

9. The vocal cords *must* be acted upon by the air ; and as it always demands *more* air for speech and song than for common respiration, it will be seen how important it is to renew incessantly the supplies. Besides, these vocal cords become more vigorous and regular in their action, with judicious practice. In common practice, as of speech, it has been calculated that they undergo 240 different changes at the mere will of the speaker. Great singers can far exceed this, as their organs are under constant discipline ; and it is reported of Madame Mara that she could effect as many as 2,000 changes.

10. It is practice that gives this great power to these cords. But the practice must be scientific. It then is never attended by bad consequences ; and **when public speakers lose their voices the injury is never caused by over-speaking, but by speaking in violation of the physiological laws which govern the voice and secure its health.**

Management of the Breath.

11. The management of the breath demands careful attention. One invariable rule should be observed in all vocal practices—the speaker or reader should **inhale through the nostrils**. It brings into action the nasal passages, which play an important part in speech. It prevents that irritation of the throat which often follows a sudden and strong inhalation through the mouth ; and its general effect, too, is beneficial to the whole vocal structure.

12. “ Nothing can be more hurtful to the pure quality of the voice, and nothing scarcely more injurious to the *larynx* and the *lungs*, than the habit of gasping in the air, without any system or method, by the open mouth. Take this as a golden rule, that the breath should, not merely when reading or speaking, though *then I hold it indispensable*, but at all times and under all circumstances, be taken into the lungs *only through the nostrils*. I assure you most earnestly, that if there be any tendency to disease or weakness of the *lungs* or of the *larynx*, *trachea* or *bronchial tubes*, the observance of this rule is of vital importance to

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