

English; if by such neglect the art of writing declines, what of the art of speaking?

“A university,” as some one has put it, “is a sanctuary of the mind. It is a trustee for the intellectual welfare of man.” Standing beside and behind our schools, it shares with them the making of citizens; of these the end is preparation, of that the aim is mastery. The boy’s general impression of his school may be mainly book learning, but the university must startle his powers by its “collision of mind with mind and of knowledge with knowledge,” as Newman has it. To stimulate thought without providing means of expression is largely to lose the worth of one’s work; while “elocution” may be reckoned an “accomplishment,” elocution in public speaking has shaken nations from the days of Solon until now.

Burke swayed his audience by sounding periods; Bright by direct simplicity; Gladstone by the fire which flashed from his eye; one must search Canada from ocean to ocean to find half-a-dozen who can do in part what these men did. In the face of an important future intellect, passion, and elocution must not remain undeveloped, or perish undiscovered.

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