

*moi un peuple qui travaille huit heures par jour, et je vous montrerai un peuple qui est le premier peuple du monde."*

I do not know that in this age and country, eight hours of labor a day would enable an individual to rise to any great distinction among his fellows, but the principle is the correct one, nevertheless; and that it applies to public speaking as well as other things, there cannot be any doubt. While of the orators, both of the present and past, scarce one can be pointed to who has not been obliged to supplement such qualifications as nature has supplied him with by the most persistent labor; while dozens can be pointed to who have risen to distinction as public speakers by the force of cultivation alone, dozens, yea scores, may be met with everywhere, who, possessed of abundant talents, but without the disposition or opportunity to turn them to such account, will remain unheard of to the end of the chapter.

As to the kind of cultivation to be pursued, I would like to say a few words, though I must, as you may see, on this branch of the subject, resort to the experience of others. To quote again from the address of Judge Torrance: "Cicero, and apparently all the ancient masters of oratory, advised writing. 'The pen,' said Cicero, 'is the best master to teach the art of practical speech.' Quintilian also advised writing. 'We must write,' he said, 'with much care and very often, without which the gift of improvisation or extemporary speaking will be a vain flow of words.' Augustus committed his speeches to memory. Pliny the younger, only extemporized when compelled, and said that there was only one way of arriving at good speaking—reading much, writing much, and speaking much."

Now let us turn to Lord Brougham and see what that master of the art says about it. In a letter to the father of Macaulay concerning the education of his son as a public speaker, he departs in some measure from the precepts of the ancients whom I have just quoted. He does not lay down writing as the first means to be employed.

The first consideration, he says, is to acquire a habit of easy speaking; no matter how, so long as it is easily and fluently. This is to be got, he says, by accustoming one's self to talk much in company, by speaking in debating societies with little attention to rule, and more from love of saying something than of saying anything well. "I can easily," he says, "suppose that more attention is paid to the matter in such discussions than to the manner of saying it; yet still to say it easily, to be able to say what you choose and what you have to say, this is the first requisite, to acquire which, everything else must for the present be sacrificed."

But though Brougham departs from the rules and practices of the ancients in the beginning, he by no means discards them as models to be studied. On the contrary, in his next step, as he terms it, that is the means to be employed to convert the easy speaker into the finished orator; the apprentice, so to speak, into a master of the art, he makes the study of the an-

cients almost indispensable. And in this again I find I must give you his own words. He says: "I do earnestly entreat your son to set daily and nightly before him the Greek models. If he would be a great orator he must go to the fountain-head, and be familiar with every one of the great orations of Demosthenes. It is in vain to say that imitation of these models will not do for our times. First, I do not counsel any imitation, but only an imbibing of the same spirit. Second, I know from experience that nothing is half so successful, even in these times, as the Greek models, I use a very poor instance in giving my own experience, but I do assure you that both in courts of law and Parliament, and even to mobs, I have never made so much play (to use a modern phrase) as when I was almost translating from the Greek. I composed the peroration of my speech for the Queen, in the Lords, after reading and repeating Demosthenes for three or four weeks, and I composed it twenty times over at least." And then Brougham goes on to say with regard to writing speeches, that, though speaking without writing beforehand, is very well until the habit of easy speaking is acquired, yet after that, one can never write too much. "It is laborious, no doubt," he says, "and it is more difficult beyond comparison than speaking off-hand, but it is necessary to perfect oratory, and, at any rate, it is necessary in order to acquire the habit of correct diction. But, I go further and say that even to the end of a man's life, he must prepare word for word most of his finer passages."

I trust you will pardon me if I have wearied you by quoting at some length from this valuable letter, but it not only bears an important application to our chief purpose here, but bears out so fully the proposition with which I started, and which is indeed the burden of my argument, that by labor alone can anything like the mastery of the art be attained, that I could not refrain from setting it down as I have done. In conclusion, then, permit me to say, that assuming all this to be true, it becomes our duty to cherish both the disposition and the opportunities which we possess; to be niggard neither of our time nor of our labor, in our efforts to build up the Society to which we here belong; to make this Society attractive to ourselves and to those who are to come after us, so that it may be the means, still more in the future than it has been in the past, of encouraging and promoting this, the most ancient, the most admired, and the most useful of all arts—the art of public speaking.

—:o:—

I WISH I WERE, &c., &c.

I wish I were the little breeze

That frolics through the morning sky,

That whispers to the nodding trees,

And bears the scents of flowers on high.

Oh, I'd not pierce the forest wide,

Nor fly to distant realms above,

But I would keep my Chloe's side,

And whisper gently words of love.—FRESHMAN.