

above, the footman below yawned forth—"What the old woman's at it again!" The feeling, almost the words, of the footman are applied to the man once felt to be too great for ordinary usage. The very perfection of what a statesman's speech *ought* theoretically to be on a great occasion, was Sir James Macintosh's on the second reading of the Reform Bill—luminous, elaborate, thoughtful, but thoroughly ineffective. A series of such speeches, and the cholera morbus would not clear the House more completely.

The favourite tone of parliamentary oratory is essentially conversational: the House has a great love for the extempore, a great abhorrence of the prepared. Yet this is a schoolboy feeling, and a preference of the smart and clever to the profound and legislative. Information deeply hoarded, lucidly arranged, and carefully and logically bodied forth, may not show so much readiness in the speaker as a sharp personal repartee; but it is infinitely more creditable to the talents of the speaker, infinitely more honourable to the character of a deliberative assembly, and above all, infinitely more useful to the country. There is a great feeling in favour of a man who speaks not his own opinions only but that of some particular class. Thus, when Hunt came into the House "the Representative of the unrepresented," there was a decided inclination to hear him, not only as the orator, but also as the organ, of the mob. With a better education and a little more ability, he might have obtained, from that reason, a very remarkable station in the House. But he is vapidity itself. Never was there so miserable a twaddler. Yet from the mere habit of making men laugh; from the mere habit of relieving a grave and dry discussion with a cock-and-a-bull story about the Times newspaper, or his early life, or his wife's maidservant, or his driving about London bridge in a one-horse chaise, he is looked upon as a sort of relief from wisdom; and what is despised as buffoonery is welcomed as change.

One of the most remarkable things that excite the surprise of a new member, is the great difference between a reputation in the House and a reputation out of it. Many men receive the closest attention, nay, the most respectful deference in the House, who have managed to be utterly unappreciated and even obscure in the country. A new member is surprised to hear the compliments lavished on Mr. Baring, the respect paid to Mr. Wynne, the praises accorded to Mr. Atwood. He would be yet more surprised if he heard the speakers for the first time, and before he himself was imbued with the spirit of the house. But it is not the one speech, it is the general character of many speeches that obtain for such members the ear of the House; a knowledge of detail, a shrewd astuteness of reply, a particular tact, or a particular appearance of sincerity—all these often evinced, insensibly create a reputation with which the public, judging only by single speeches, often ill-delivered, and therefore ill reported, are thoroughly unable to sympathise. But the most remarkable