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The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

Her days of glory past unsung,
She sleeps in evening's fading glow,
With bands of shadow o'er her flung,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

Around her tower the solemn hills,
Her lakes repose far below,
Deep silence all her borders fills,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

The busy tides of Aztec life
Have ebb'd, no more to flow;
'Tis o'er the fever of the strife,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

Her dark mysterious worship past,
Her teocallis lying low,
Oblivion's night up-rising fast,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

No longer through her noonday streets,
Pass priestly pomp and regal show,
But shadow lengthening shadow meets,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

No fleet canoes adorn her lakes,
Nor garden islands floating slow;
Nor our nor song their silence breaks,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

Her plumed robe and crown of gold
Are gone to alien and to foe,
Save those of evening sky unroll'd,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

Her nerveless arm hath lost the skill,
The axe to wield, the lance to throw;
The warrior pulse forever still,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

She sits beside her inland sea,
A queenly widow in her woe,
For only memories hath she,
The sunbeams slant on Mexico.

—SELECTED.

Oratory.

The opinion very generally prevails that oratory in this age is so circumscribed in its scope, as to leave little incentive or profit in its cultivation. The Athenian youth were taught to regard this as the highest effort of the human mind; ours in seminary and college are so slightly indoctrinated in its value as to esteem it lightly, or totally to neglect it.

In our foremost institutions no special prominence is given to this branch of culture, and by this neglect it is held in small esteem by students. In former ages oratory was the culmination of all culture. It was the royal road to political influence, and fame. In our times it is regarded as the feeblest weapon in the armory of political strife. The intrigues of the caucus are omnipotent, and dwarf all other appliances; while venality steps in to supplement what party discipline fails to effect.

It is an interesting inquiry, to trace the nature of that oratory which has cast its iridescent splendor on the age which it has distinguished; and to mark some of the causes which have reduced it to its present low estate.

And first it may be observed, that great orators have arisen only in free states, and in times of great national emergencies. The fame of Pericles, as an orator, is associated with the Peloponnesian war, Demosthenes drew his inspiration from the perils impending over his country, and Cicero from the plots that threatened to subvert the republic. Pitt, Burke, Sheridan and Fox spoke on great national

themes, and in great crises; while in our own country the oratory of the revolution was born of the aspiration to create on this continent a new nation consecrated to freedom.

From the most trustworthy accounts handed down to us, we are compelled to conclude that the style and language of notable orations were but feeble factors to produce their results. "Had you heard Demosthenes," said his rival, "your wonder would be increased."

The most finished oration of Pericles is only known to us through that sententious reporter, Thucydides. He claims only to give the substance of the thought, not its rhetorical finish or manner of delivery, whose subtle essence no language can convey.

If we come down to the orators of modern times we meet with the same disappointment. The powerful statement, the splendid invective of the elder Pitt is known to us chiefly through the reports of Dr. Johnson, who in some cases wrote out speeches for him which he never heard; and to some, when Pitt was praised, the Doctor replied, "That speech I wrote in a garret."

The wonderful eloquence of Sheridan in the trial of Warren Hastings has not been handed down to us by any record of his words, because "he chose to leave to the imagination which in most cases transcends reality the task of justifying his eulogists and perpetuating the tradition of their praise." The stirring speech of Patrick Henry, which so captivates school boys in the declamatory period, owes its form and finish to the graceful rhetoric of his biographer, William Wirt; and John Adams comes down to us from a former generation in the sonorous periods of Daniel Webster.

The traditions respecting these famous orators must be taken with much abatement, if the style of the speeches alone be considered, but may be taken at the highest estimate if measured by their effect.

With regard to the masterpieces of oratory, the fact seems to be, that those which have come down to us loaded with verbal and rhetorical felicities fell upon inattentive ears; while those of more dramatic rendering, and adapted by the speaker's instinct to the various moods of the hearers won the highest encomiums.

The speeches of Burke abound in the most graceful and vigorous statement ever conceived by genius, and which to day, captivates the reader, were listened to with impatience at first, and finally not at all. As characterized by Goldsmith,

"He to deely for his hearers went on refining,
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining."

"Does it read well?" said Fox, "then it was a bad speech."

What then are some of the causes that have contributed to make oratory less effective than formerly?

First, nearly every question that engages the orator is amply, if not exhaustively discussed by the newspaper. In this way public opinion is formed, and the work of the orator forestalled. Besides,

this method of popular instruction has brought in the fashion of treating its topics in a cold blooded cynical way—the very antithesis of the method of the orator. He must burn with emotion and flame out with enthusiasm. Glowing thought must find eloquent utterance in burning words.

Now it cannot be denied that modern newspaper discussion of public themes seeks a terse, unemotional and critical style to give its thought to the world. It is under restraint, curbed and bitted in, with the most exacting precision and coldness of statement.

Again, the field of oratory, especially political oratory, has been greatly circumscribed because no great assemblies are to be convened, and but little eclat can be reaped as a reward. Formerly, public opinion was fashioned by the orator; today his work is only for the few assembled not so much or instruction as to be incited to action.

Besides, the prevailing taste in respect to literary style, and emotional exhibitions of soul forces has greatly chilled the ardor of the orator. The most impassioned periods of Chas. Sumner, were uttered in a comparatively frigid way, as if protesting against himself.

For purposes of deliberation on all subjects of public interest, the newspaper has supplanted the orator, and in abdicating this function, oratory has come near losing sight of the other function peculiarly its own, to impress and inspire men with enthusiasms and emotions that will lead to the most noble and heroic deeds.

A. R. B.

Incentives to Human Labor.

(concluded.)

But there is another influence which contributes largely toward bringing out the best powers of a man in labor, the genius within him, or the beautiful ideas which originated and built up in his own mind, and which finds expression in the works of his own hands. It guides the pencil of a Michael Angelo, and Raphael in unerring precision as they place upon canvas the beautiful thoughts of their souls—thoughts so beautiful and so life like in representation, that the beholder is charmed at the sight.

Its seats a Philias day after day with chisel in hand before the marble column, from which at length shall come forth a Jupiter Olympus, the image of man, perfect in symmetry, noble in beauty, the grandest conception of the human mind. It leads a Milton with a mind soaring "above the flight of Pegasean wing to give expression to his thoughts in epic lays. And although old and blind to perform the toilsome task of writing Paradise lost and regained, two works which stand unrivaled monuments in the literary world. The muse, Urania which he invoked to aid him in his "arduous song" was not the angelic being holding court "above the top of old Olympus," but was the heaven born spirit of genius dwelling within

secret chambers of his own mind. Kelper and Newton performed mathematical work which was not only astonishing in their own day, but stands unrivaled in our own. Their works, bespeaking great thought and labor, were prompted by the wonderful genius with which they were endowed.

Other incentives to industry are artificial. Wealth is but a gewgaw and fame a hollow sounding word, without a lauding and appreciating populace to give each a value. But genius is not artificial. It is born with the man, and is a part of him; and its promptings are natural instructive. True the possession of wealth and fame is often a strong incentive to bring out the best productions of genius, as in the case of Sir Walter Scott, who wrote more for money than any thing else. But unless a man has a mind that can appreciate a certain occupation, or has some considerable talent for it, he will not be likely to pursue it with any great degree of earnestness. Right here many make a great mistake in choosing an occupation. They have somehow received the idea that a man is capacitated to perform almost any labor but any other else is able to do, like the Englishman who cast a die to decide between the professions of law and medicine, they are willing to take up with any profession that offers a respectable beginning with out regard to what their natural predispositions for it may be.

Industry goes a long way toward success in any occupation, but it cannot, as many seem to suppose, take the place of a natural qualification for it. Genius must be cultivated by exercise, but it cannot be made by it. He who is naturally fitted for a lawyer, would figure rather poorly as a doctor and vice versa. The lawyer might perhaps make a respectable physician, but the occupation would be a continual task instead of a pleasure, and he would have few of those natural promptings to success that he would have if he were to follow the profession for which nature seemed to intend him. The man fitted naturally to be a physician might study law with some degree of success, but he runs a great risk of being a poor, pitiful, pettifogger all the days of his life. But a great many instead of thinking themselves fitted for any occupation, go as much to the other extreme, and think themselves fitted for none. Now this opinion is hardly less fallacious than the preceding, and when entertained is no less dangerous to success. "No one," says Bethune, "is to suppose himself destitute of genius because its effects do not immediately appear." Genius in its higher forms, we admit, only belongs to a few, yet all have genius to some extent which fits us better for one sphere of action than another. This feeling that nature has bestowed upon us any special gifts to often arises from our attempts to cope with others in certain directions contrary to the natural truth of our own mind.

With the student this is especially the case. Some of his fellow students outstrip him in the