

ful book takes possession of his audience.

"Art is long and time is fleeting," and men have not time to listen to prattle which can just as well be omitted. Our speeches as well as our actions should be regulated by this one fact—"Time is short."

One general rule has been laid down to be observed by all, which is this, "That men should not talk to please themselves, but those that hear." This would create a desire to present one's hearers all the knowledge available, which would necessitate the most careful preparation, and also to suit his remarks to circumstances.

A.

DIGNITY.

Dignity is a growth. It is not named by Milton in the list of sudden creations. Although:

"From his mould
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd
His vastness,"

and beasts and birds, fishes, grubs and insects *sprang* into being; dignity, vaster than the vastest, grander than the grandest, was produced not so. As it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be subsequently, dignity increases by successive differentiations from the infinitely little to the infinitely much. This growth is the result of internal agitations and external aggregations, the elemental variables being interdependent.

Dignity is not always a growth. The rule has exceptions—like rules of Greek accident. The dignity of an owl is not a growth. It is a birth, instantaneous, magical. The owl has more dignity than a hotel clerk—and less impudence. [N. B.—Dignity and impudence are not twin brothers.]

The dignity which grows—and we have explained that that includes all dignity except what is had by owls and owlsh men,—requires food, though not always of the material sort. This food varies infinitely. The man who becomes suddenly rich, or

who by plodding becomes rich, or has always been rich, or expects when his venerable grandmother dies to become rich, commonly has dignity of the haughty, overbearing kind. Such persons may lack good looks, and amiability, and education, and common sense; but they have *dignity*. Education produces dignity. Freshmen have it measurably. Sophomores and Juniors have more; while the meekest Senior is *immeasurably* dignified. By this quality you can easily recognize a Senior or a young man recently graduated. There is an air of conscious superiority and dignity which is very touching. As the school lore is gradually forgotten the dignity subsides, and a man ten years out of college is almost as human as other folks, *ceteris paribus*. Office, whether petty or princely, nourishes dignity. It makes no difference whether a man is premier or postmaster, councillor or constable, dignity is worn as a badge of office.

In its youth dignity is tender. Its sensitiveness causes the owner thereof pain. A young man or woman rarely wears large dignity without getting it hurt. Slight breaths of imagined contempt or insult seem hurricanes in their effect upon it. But as time passes the tender dignity grows tough and hardy. This is why a man of mature years, if he is as respectable as he is dignified, rarely suffers pain *as to his dignity*.

Dignity on a young man often fits like Saul's armor on David; the wearer rattles about in his shell of dignity like a small dry pea in a large dry pod.

We often hear the expression, "He got on his dignity." There is a popular misconception of the meaning of these words. A man who is "on his dignity," is not wearing his dignity conspicuously. He has *lung* it off, dashed it to the earth (or floor), and is standing *upon* it. He is therefore *on his dignity*. This explanation will commend itself to the good sense of all who have seen a man *on his dignity*; for a more undignified sight is rarely seen.