

THE NORMAL SCHOOL.

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RHETORICALS.

Much has been said and written upon the best methods of instruction in nearly all the branches of education, while but little has been said about the object or the best method of conducting rhetorical exercises. This is a question which has occupied my mind as much or more than any other question connected with the teacher's work. During the ten terms that I have taught, I never have made rhetorical a success until now. As I look about me I find that this work is entirely neglected in some schools, in others sadly abused. I have often heard this question, "What is the use of *speakin'*?" I never expect to speak in public." Taylor says, "A person growing to a certain age must appear in the world; he can no longer hide himself at school. He must start forward and become something. What that something is to be, education only can surmise even talents, genius, fortune, can give little guess." There is perhaps no one who has gone out from school, and entered upon the duties of life, who does not feel the importance of being able to stand before an audience or company and tell what he thinks upon any subject that may come up for consideration, in a pleasing and instructive manner. It is the object of education to enable man to act rightly, honorably and successfully. Education is a means to an end. No matter what kind of life may be before him, that college graduate is best fitted for it, who is the most completely and systematically trained in all his faculties and powers. Let him make the most of himself, then, on every side of his nature. Let him train like an athlete for every contingency. Thought, memory, imagination,

every part, should be fully developed, and then in whatever direction he is called to act he will be ready. If we do not expect to be ministers or lawyers, we are often, at public gatherings, called upon to express ourselves, it is necessary that we receive the proper training while at school to fit us for this work. Among the many who participate in public speaking, how few there are who are true orators, or even agreeable speakers. "No wonder that hearers nod and doze when the speaker with tedious mean and whine relates his sorrows in a see-saw tone." How unworthy of one who performs the high function of a religious instructor, upon whom depends in a great measure the religious knowledge and final character of many fellow beings, to imagine that he can worthily discharge this great work by occasionally talking for an hour, he knows not how or in a manner he has taken no pains to render correct, or attractive. All faults in expression and gesture can be eradicated by proper training in school. Lloyd says, "The voice all modes of passion can express, that mark the proper words with proper stress." While all speakers cannot equal Edward Everett or Webster, I believe that the standard of public speaking can be raised by giving proper attention to rhetorical in common schools and colleges. The teacher's work cannot be overestimated, especially in a republican form of government, where its perpetuity depends upon the education of the masses. The moulding of the future generation is in the hands of the teacher. In this enlightened age of the world there is a great demand for public speakers, those who are cultured and have refined tastes, who can appeal to the reasoning faculties, whose language and expression