

Where we listen to the delivery of a fine composition which does not display any of the spirit with which its thoughts were conceived, it reminds us of a beautiful work of art which needs but a few touches to display all the grace and beauty of perfection. In reading there is leisure to indulge somewhat in the thoughts and feelings which are expressed; but in listening to a speech, our mind is hurried on, and unless the speaker expresses his spirit as well as his thoughts, rounded periods and balanced sentences will pass for such and nothing more.

The object of elocution as an art is to manifest my thoughts and feelings to others in such a way as to give them a true idea of how and what I feel and think, and in so doing to make them respond to my states of mind and feeling. This being the case is it not evident that a thorough course in elocution is necessary for those looking forward to positions as speakers?

An extended knowledge of elocution is a power giving us superior advantages over others. On what does the success of the orator depend but on his acquaintance with the science of speaking with effect? Most of the effects of ancient as well as modern eloquence may be attributed to the manner of delivery; we read the words of the orator, their spirit is gone, the body remains beautiful, but motionless and dead.

A nation tottering to ruin has been reclaimed by one speech; thousands of clamoring tongues have been silenced,—old and young have bowed to the overpowering influence of the spoken heart.

It devolving on the clergy to deal with the greatest truths, should these not be delivered in an appropriate style? The Bible requires in its proper delivery the most extensive practical knowledge of the principles of elocution; a better impression can be made than from the most luminous commentary.

In Institutions unable to support a Professor of Elocution, this art is sadly neglected by the majority of students; perhaps displaying their powers but once or twice throughout the course. Although these persons may be clever as writers, yet if called upon under the easiest circumstances, they will be unable to express themselves in a pleasing manner. Some may

regard Elocution as an accomplishment; allow it such, it is one which we would all do well to possess. There are those who are born with a natural gift of Elocutionary powers; yet we can all attain to a degree of perfection in this art. Many think that to succeed a teacher is necessary; yet the amount of progress that can be made by our own efforts is surprising. Hours that are wasted could be turned to no better advantage than in reading aloud or reciting to those who will criticize us; for proof of this we have the testimony of some of our best Elocutionists. It is to be regretted that this art has been so much neglected, but we hope that a reformation in this direction will soon be effected.

BETA.

ECHOES OF THE PAST.

NO. 1.

AN EVENING WITH THE MUSES.

There are few to whom it is not a joy to look back on the college days—days when the spirits were buoyant and hopes bright and high—days when student-life made existence not only tolerable but intensely enjoyable—days the memories of which are ever present with us and cannot fade away. In memory there are some things which perhaps we would willingly forget; but there are many things which, because of their peculiar character and preciousness, we dwell upon without any risk of being satiated. In imagination we not infrequently, for a short time, blot out the intervening years and become students again, entering with zest and enthusiasm into their life with its joys and sorrows, its duties and pastimes. Indeed the words “I would I were a student again,” are by no means strange to many an alumnus tired of breasting the billows of a stern and laborious life. This evening, then, as I sit, the fire burns. Without difficulty I can enter again my old room in that dear old college building which in 1877 was burned with consuming fire. Chums take their accustomed places. Confab is the order of the evening. Words spontaneously flow. All questions in Physics and Metaphysics receive their quietus. The non-ego is swallowed up in the ego. The puzzling questions which, dimly outlined in the minds of the