

with which the several rooms and halls were embellished; and we were not surprised in learning, as we did from DR. BUTLER, the excellent and kind-hearted superintendent,—that the influence of these upon the minds of the unfortunate inmates was highly beneficial, making them more quiet and happy. He stated that no injury had been done to a single one of the hundred and twenty-five pictures that had hung upon the walls for more than a year.* Now we believe that much good would result if school rooms should be adorned with appropriate pictures and paintings. They would not only make the room more attractive, but they would exert a silent, though sure and pleasant influence over the minds of the youth. We are all affected by the nature and condition of the objects which surround us; and the silent, unconscious influence of inanimate objects is, often, far more powerful and controlling than we imagine.

And so with flowers. How much they may do, not only to "beautify the earth," but also, with smiling looks and fragrant voices, to contribute to man's enjoyment and promote his cheerfulness. We are well aware that some affect to despise the culture of flowers, regarding them as useless products. But to him who

"Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones and good in everything."

there will be a sincere delight attending the culture of the flowers which speak so unequivocally of the goodness of the great Creator who has made the flowers—

"To comfort man, to whisper hope,
Whene'er his faith is dim;
For who so careth for the flowers,
Will much more care for him!"

Whenever we see a house, with its neat flower garden and well trained vines and shrubbery, whether it be in the thriving village or away from the "busy haunts and noisy shops," up among the hills or mountains, we always feel that the indwellers have hearts that feel for others' woes, "God who careth for flowers," will not be unmindful of those who appreciate the *beauties* as well as the *utilities* of his handiwork. What a bright, joyous, cheerful aspect would the earth wear, if all who dwell thereon would plant and cultivate a few flowers? It would not only tend to "strew man's pathway to the tomb" with flowers, but also to shed a sweet fragrance around his daily walks and vocations. Then will not teachers do what they can to foster a flower-loving spirit? If they will, they will be amply compensated by their reflex influence in promoting a genial disposition in the hearts of the little ones under their charge. Whenever we see a happy boy or girl gaily tripping along the school-ward path, with a bunch of flowers, whether culled from the garden or road side, for the teacher's desk, we always feel that in the young heart which prompted the gift, the teacher will find a ready and cheerful obedience to his wishes.

We hope the time is not distant, when every teacher will feel it not only a *duty* but a *privilege* to cultivate in the hearts of our youth a refined love for music, paintings, and flowers; feeling assured that thereby much will be done to promote both the happiness and true usefulness of their pupils. And when it shall be deemed an essential part of a school-yard, to have a neatly arranged flower lot, we shall find the love of school increasing, and a growing dislike for coarse and uncourteous acts on the part of the young. Whatever tends to adorn and beautify the place in which children spend much of their time, will leave a pleasing and lasting impression upon their young and tender hearts. In the language of Keats:

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever;
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness, but still will keep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing;
Therefore, on every morning let's be wreathing,
A flowery band to bind us to the earth."

And, as another says, "if rightly wreathed, the band will bind us to Heaven no less."—*Connecticut Common School Journal*.

N.

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND DEBATING.

(From Groombridge's "Talking and Debating.")

The great nations of ancient and modern times have cultivated oratory as one of the noblest arts, and it has become the fashion to judge the relative positions of nations, in the scale of civilization, by their respective excellencies in the exercise of this high accomplishment. Oratory has served the highest uses in promoting the prosperity of states, the administration of justice to individuals, the promulgation of truth, the denouncement of wrong, and assertion of right, in every age of the world; and is at once the most attractive as well as the most persuasive and forcible of any mode of *expression* exercised by man.

At the present day, no man of any pretensions to literary culture or social refinement, dare consider himself utterly free from liability to

be called upon to appear in public as a speaker—either to defend a principle, enforce his own claims or the claims of others dear to him, to oppose a false doctrine, or simply to return thanks at a dinner, or propose a resolution at a meeting; but to do such things well is less easy than is sometimes imagined, for the mere gift of speech will not make an orator, nor the most perfect *knowledge* of a subject enable the proficient to expound it with ease.

The same may be said of debate—most men can reason but not many can *argue*; there are very few who cannot distinguish common sense from error and bigotry, but *want of method* will frequently weaken the force of a truthful and sincere appeal, and give a temporary victory to the abettor of falsehood.

HOW TO MAKE A SPEECH.

Whatever the subject of address, the speaker should preserve his self-possession and check all enthusiasm at starting. A beginner, in oratory, should first of all guard against what is called *warmth*, for when once the energy of the speaker rises into impassioned eloquence, it requires the judgment based on long experience to keep the tongue within bounds, to preserve the thread of connection, and to avoid turgidity, strained comparisons and bombast. A young speaker will often take us by surprise with a fine burst of original elquence, and no sooner has the applause subsided than signs of exhaustion show themselves. He is striving to follow up the grand hit with a still greater; he cannot succeed; he gets confused, begins to stutter, and perhaps breaks down just as the field was open for him. Why does he fail? Simply through having lost control of himself—his imagination has extinguished his reason, and the thread of connection is lost. Positive coldness is better than injudicious warmth, measured sentences preferable to hurried exclamations, and an immovable firmness and quietude of demeanour, more worthy of cultivation than all that is understood of "moving appeals" and "passionate addresses."

THE EXORDIUM.

Every set speech should be complete in itself; it should have a commencement, in which the subject is introduced; then the main portion of the address must be devoted to the consideration of the question, and the *peroration* or close should set forth the conclusions of the speaker as based on the arguments already advanced.

The exordium should be as brief as possible, and the more attractive in style the better, so as to engage, at once, the attention of the audience. Yet there must be no vain attempt at oratory, and during this part of the discourse the speaker should maintain a measured calmness, such as to prove his claim to undivided attention.

Many experienced speakers commence their addresses with a happy allusion, a queer comparison, or a statement of some apparent paradox which is to be unravelled as the speech proceeds, and which naturally opens up the question to be considered. If this is cleverly accomplished, the attention of the audience is rivetted at once, and the speaker is pretty sure to have a respectful and appreciative hearing, even if the whole of his hearers are opposed to the views he advocates. Ability always commands applause even if engaged on the side of the minority. Still this method is not to be recommended to a beginner, who may make many sad mistakes in attempts to produce effect. Let sound reasoning and plain statement have precedence, and the use of the weapons will be found in time.

The use of the exordium is to enable us to state (if necessary) why we speak, and on *what subject* we purpose speaking. If the subject is already fixed, then the speaker is bound, as a rule, to state distinctly what line of arguments he intends to pursue—which *side* he intends to advocate, for it is quite illegitimate to catch your audience in a trap and gain convictions by appearing to agree with those whom you purpose to oppose.

A GREAT MAN'S BOOKS.

A recent visitor to the library of Daniel Webster, which remains at his old home in Marshfield just as he left it, after giving a full description of it, says, "Not an infidel work could be found among all his books. He never read such books. To the very close of his life, he retained that reverence for the Bible and the religion it inculcates, which his excellent parents taught him in infancy. The mute counselors with whom he communed in retirement, still show how he thought, how he studied, and what opinions he cherished. A better selection of books to make one wise and good could scarcely be made."

CELEBRATED MEN AND THE WEIGHT OF THE BRAINS.

The brain is the great centre of the nervous system. From it passes a double set of nerve lines, which divide and sub-divide until they pervade the whole fabric. Cuvier's brain was enormous, it weighed 65 ounces; Dr. Abercrombie's, of Edinburgh, weighed 63 ounces; Lord Byron's was also very large, being 64 ounces; and Dr. Chalmers' 53 ounces. It is rather singular that the brain of Dr. Chalmers, who is justly celebrated for his attainments and profundity, should (comparatively speaking) be so much lighter than that of either of the

* This is also Dr. Workman's experience at the Provincial Lunatic Asylum, Toronto, where pictures are also hung on the walls.