

### Roosevelt as a Speaker.

A good story is told of one of Roosevelt's first efforts at declamation in school when he had undertaken the old familiar poem of Bozarris. He was lost in embarrassment on reaching the third line:—

"At midnight in his guarded tent,  
The Turk was dreaming of the hour  
When Greece her knee—

There his memory gave out through stage fright and he made several attempts to start again: "When Greece her knee"—long stop—"When Greece her knee"—The old professor said from behind on the platform loud enough for the whole school to hear: "Grease her knee once more, Theodore, and perhaps she will go."

The writer recalls this familiar story of Roosevelt's beginning as a speaker to emphasize as a warning to teachers who very generally neglect this matter of elocution, that Roosevelt was scarcely better at speaking at the end through lack of proper voice culture. I was present when he came home from his world trip—the best known man in the world—to speak to an audience such as perhaps no man ever faced before. The choicest men in our country and diplomatic representatives of other lands were gathered in Convention Hall, where a Sunday School convention had been held shortly before, and at which even women had been heard, and many laymen unaccustomed to public speaking. But Mr. Roosevelt could not be heard by more than one-third of his audience. I was just about that far from the front and heard scarcely a word, and within ten minutes from the time this world hero had begun to speak the people in the rear were murmuring and leaving the hall, unable to hear anything of what he said.

One feels as if the teachers who had opportunity to prepare this man for his great work were entitled to some exemplary punishment for failing to train his voice as he was known to be preparing for public life, to discharge one of the most important functions of leading citizens, that of public discussion. Wendell Phillips used to say: "This is a government by talking." The fact that such a warning as this story should give is needed is seen in the fact that of the nearly five hundred legislators of the United States Congress there are not fifty speakers that can even be heard comfortably by the people in the galleries.

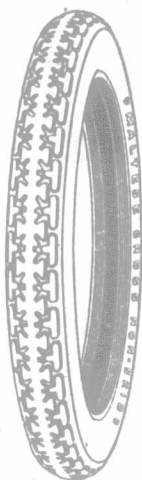
More than ever in this period of democracy, when the soap box orator of the street, who is reaching half of the population that never go to church and seldom to inside meetings of any kind, must be met with reason against rant, it is vastly important that every graduate of the public schools should be as much at home on his feet, to state the thing he knows and confute the demagog, as he is at home on a bicycle or horse or on skates or in the water as a swimmer. Three-fourths of the success of good speaking is sufficient practice to make a man absolutely free from stage fright when he stands on his feet and able to say in intelligible and effective language the facts that he knows.

WILBUR F. CRAFT.—In *Journal of Education*.

### Sheep Account and Record Book

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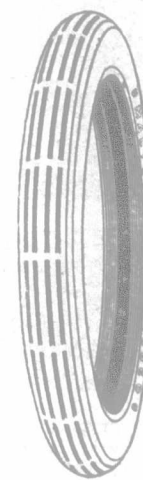
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