

"wished; but if, as you may think, deficiently, I have spoken as I could. Do you, from what has been said, and from the better arguments omitted, which may be well suggested by your manly understanding and your honest hearts, give a verdict consistent with justice, but inclining to liberty; dictated by truth, yet leaning to the side of the accused men; struggling against the weight, power and influence of the crown, and prejudice more overwhelming still; a verdict undesired by a party, but to be applauded by the impartial monitor within your breasts, becoming the high spirit of Irish gentlemen, and the intrepid guardians of the rights and liberties of a free people."

In this, as you see, there are no tricks of diction, no figures of speech, but its effectiveness is apparent to all.

This, after all, appears to be the real test of eloquence. Is it effectual to the purpose in hand? If it be not, your speech may be arranged in the most regular periods, may be delivered in the most forcible manner, and yet lack the spirit of true oratory.

Take, for instance, the short but effective address of Napoleon to his soldiers on the Plains of Egypt. When pointing to the Pyramid he said: "Soldiers, from yonder summit, forty centuries look down upon you to-day." Here no one can doubt the purpose or the effect. But what was there in that brief speech which should have that effect? What was there in the sight of that cold, immovable statue, even though four thousand years had rolled over it, to arouse the drooping spirits of the soldiers, and strengthen their hearts for the struggle? It was, that the contemplation of that which had remained unchanged through so much of change; which could make us forget the very limited area of time and space in which we exist, and carry us back through the long eventful centuries to a period almost ere Nature's self began to be, had in it something of the sublime, had in it something of that quality which never fails to raise us up for the time being above ourselves, and to arouse within us higher and grander emotions than those to which we can ordinarily attain.

The touchstone of good speaking, then, I think it may be laid down, is the effect produced. But to produce the desired effect, in a set speech, without cultivation, is in most cases impossible.

The slightest slip may give a ludicrous effect to what was intended seriously, may change a speech from the sublime to the ridiculous, as when Disraeli, one of the greatest masters of oratory the present century has produced, brought down upon himself the laughter of Parliament, in a vain attempt to do that which practice and cultivation has long since enabled him to accomplish.

In the termination of a speech, particularly, the lack of cultivation is often painfully apparent; so that what would otherwise have been an effective and successful address, is spoiled by a lame and impotent conclusion. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult for an uncultivated speaker to avoid falling into a conclusion which renders the whole effect ridiculous in the extreme.

I was present some time ago, on an occasion when a little amateur speaking was indulged in, and, out of seven persons who spoke, I counted five who finished up in this way: "Thanking you for the honor you have done me," or, "Thanking you, Mr. Chairman, for having called upon me, I, — I, — I, take my seat."

It will, I think, be granted that the effect of the finest speech would be in a great measure spoiled by such a conclusion as that; but the question is why did so many adopt that style of conclusion? Simply because it was the form of conclusion most used in the only kind of composition in which they had any experience, viz., letter-writing. There it comes in very, very often happily enough, because to the participle "thinking," "hoping," &c., there is a natural sequence, viz., "I remain, yours, &c." There the sentence has a natural and proper termination; but in public speaking it can only lead to the ridiculous conclusion "I take my seat," or, as in some cases, the speaker drops the latter part altogether, trusting to the applause which he fondly hopes to follow to cover his retreat.

These may seem like details of a trifling and uninteresting character, but they go to show the necessity of cultivation in everyone who desires to be a speaker; and if necessary in a person possessing natural qualifications, how much more so in one who is not so gifted! As I said at the outset of this essay, where natural talents and cultivation are combined, the result will inevitably distinguish a man as a speaker; but as between the two separately, genius may dazzle for a while, but cultivation will inevitably carry the day. To quote from an address of His Honor Mr. Justice Torrance, delivered some years ago at a convocation of the college: "The eminent masters taught that whatever might be the qualities of the intellect and the gifts of nature, these advantages were of no avail if they were not aided by stubborn labor and by persistent exercise in reading, writing and speaking."

Be assured of this, that in oratory, as in every other field of human effort, nothing lasting is produced without labor, and those things on which the least labor seems to have been bestowed, have very often received the most of it. A remarkable instance of this is given by a note-book of Plato, in which he had written the first words of the Treatise on Government several times over in different arrangements; and also by the *novum organum* of Bacon, which he is said to have written twelve times with his own hand. A story is told of Tennyson also, who, when a gentleman called his attention to a certain couplet in one of his poems, and remarked that it seemed to have been produced without the slightest effort, replied that he had smoked a dozen cigars over those two lines; and again, when the late Joseph Howe, of Nova Scotia, was preparing his speech on confederation, he went into training for a week, not only in an intellectual sense, but in a physical one.

I do not wish to grow abstract or discursive in my argument, but you will pardon me if I say that the secret of almost all success in life is work. "*Montrez-moi*," says the illustrious Bishop of Orleans, "*Montrez-*