

modern names of Plunkett and Bush, Derby and Campbell, Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone. It is to aid each other in the contemplation of the lives of such mighty Dead and such mighty Living, that we of the Sheridan Club propose to meet at stated periods. It is to encourage each other to follow (though *magno intervallo*) in the steps of these great examples; to impart to each other our individual acquisitions, that we shall from time to time assemble in this hall; and although we may never approach their standard in literary lore, nor arrive at the pinnacle of fame to which they have attained; yet the study of the career of such men will discipline our minds, and materially aid us in the all important task of self-education; by such education, I mean not, gentlemen, the mere customary course which most of us have gone through at school and at college; by such education I understand not the parrot-like learning which is but too common in our day; but I mean a nobler thing; I mean a fair impersonation, which like philosophy in "Lucian's Dream," sits by us in our boyhood and woos us at our manhood, endeavouring to lead us from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge, from carnal pleasures to intellectual enjoyments, in fine, from materialism to spiritualism.

It now becomes my pleasing duty to lay before you, in as few words as possible, the other branch of the studies which will occupy our attention on the many occasions on which we hope to assemble under this roof during the ensuing season, I allude to the study and practice of "public speaking," one which, though much encouraged in most of the countries which compose the continent of Europe, has been, alas! but too much neglected in England and her colonies.

Whilst Italy boasts of her schools of oratory, of which a Cavour, a D'Azeglio, and a Gavazzi are the pupils; whilst the universities of France, in like manner, foster with protecting care that wondrous art, and possess those schools of rhetoric in which a Montalembert and a Theiers, a Victor Hugo and a Guizot, have all learned to debate. Amongst us practical Anglo-Saxons, the taste for eloquence has of late years visibly declined, and deeds rather than words are