

Germans have tried to introduce it, but have failed. The splendid chorus of the *Persæ*, or the finest passage from the grand old tragedy of Prometheus Desmotes, would either be coughed off the stage at the Adelphi, or would set all the audience asleep in a short time. The world has grown too matter-of-fact for such flights of eloquence and imagination.

Generals no longer make orations to their armies. "Up Guards and at them" is almost the only piece of rhetoric history has recorded in describing one of the greatest battles of the most successful general of ancient or modern times. "England expects every man to do his duty" is the terse stern watchword with which Nelson commenced the glorious battle of Trafalgar.

Even in our own times there has been a singular change, a tendency to decri rhetorical displays, to listen only to plain matter-of-fact communications and addresses. Sheridan's great speech of several days length against Warren Hastings (designated a speech, not an oration), though eulogized by his contemporaries, is now regarded as most defective in point of taste. The eloquence of the House of Commons, it is said, is composed of sarcasm and statistics. There can be no question that this feeling, so peculiar to the British people, is equally manifest here. I have often heard barristers from other colonies remark on the plain, simple, colloquial addresses which are generally to be heard in the courts of law in this province. And the same remark may, with some few exceptions, be applied to the speeches delivered in our legislature.

But across the border the rule is reversed. There seems to be an extravagance in the mode of thought and expression among our neighbors that is in striking contrast to the cautious, cool reserve of the British people. What would be designated addresses in Great Britain, are elevated to the rank of orations,—and their Fourth of July orations probably deserve the name, from the rhetorical and figurative character which they assume, and the great learning, eloquence and ability which they generally evince.

Though the committee have designated this address as an oration, I assume they have merely used the phrase usually applicable to anniversary speeches on this side of the Atlantic, but have no wish that it should be of the same character as those well-known effusions. They desire that instead of its being limited to the settlement of Halifax, it should rather embrace the history and destiny of the whole province; and a very general opinion has been expressed that it should be of a practical character.

This being the case, I need not apologize for adopting a plain, familiar style, or for principally touching upon those topics which