

not less a hog; indeed, his swinish qualities are emphasized by the incongruous gems. Sterne, I think it is, who says that the dwarf who brings a standard of height along with him is something worse than a dwarf.

All that we know of public speakers who have attained eminence, from Demosthenes to Bright, shows that excellence can be had only at the price of hard work. The genius of oratory does not smile on us without years of courtship. Mr. Gladstone, some time ago, dwelt on the evidence of painstaking thought and labour found in the MS. of Mr. Canning. How Brougham worked is familiar to all who have read the works of that great but vain and garrulous man. Yet, probably, there is no art in which so many are ambitious of excellence as that of speaking, and in which they think success so easy.

Now, what is the end aimed at speaking—whether in the forum, from the pulpit, or in the Senate? Lectures do not properly come under the head of speeches. The name imports that a lecture is a composition thought out, and prepared, and written in the study for the purpose of being read. If a lecture pleases, if it has enabled you to pass an evening pleasantly or instructively, it has justified itself. Not so a sermon, a legal argument, an address to a jury, a speech in Parliament or on the stump. What raises the sermon, the legal argument, the jury speech, the political harangue, infinitely above the lecture is this—they all contemplate action as an end. And so far as any one of them, or any part of any one of them, is not instinct with this aim, the speaker is guilty of impertinence. The end aimed at is not to delight the imagination or tickle the fancy, though delighting the imagination and tickling the fancy help you on your way, but to convince the judgment. How can this best be done? By giving adequate reasons why the course you propose must be considered the best, and inflaming the

passions so as to bring them to your aid. The logic should be red hot. Most oratory in modern times is addressed to the masses of the inhabitants of the country of the orator. Therefore a speech, or sermon, or oration, which aims at persuasion must be easy of comprehension, must appeal to the understanding, must court the weaknesses of those whom we try to persuade, and must pay some regard to the fact that we do not live in antediluvian times, when, no doubt, a few years might be spared to digest a discourse.

A great deal of the speaking in the course of the Syndicate debate was excellent, a great deal made me fancy that the speakers had forgotten all that Hazlitt says on the subject of oratory, with the exception of his striking but only half-true words, 'that modesty, impartiality and candour, are *not* the virtues of a public speaker.' They certainly forgot that brevity is. The first men in the British Parliament rarely speak beyond an hour or an hour and a quarter. The latter is the utmost limit Mr. Bright used to allow himself. Mr. Cobden always spoke within moderate compass. Mr. Gladstone is diffuse. Yet his speech moving the House into Committee to consider the Acts relating to the Irish Church, contained only twelve thousand words. His speech on March 2nd, 1869, bringing in the church measure—a large question necessitating a detailed statement and elaborate calculations, contained only 22,680 words. Sir Charles Tupper's speech introducing his Syndicate resolutions, contained 36,000 words; Mr. Blake's reply 32,400 words. Mr. Lowe's speech on the second reading of the Borough Franchise Bill, 1866 contained 6,960 words; his speech on the first reading of the Representation of the People's Bill, 9,280 words; on the second reading, 16,008 words. Grattan's great speech on the rights of Ireland, contained 13,524 words; on 'Simple Repeal,' in reply to Mr. Flood, 7,674 words; his philippic

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