call up the kindred ideas of contention, etc., etc. "Good fight" will suggest wherein its goodness consists, and further, that all fights are not

“good.” (2) “Course” will cause to spring up the thought that everything in nature has a course, and that man is no exception. He has duties. “Finished” cannot fail to produce the thought that man must hold on to the end. (3) “I have kept the faith.” Here the nature of true faith will naturally be suggested, and man’s responsibility in the matter. There is still another element in the Christian’s happy death-bed, and that is set forth in the next verse. There are many germs of thought there. (1) “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.” (2) “Which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me.” (3) “And not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.” Out of (1) grow the ideas suggested by a comparison of the heavenly crown with earthly rewards. Out of (2), that of the greatness of the giver enhances the value of the gift. “The Lord will give it me.” Out of (3), that heaven would not be an abode of happiness if we were there alone. “And not to me only.”

I have purposely refrained from amplifying in treating this text. My simple object has been to illustrate our point—that thought will, like seed, germinate and grow under favourable circumstances. Our business, therefore, is to render the circumstances favourable. Our object was not to show how this may be done: yet, I may here be pardoned if I suggest that it would help it on very much if the work done at our schools and colleges took the shape of education rather than that of instruction. Cram, cram, cram. Pass examinations. This is the order of the day. Little is done to prepare men for the real battle of life. But this is, as Artemus Ward would say, a digression.

In these days of “free thought” and brilliant progress, it would not be amiss here to advert to the fact, that the true Christian preacher has a source of light and heat which, because despised, is not accessible to the general world. I have often felt amazed at the arrogance—not to say impudence—of those who style them-

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selves "free thinkers" and profess to pursue knowledge with untrammelled and unfettered minds. They assume that they possess mental powers of gigantic dimensions, and that all others that are not with them are very pigmies. It never seems to occur to these men that it is just possible that others may have as much intellectual power as they possess, and further, that it is just as vigorous as theirs. If it did, it might also occur to them to ask what it was that made them to differ? There is something, whether they will acknowledge it or not, that does make the difference, and this is humility. The true Christian acknowledges that, by his own unaided effort, he cannot, however much he may search, find out God or know His ways. He humbly confesses his inability and seeks his Maker's aid. Free thought indeed! There is no such thing. They who call themselves "free thinkers" know not what they say. Thought is either enveloped in gross darkness—when it runs not knowing whither it goes—or, it is enlightened by a power from without. In

the former case, license—not to say licentious—is a better term than “free.” In the latter case, although often dimly seen—as through a glass darkly—it is nevertheless clear and well-defined. This source of light and heat no true Christian will ever neglect. He cannot, indeed, afford to neglect it. Here is the great secret of making thought yield thought. Hence Luther’s dictum is justified—“Bene orasse est bene studisse.”

But now supposing the public speaker has not time to wait while thought grows in this way—and many preachers, considering what is required of them, have not time,—and that he has culled his thoughts from other authors and has made them his own—we must admit that this is legitimate—how should he proceed? He has nothing new to say, but he wants to say, in his own way, what has already been said—“non nova sed novè”—how shall he so arrange his thoughts as to reproduce them in the order he requires them? This question, indeed, may fairly be put, in whatever way the thoughts may have been acquired. Is it possible to arrange

thoughts so as to call them up again in the required order? If there is a plan, what is it? There is such a plan and I believe it may be safely and successfully adopted. This is our second point.

We start with supposing that the public speaker has his ideas carefully arranged on paper, and his object is to transfer those ideas to his mind so that he can reproduce them without any extraneous help, in the shape of notes or otherwise, in their natural order. This is fairly within the reach of any ordinary man who will give himself the trouble—nothing good can be done without this requisite—to work out the principles for himself and apply them.

The first principle to recognise and apply is the one to which we have already adverted, viz. : Ideas constitute the mind's natural elements. We may just as well expect fishes to live out of water as expect the mind to exist apart from ideas. This involves the dissociation of ideas from words, or, in other words, the exercise of mental vision. We must see things apart from

words. See the importance of this illustrated. Go into a farm-yard. There are twenty different animals there. Now go into the farmhouse. There is a piece of paper on the table containing a list of the names of those animals. When at home try to recall the animals and you will have no difficulty. Now try to recall the names, and you fail. Take another illustration. You are giving a lesson in geography. You go over the names of exports of any given country and try to impress them on the minds of the children. In a few days you question the children on the lesson and you find that they have forgotten all you said. Try another plan. Produce a sample of each export and lay them out in order so that they can see them. You find that they do not now forget. It all depends on this principle. We do not forget so easily what we have really seen. We must exercise our mental vision, or, as Locke puts it, "call up things into the mind's presence chamber."

There is another principle that we must re-

cognise and apply, and it is the principle of the association of ideas. We have already adverted to this. We need only say here that, owing to the operation of this principle, ideas which have been once associated, will recall each other. Locke has some good and useful chapters on this subject, which those who wish to see it worked out in a booky fashion, will do well to read.

Now I believe that if these principles be apprehended and applied, the results would be all that could be desired—public speakers could dispense with notes. We have been accustomed to think that, in order to speak well, we must remember words, whereas the mind will not be bothered with words. We must remember ideas, link them together by some convenient process, and leave them to clothe themselves as they come in order before our minds. I believe that here lies the whole secret of extemporaneous speech.

But what is the best plan to adopt? We have only to devise some scheme by which we

can string our ideas together, so that they shall come up in the regular order in which we require them. This is quite clear. Which plan is the best? Several methods have been, by men's ingenuity, devised. I once met a clergyman who told me that he fixed the several heads of his discourses on the several parts of a tree. He knew the order in which he would go over the tree, and each part of it as he went over it brought before his mind the part of the discourse that he had located there. I have heard of other clergymen localizing their thoughts in the several parts of the church. There was in these cases a certain part for the chancel, nave, organ gallery, etc., etc. I am indebted, to a great extent, to a neighbouring rector for the plan I am now going to recommend. The plan is simple and easy of application. Take a sheet of foolscap; divide it into twelve squares. It will look like a window with twelve panes in it. If the extemporaneous discourse be a sermon, it would be as well to reserve the first square for the text. Then begin on the middle square and

there localize the first idea. It may be represented in words or otherwise—by hieroglyphics for instance,—only we must remember to see the idea mentally. The third space it would be as well to reserve empty, or, if need be, to receive the latter half of the text. We shall require to do this when our text is long. Proceed through all the squares, localizing ideas in each, and distributing the sermon over the whole sheet of foolscap. When this is done, it only remains to familiarize the mind with the association of the ideas with the squares. The squares will come up in their order and each square will bring with it the idea it bears. This follows as the result of the association of ideas. The idea is associated with the square and the square with the idea and the one suggests the other.

I speak from experience when I say that this is a good and successful plan. It is the one I now adopt, after having tried many others, and I find no difficulty. By its aid I am able to give expression to ideas which require three-

quarters of an hour in delivery, with remarkable ease. I make a point of learning off the text, however long, and take nothing with me in the pulpit. I need not dwell on the advantages which accompany such a plan, for they are too obvious; but I may say that it is my firm conviction that every man, with any pretension to the name,—and if he have none, he should hesitate before speaking in public—may accomplish the same thing. I repeat, however, that the facility that I have myself acquired, is owing in a great measure to the fact that I have trained myself to see ideas apart from words.

One last word; and this is as good as a thousand. We may sum up this whole chapter, and, if whole volumes had been written on the subject the case would not have been altered, thus—See ideas. Link them together. Here lies the whole secret, so far as the mental process is concerned, of the art of extemporaneous speaking.



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