

viewed, takes rank with the fine arts, and, as such, is as worthy of study and admiration as those material forms which embody the conceptions of Angelo, Titian, and Raphael.

In conclusion, we are aware that in thus urging the claims of the art of expression, we have exposed ourselves to the jest of Diderot on Beccaria, that he had written a work on style in which there was no style; but one may see and feel the beauty of works of art which he can never execute; and we will willingly become a target for the critic's shafts, if we can but induce any of our readers—especially our undergraduate readers—to study the magnificent mystery of words. We press this matter the more urgently for two reasons: 1. Because, as Prof. Shedd says, the modern mind, especially "the American mind, is full of matter, and overfull of force. . . . The Goth needs to become an artist." 2. There is a tendency in some of our colleges to neglect rhetoric as a synonym for the shallow and the showy. The only style sanctioned by their professors is apparently the "colourless-correct," which Julius Hare called Scotch-English, and which Carlyle, himself a Scotchman, likened to power-loom weaving. Its great aim, apparently, is to avoid all impulse, brilliancy, and surprise; and its ideal is reached when a writer, as Coleridge said of Wordsworth, is "austerely accurate in the use of words." Even at our oldest college, where compositions were formerly required every fortnight for three years, only half-a-dozen essays are now required during the whole four years' course; and the department of "Rhetoric and Oratory," so long glorified by an Adams and a Channing, came so near to extinction a few years ago, that we are told it only got a reprieve at the very scaffold, at the intercession of some of the older graduates. Again, there are persons who, like

Karl Hildebrand, affirm that nothing in one's native language, but grammar and spelling, can be taught. "I never heard," says he, "that Pascal and Bossuet, Swift and Addison, or Lessing and Goethe, passed through a course of stylistic instruction in French, English, or German; and yet they are supposed not to have written these languages so very badly." So, it might be replied, there have been men in every calling—painters, sculptors, musicians, architects—who have mastered their art without technical instruction. But the example of these prodigies of genius proves nothing in regard to the average man. It is true that the highest secrets of a good style cannot be taught, but must be learned by each man for himself, pen in hand; that the knowledge and use of one's native language are grasped, not deliberately, but "by a thousand unconsciously receptive organs." But the same thing is true of music, painting, and all the other arts, in the acquisition of which the student is advised to begin with a teacher. Let the undergraduate, then, begin early to write—to write while his faculties are plastic, lest, when he is called to posts of responsibility and honour, he have to take up the lament of Italy's statesman, Count Cavour. Bitterly did he lament that in his youthful days he had never been taught how to speak and write—"arts which," said he, "require a degree of nicety and adaptability in particular organs, which can only be acquired by practice in youth." To obtain such a mastery of language as we have described is the privilege of but few; but all may make an approximation to it, and of all excellence, here as elsewhere, the first, second, and last secret is *labour*. Intercourse with men of culture, listening to the language of the common people, and the perusal of good authors, it has been truly said, are the basis of a good style; and the true