

learn with surprise that there is not a soldier on guard in the capital of the United States, even during the sessions of Congress, although the familiar fact excites not a thought in our minds.

I have heard a good deal said about schools of eloquence, the rhetorical talents of certain portions of the country, and native genius; but I found true in Washington what I believed in the French Chambers and the British Houses of Lords and Commons: that many men who suppose themselves great orators are deficient in some or all of the indispensable qualifications; and that not a few real orators are unsuspecting of their talents, or unconscious of what they consist in. With our early training at school and college, we are very apt to suppose that fine language must approach the Latin standard, either in words or arrangement; and after we have lived long enough to correct this mistake, we are some time in settling the great fact, that eloquence can never consist in useless words. Yet nothing is more true: and although we often find high encomiums passed by the newspapers on particular speeches, could we have witnessed their delivery, we should generally have found them falling blunt and dead upon the closed ears of a thin and sleepy audience.

With abundant materials for thought, I took my seat in a stage-coach for Baltimore, and revived many a recollection of strolls through European palaces and prisons, and events in the history of courts. Washington, thought I, is a metropolis of nuisances, a capital of intrigues, and ever must be. But yet how different it is, in some respects, from the seat of an European court! The profession of a courtier requires a long apprenticeship, which it is almost impossible to obtain in this country, among the frequent changes to which our system subjects us. Though the growth of bad men may be rapid, their career must generally be short. But what results might not be produced, if such characters as may be conceived, were allowed to prosecute their operations for ten, twenty, or thirty years, without fear of interruption, and under the shelter of an unchanging dynasty?

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