"Thousands of young readers in 19th century America learned about eloquence and liberty from the stirring speeches, plays, and poems in *The Columbian Orator.* When one reads it today—even better, reads it aloud—its eloquence speaks to us all."

—Sydney Nathans, Duke University

"Frederick Douglass validated his manhood by giving Edward Covey, his surrogate slave master, a good whipping. What inspired his fists was not only manly rage, but liberating knowledge—knowledge gained in part from his reading of *The Columbian Orator.* I read it now and the words still inspire and inflame."

—Ossie Davis

THE

COLUMBIAN ORATOR

CONTAINING

A VARIETY OF

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED PIECES

TOGETHER WITH

RULES,

WHICH ARE CALCULATED

TO IMPROVE YOUTH AND OTHERS, IN THE

ORNAMENTAL AND USEFUL

ART OF ELOQUENCE

by CALEB BINGHAM, A.M.

Author of the American Preceptor, Young Ladies Accidence, & c.

BICENTENNIAL EDITION

edited and with an introduction by

David W. Blight

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS

NEW YORK AND LONDON

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS
New York and London

Published by arrangement with Bernel Books, a division of B. L. Mazel, Inc.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Columbian orator : containing a variety of original and selected pieces together with rules, which are calculated to improve youth and others, in the ornamental and useful art of eloquence / [compiled by Caleb Bingham. — Bicentennial ed. / with a new introduction by David W. Blight.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-8147-1322-X (hardcover : alk. paper). — ISBN 0-8147-1323-8 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Speeches, essays, etc. I. Bingham, Caleb, 1757–1817. II. Blight, David W.

PN4200.C68 1997

808.5'4—dc21 97-35955

CIP

New York University Press books are printed on acid-free paper, and their binding materials are chosen for strength and durability.

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people helped in the completion of this new edition of *The Columbian Orator.* Bringing Bingham's reader back into print, especially because of the attention brought to the book by Frederick Douglass's autobiographies, was Bernard Mazel's good idea. Bernie inspired and encouraged me to take on the task of introducing and editing this book. I could not have identified many of the authors in this volume, nor have located some of the old works about schoolbooks, without the help of my marvelous research assistant at Amherst College, Chip Turner. The librarians at Amherst College, especially Michael Casper, and at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, especially Tom Knowles, gave repeatedly of their expertise and energy in tracing Bingham's books as well as his life. As always, Nancy Board, at Amherst College, was extremely helpful in bringing the manuscript to electronic life. I am especially grateful to Niko Pfund and New York University Press for having the confidence to bring this book to life at its two hundredth anniversary. Finally, my collaborator, co-researcher, and reader for this entire project was my wife, Karin Beckett. This new edition would not exist without Karin's archival research, her passion for locating and understanding Bingham in the early history of American education, and her many conversations with me about this book's significance in Frederick Douglass's life.

DAVID W. BLIGHT
Amherst, Massachusetts,
June, 1997

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE PECULIAR DIALOGUE BETWEEN CALEB BINGHAM AND FREDERICK DOUGLASS

"I well remember, when I was a boy, how ardently I longed for the opportunity of reading, but had no access to a library." —CALEB BINGHAM, 1803

"Every opportunity I got I used to read this book." —FREDERICK DOUGLASS, 1845

On a day in 1830 in an alley near Durgin and Bailey's shipyard, in the Fells Point district of Baltimore, a 12-year-old slave boy named Frederick Bailey listened as a group of white boys recited passages from a reader assigned to them in school. The black boy was very much part of the group; he often pulled out his lone book, Noah Webster's speller, and looked up or asked his playmates about words they used. The young slave had brought along bread to trade for the conversation and knowledge he obtained from these encounters; poor white boys living near the docks did not eat as well as the family at the house of Frederick's master. Frederick probably listened as one of the white boys declaimed:

You'd scarce expect one of my age,
To speak in public, on the stage;
And if I chance to fall below
Demosthenes or Cicero,
Don't view me with a critic's eye,
But pass my imperfections by.
Large streams from little fountains flow;
Tall oaks from little acorns grow:
And though I now am small and young,
Of judgment weak, and feeble tongue;
Yet all great learned men like me,
Once learned to read their A, B, C.

Frederick may have even heard passages that included irresistible words like "freedom," "liberty," "tyranny," or the "rights of man."

That day in Baltimore Frederick took fifty cents he had earned polishing boots, went to Knight's bookstore on Thames Street, and bought a copy of the popular schoolbook, Caleb Bingham's *The*

Columbian Orator.[1] Now young Frederick was armed with the same reader his playmates were using; he too could listen to the music of words, recite passages, perform to imaginary audiences, and invent his own uses of the words. Most important, the young slave, who had bitterly reminded his playmates about his status as a "slave for life," could begin to understand the world beyond his thralldom. Destiny is an old-fashioned word; but *words* were the destiny, and would be the hope, the nourishment, and eventually the legacy of this young slave who would become Frederick Douglass, the greatest African-American leader and orator of the nineteenth century.

Many influences shaped the mind of the young Douglass. He was very fortunate to live on two separate and extended occasions in the urban environment of Baltimore, affording him opportunities he never could have experienced on the plantations of Maryland's eastern shore. For a time in Baltimore, his mistress, Sophia Auld, helped him learn his ABCs. She read the Bible to him; the first passages he remembered hearing were from the book of Job, where he encountered the story of a man who had to live with unbearable burdens, but who also eloquently complained of his fate. He copied words from the copybooks of his white owner's son, Tommy Auld, and competed with the other white boys in the alleys to show off the letters he had learned. In the kitchen loft where he slept, Frederick also copied from the Bible, from a Methodist hymnal, and, undoubtedly, from his first purchase, *The Columbian Orator.*

Equally important to these rudiments of learning was the religious conversion Frederick experienced when he was also about 12 years old. Deeply in need of father figures and spiritual hope, and "religiously seeking knowledge," as he recalled it, the slave boy turned to a religious black man, a freeman named Charles Lawson, who worked as a drayman for a rope maker and lived on Happy Alley in Fells Point. Frederick spent countless hours with Lawson in the drayman's shack reading the bible aloud, singing hymns, and praying together. "I could teach him *the letter,* but he could teach me *the spirit,*" Douglass remembered. Throughout his life Douglass would teach his teachers and learn from them at the same time. From old Lawson he gained a sense of confidence, reinforcement for his quest for knowledge, and above all at that tender moment in his development, a belief in a benevolent and protective

God, the faith that his "life was under the guidance of a wisdom higher than my own."[2]

Probably nothing had a more immediate or lasting effect on the young Douglass's intellectual and spiritual growth than his fortuitous discovery of *The Columbian Orator.* "Every opportunity I got, I used to read this book," Douglass remembered. This book he so cherished, the one that he would carry with him as he escaped from slavery in 1838, was first compiled and published in Boston in 1797 by Caleb Bingham, a teacher and pioneer of public schools in Massachusetts, and, along with Noah Webster, the author of the most popular readers in early American educational history. Late in the twentieth century, as Frederick Douglass's autobiographies have been rediscovered and canonized in American classrooms, more and more readers have become aware of Bingham's classic reader through the tributes Douglass paid the book. Douglass's biographers have also paid careful attention to the influence of *The Columbian Orator* on the development of this great orator. Moreover, we live in a time at the end of the twentieth century when the goals of education and the texts employed have become the subject of intensive political debate. What should young readers study in multicultural America? Where should young readers find inspiration, the cadence, character, and meaning of language?

In this, the two hundredth anniversary year of the publication of *The Columbian Orator,* itself a vehicle in the spread of schooling in the new American nation, it is appropriate to bring back into print the book Douglass referred to as his "rich treasure" and his "noble acquisition."[3] This tribute by a slave who used language to will his own freedom, along with the book's enormous influence on education in its own time, make for a confluence of reasons to republish this wonderful old American book.

Moreover, the republication of *The Columbian Orator* marks a modest, but interesting, intervention in the cultural politics of our own time. In an age when there is good reason to lament the decline of oratory and to fear for the future of the book in the face of the power of visual and electronic media, this elocution manual/reader lends us reassurance from the past. Like lost treasure, some old books can reemerge in the present and matter as much now as they did when they were new commodities in American classrooms. The image of young Frederick Douglass hiding in his loft practicing reading and speaking from his *Columbian Orator* is

far more inspiring than it is quaint. Indeed, those concerned in American society today with how young people garner and practice good habits and virtues in the face of so much popular culture vying for their attention might benefit from a slow examination of Bingham's reader. They might even wish to make the book talk by reading the dialogues and speeches out loud, as a family no doubt did in the pre-visual, pre-electronic age of the early nineteenth century. As Douglass did, they will find both music and political meaning in the language.

Caleb Bingham was born in 1757 in Salisbury, a village in northwest Connecticut. He grew up in a frontier settlement in close proximity to Indians, an experience that seems to have given him a lifelong sympathy with their plight. A local minister helped prepare young Bingham for college and in 1779, during the American Revolution, he entered Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. Bingham delivered the valedictory address upon his graduation in 1782, and for approximately two years served as master of Dartmouth's free school for Indians. In 1784, Bingham moved to Boston, probably stopping for a period of some months to serve as interim principal of Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts.[4]

In Boston, Bingham began his remarkable teaching career by opening the first private school for girls, in the city that would eventually pioneer the public school movement. While operating this school for girls, Bingham published his first book, *The Young Lady's Accidence: Or, A Short and Easy Introduction to English Grammar* . . . (1785). Bingham's grammar, the second published by an American, was used for both genders, and eventually sold in excess of 100,000 copies, outdistancing Noah Webster's original American grammar of 1784.[5]

Bingham's acclaim as a pedagogue swept him into the effort to reform the Boston public schools in 1789. He helped to found new "reading schools"; earlier schools had been largely devoted to penmanship and some arithmetic, and the teachers were often uneducated and incompetent at broader literary skills. Bingham brought reading, spelling, grammar, and geography into the curriculum; and though the sexes were segregated, the instruction was equalized.

Although by all accounts a modest and self-effacing man,

Bingham nevertheless rose on one public occasion and vehemently demanded prompt and reasonable salaries for teachers in the new Boston school system. After challenging the Boston selectmen on the teachers' unpaid salaries, Bingham was called to Faneuil Hall to deliver an "apology." According to an associate and early biographer, Bingham stood tall and, "in a voice no one failed to hear," described the plight of ill-paid teachers: "I have a family and need the money. I have done my part of the engagement faithfully, and have no apology to make to those who have failed to do theirs." His passion and argument apparently convinced the town to exercise greater vigilance in paying its teachers.[6]

In the 1790s, Bingham began to compile and publish the textbooks and readers that would give him a place of lasting significance in the history of early American education. In 1792 he published a speller entitled *The Child's Companion: Being a Concise Spelling Book . . .*, which went through some 11 editions and remained in use as late as the 1830s. Bingham's most popular book, *The American Preceptor: Being a Selection of Lessons for Reading and Speaking,* followed in 1794. A reader intended to teach moral virtues and containing 100 selections of prose and poetry, many with titles such as "On the Duty of Schoolboys" and "Sublimity of Scriptures," *The American Preceptor* sold an estimated 640,000 copies and, in an updated edition with a new title, was still in use in 1875. The moral purposes of such readers, as well as Bingham's own nationalism, are explicit in his preface to *The American Preceptor.* There he announced his "preference" for "productions of American genius," and pledged that "this book contains neither a word nor a sentiment which would raise a blush on the cheek of modesty."[7]

In 1795, after producing his own geography textbook, modeled on Jedidiah Morse's famous *Geography* (1784), Bingham resigned as a teacher in the Boston schools, opened a bookstore on Cornhill Street in Boston, and devoted himself to producing schoolbooks. In Boston in 1797, he published the first of approximately 23 editions of *The Columbian Orator.* By the first two decades of the nineteenth century, in vast stretches of rural America, including the South, Bingham's readers joined the Bible and an occasional almanac as the only books in many homesteads. A final edition of *The Columbian Orator* was printed in Philadelphia in 1860 by J. B. Lippincott, and its total sales are estimated at nearly 200,000.

Through its many editions and printings in at least 10 cities and states from Vermont to Maryland, *The Columbian Orator* became one of the primers through which thousands of American youth improved their reading and practiced syntax and speaking.[8]

With hardly any formal schooling, the 21-year-old Abraham Lincoln studied with relish the classical and Enlightenment era oratory in *The Columbian Orator* during his first winter (1831-32) in New Salem on the Illinois prairie. That an urban slave youth living in Frederick Douglass's circumstances in Baltimore, only a year earlier, would discover this book through his white companions (who were, after all, in school) is, therefore, not altogether surprising. That Douglass would embrace and use the language in this book to the ends of his own freedom, first imaginatively and then literally, had, however, everything to do with the circumstances of slavery. To a slave who could achieve literacy, a world of possibilities opened up; language itself, as the slave narratives have demonstrated, could become the mode of liberation, first as a source of hope, later as a strategy of escape and a form of power. However unwittingly, Bingham helped Douglass begin to understand the prospect and the meaning of his own freedom. Given Bingham's politics and world view, that is as he would have wished, for *The Columbian Orator* is much more than a collection of stiff Christian moralisms for America's youth. It was the creation of a school reformer of decidedly antislavery sympathies, a man determined to democratize education and instill in America's youth the immediate heritage of the American Revolution the habits and structures of republicanism.[9]

For 21 years, Bingham's bookstore in Boston was a gathering place for teachers and a headquarters of the early school reform movement. Against the current in Massachusetts, Bingham joined the Jeffersonian Republican party. He ran for office in the state legislature several times under that party's banner, but due to the Federalists' dominance in New England, he never won an election. In 1810, Bingham was appointed by Governor Elbridge Gerry as director of state prisons in Massachusetts, a position he held for several years. Bingham further became active in creating public libraries in Boston and other communities. In 1803, he donated 150 books to his home town of Salisbury, Connecticut, to establish a library for youth; the municipal appropriation to found a public

library in that town in 1810 is believed to be the first of its kind in American history.

Bingham continued to publish schoolbooks. Two were the result of his fluency in French: an English translation of Jean Lacroze's historical textbook, under the title *A Historical Grammar; or, A Chronological Abridgement of Universal History* (1802); and a translation of Chateaubriand's story *Atala,* under the title *Atala; or, The Love and Constancy of Two Savages in the Desert* (1802). In 1803, he collaborated with one of his daughters, without giving credit, on *Juvenile Letters; Being a Correspondence Between Children, From Eight to Fifteen Years of Age,* a textbook on English composition. In 1814, Bingham published his last known book, *The Hunters; or the Sufferings of Hugh and Francis in the Wilderness.* Written by Bingham himself, this story (based on an actual incident) of the valor of two boys, one white and one Indian, surviving for two winter months in the New England wilderness is a morality tale of interracial interdependence and an argument for Indian assimilation rather than removal or liquidation.[10]

Until his death in April 1817 (ten months before Douglass's birth), Bingham remained a remarkable mixture of at least three elements. He held to a devout Congregationalist faith and Puritan sensibility (believing in human depravity and the sovereignty of God, and dressing in old eighteenth century style, with cocked hat and silver-buckled shoes). He was a staunch Jeffersonian in a state where few existed (he never put any money in a bank, and seems to have embodied Jefferson's egalitarian faith in the capacities of common folk). Finally, Bingham saw the early American republic as a new political beginning for humankind, and his more than one million schoolbooks sold across the land were designed to produce republican citizens.

The Columbian Orator was an elocution manual as well as a reader for school children in the new republic. In Bingham's introductory essay, "General Directions for Speaking," he drew upon the ancients to demonstrate a variety of techniques that make for effective oratory. The primary aim, said Bingham, was to create "action" between speaker and audience. "The perfection of art consists in its nearest resemblance to nature," wrote Bingham. Eloquence, as in musical harmony, achieved power, therefore, when the orator

could train his voice to "follow nature." Cadence, pace, variety of tone in the voice, and especially gestures of the arms, hands, shoulders, and head were all elements of speech-making about which Bingham provided specific instructions. He also stressed "diligence and application," reminding his young readers that the great Demosthenes was originally endowed with speech impediments and a weak voice. That the greatest of the Greek orators had to work at it incessantly provided not only a nice moral lesson, but evidence that orators were not born of nature; they only managed to harness elements of nature's power and beauty. Bingham even scrutinized the eyes and facial expressions for their role in effective oratory. In a social world that operated by duplicity, evasion, and masking, we can only speculate on how a young slave like Douglass might have reacted to Bingham's assertion that "it is the countenance that chiefly represents both the passions and dispositions of the mind. By this we express love, hatred, joy, sorrow, modesty and confidence: by this we supplicate, threaten, soothe, invite, forbid, consent, or refuse . . . "[11]

When Douglass was 17 years old and living back on the eastern shore of Maryland, he conducted a clandestine sabbath school among a band of slave teenagers like himself. As he recited and practiced passages from scripture and *The Columbian Orator* with his secret circle of would-be orators, Douglass surely had taken Bingham's advice to gather, as the ancients had, "some of their friends and acquaintance . . . and declaim before them in private." Young Frederick and his band of sabbath school brothers had learned much about how emotions and ideas were transmitted in one's countenance, as well as in the cadence of one's voice, by listening to black preachers; Bingham provided them the material with which to practice. One can imagine Frederick under a secluded large oak, practicing the movements of his shoulders, hands and eyes, and reciting a passage from *The Columbian Orator* to his charges.[12]

Bingham organized the 84 entries in *The Columbian Orator* in a random manner, without regard to chronology or topic. Such a disregard for system was actually a pedagogical theory of the time designed to hold student interest. The selections include prose, verse, plays, and especially political speeches by famous orators from antiquity and the Age of Enlightenment. Cato, Cicero, Socrates, John Milton, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin,

William Pitt, and Daniel O'Connell (Bingham mistakenly identifies him as O'Connor) all appear at least once and some several times. Only a few selections have oratory itself as their subject. Most pieces deal with the themes of nationalism, individual liberty, religious faith, or the value of education.

The randomness of the collection may jar modern readers, as may the moralistic tone and the explicit religious function of many selections. Writing about education in early Boston, one commentator during the 1880s called *The Columbian Orator* a "forbidding and gloomy compilation," and complained that no less than four selections forced young people to read about "the Day of Judgment" and to walk through a "vale of tears."[13] Such assessments simply missed how Bingham's reader reflected New England's long transition from seventeenth century Calvinism to nineteenth century evangelical, freewill doctrine, from Puritan theocracy to the Revolutionary era's separation of church and state. Bingham's reader, like so much literature in the early national period, demonstrated how religious faith and secular republicanism marched hand in hand in the first decades of the American nation.

Among the most interesting features of the collection are the 11 dialogues, most of them originally written for this volume by David Everett, Bingham's associate in Boston and fellow Dartmouth graduate. Everett also wrote the ditty, "Lines Spoken by a Little Boy," which became a widely-recited poem in American homes. In a brief editor's note Bingham described his compilation of dialogues as "grave and humorous." They were, indeed, both serious and comical; all of them are moral tales full of lessons about human nature, truth-telling, and reversals of fate where underdogs outwit their oppressors. In "Dialogue Between the Ghosts of an English Duelist, a North American Savage, and Mercury," it is the Englishman who reveals himself as the greater "savage," while the Mohawk Indian, respected for his cultural differences, achieves the higher virtue. It is difficult to know how young people would read these dialogues today at the end of the twentieth century, but many of them anticipate modern tensions in education, ethnic pluralism, the nature of power and individual rights. The dialogues on education, especially, reveal early concerns over the democratic, practical "usefulness" of schooling, a debate that still rages at the turn of the twentieth century in America.[14]

By 1800, Americans, reaping the fruits of the Age of Revolution, were being pulled in contradictory directions over the idea of proper speech. The distance between what might be judged "vulgar" and "refined" language was narrowing in a land with ever-increasing numbers of newspapers and printed books, the popularization of politics, and the steady spread of schooling and textbooks. In early America, literacy was democratizing, but it forced a paradox into the open, one visible in Bingham's reader. As historian Kenneth Cmiel has persuasively shown, "a republican discourse had to find the right pitch, refined but not *too* refined, a gentleman's language but not an aristocrat's. Negotiating these boundaries became an issue that nagged well into the nineteenth century." The founding fathers and intellectuals of all kinds called for the development of a national tongue and literature in the early republic. But such an American English, changing daily, had to function as both a badge of education and a means of popular public discussion. A republic was by definition a continuing debate. A static, formal, upper class language could not long survive in America, where language grew as a conflicted melding of pressures from above and below, an emerging mixture of dignified, classical eloquence and the demands of democratic education.[15]

The Columbian Orator is just such a mixture. Many of Bingham's dialogues and poems, and some orations, attack affected, over-refined speech, yet the grand style of Cicero, the gravity of George Washington's addresses, and the formality of parliamentary discourse are hardly banished from the book. Americans feared aristocratic language and power at the same time that they reached back to classical Greek and Roman, as well as to more modern French and English models, for their political and linguistic lives. Bingham's reader was a mirror of that creative tension between past and present.

Frederick Douglass provides a particularly interesting example of a mid-nineteenth century American who, as a fugitive slave and a black abolitionist, would have to achieve a supremely dignified style of expression to gain recognition and respect. At the same time, he became a master of the direct, radical, moral and political language of abolitionism. His speeches from countless platforms by the 1840s and 1850s were hardly polite discourse; they expressed both his own powerful indictment of America's crime of slaveholding and appeals to America's founding creeds. As histo-

rian John Blassingame has demonstrated, Douglass also became a master of mimicry, the speaker as political entertainer who was skilled at subversive theatrics during a golden age of oratory.[16] How much of these skills can be attributed to *The Columbian Orator* is hard to determine. But during this former slave's fragile youth, Bingham's reader certainly gave Douglass confidence, a sense of the heroic, and a host of ideas about human rights, the character of legitimate government, and the question of whether or not slavery might be a permanent condition. Indeed, the paradox at the turn of the nineteenth century between democratic and aristocratic eloquence eventually produced no greater product than Douglass, the slave who rose from below, mastered his masters' language, and spoke to America as no one else ever had about how the country might reinvent itself if it could imagine a way to destroy slavery.

Abolitionism often relied on a deeply religious, forbidding, apocalyptic language. But the antislavery movement eventually reaped the seeds planted by the popular educators of the early republic who, as Bingham says in his introduction to *The Columbian Orator,* sought to assemble the "art of oratory" and to "cultivate its rudiments, and diffuse its spirit among the youth of America." Abolitionism became the nation's most important product of "democratic eloquence."[17] Bingham, the devout Congregationalist, probably feared the passions of the crowd that democratic speech and education served; hence, the moralistic tone of so many lessons in the reader. But he spread schooling and democratized textbooks across the land, and he wanted libraries opened to everyone in the American crowd. He could never have known that through his work he would one day have a peculiar dialogue with an American slave.

In his autobiographies, Douglass mentioned several selections from *The Columbian Orator* that especially influenced him. Among the speeches he said he read "over and over again" were Daniel O'Connor's (he mistakenly identifies him as Sheridan) address in the Irish Parliament on Catholic emancipation, and those in the British Parliament by Lord Chatham, William Pitt, and Charles Fox. Reading these orations, said Douglass, "enabled me to give tongue to many interesting thoughts, which had frequently flashed through my soul, and died away for want of utterance." He discovered a "powerful denunciation of oppression, and a most brilliant

vindication of the rights of man" in O'Connor's speech. The one selection he "perused and reperused," he remembered, was "Dialogue Between a Master and a Slave." The naiveté and simplicity of this philosophical exchange between a slaveowner and his bondsman "profoundly affected" the early teenage slave as he read its improbable conclusion. What Douglass at least discovered here was that slavery was something subject to "argument," even between master and slave; that the slave would convince the master to liberate him might seem unlikely in reality, but this did not tarnish the piece's fundamental point—the slave won the moral debate. The teenage slave needed all the examples he could find of reason winning over power; he was surrounded and imprisoned by the opposite message. The bondsman even gets the last word, warning the slaveholder that, in spite of his moment of "kindness," he is still "surrounded by implacable foes" bent on "revenge." Reading Douglass, one sees how his discovery that slavery was a matter of "debate" and "argument" opened a world of possibilities. Reading for his own immediate purposes, Douglass declared that the speeches and dialogues in *The Columbian Orator* had armed him with the "principles of liberty, and poured floods of light on the nature and character of slavery."[18]

Douglass may also have been captivated by other selections he neglected to mention in the various recreations of his youth. A play, "Slaves in Barbary, A Drama in Two Acts," must have caught his attention, especially when he read aloud in solitude. In an exotic setting, "Hamet," the "Bashaw of Tunis," presides over a motley collection of captives being sold as slaves. They include Turks, an Irishman, a black American slave named Sharp, and an American sea captain, himself a captive, named Kidnap. In a reversal of fortune, both Sharp and Kidnap are sold, but the white sea captain is put under Sharp's "instruction." Sharp's thick slave dialect may or may not have attracted the young Douglass, but he would surely have relished Teague's (the Irish captive) eloquent speech in which he declares: "if men were made to be slaves and masters, why was not one man born with a whip in his hand and gold spoon in his mouth; and another with a chain on his arm, or a fetter to his heel . . . ?" And he could not have missed the ending where Hamet frees a noble captive named Francisco, declaring: "Let it be remembered, there is no luxury so exquisite as the exercise of

humanity, and no post so honourable as his, who defends THE RIGHTS OF MAN."[19]

In addition, young Frederick is likely to have been drawn to the short piece, "Extract from a Discourse Delivered before the New-York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, April 12, 1797," by Rev. Samuel Miller. Douglass had seen many ships in Baltimore's harbor, but it may have been in *The Columbian Orator* that he first learned that "there are ships fitted out every year in the ports of the United States to transport the inhabitants of Africa from their native shores, and consign them to all the torments of West-Indian oppression."[20] This fierce denunciation of the slave trade and appeal for "savage" Africa's forgiveness of Europeans must have intrigued the curiosity of the teenage slave who was vaguely aware that he was descended from some place called Africa.

In spite of Bingham's argument that oratory—the mastery of language—is the challenge to "make the best use of what nature has bestowed upon us," speech is, as Garry Wills has stated, "unnatural" and "artificial."[21] Words are inventions of the human imagination, their eloquent and persuasive manipulation a human artifice. The orator, with his sometimes transcendent words, is not born; he learns and practices his craft. He can only imitate nature; he is not nature itself, not Lincoln at the "Gettysburg Address," not Douglass in his "What to the Negro is the Fourth of July," and not Martin Luther King in the "I Have a Dream" speech. However prophetic and inspired, the greatest of orations are likely to be the product of long education, revised drafts, borrowed and reinvented words. Hence, we can observe how Douglass, the great and widely admired orator, was the product both of his considerable gifts and of a peculiar kind of what Bingham might have called "schooling."

Douglass was often described as having an oratorical style "peculiarly his own," one that was "easy, graceful, natural." His physical presence, as well, was said to combine "the dignity and grace of a courtier, and the bearing of a king." As an abolitionist orator and editor in the antebellum and Civil War eras, Douglass came to see and wield language as his only real source of power. He was quite self-conscious of what the orator had to represent. In an age of romantic individualism and moral heroism, the words had to reflect the speaker's own life. In 1854, Douglass described

the best orator as the one "supported by the Almighty," and driven by "a conscious personal consistency." "A good sermon from a bad preacher," said Douglass, and "an exhortation to give liberty to the oppressed by one not inspired by love for the oppressed, are unavailing and worthless." Douglass was obviously thinking of himself, of the ways in which the personal and the political combined in black abolitionism, when he concluded that the best oratory must simply achieve "harmony between the speaker and the thing spoken."[22] The language we invent is the product of our personal experience and of broader education in books, however we come by both.

One should not claim too much for the influence of Caleb Bingham's *The Columbian Orator* on the emergence of an orator and writer as complex as Frederick Douglass. But as we try to imagine the young slave in the alleys of Baltimore, the teenager in the brush arbors of Maryland's eastern shore, or even the young adult fugitive slave awkwardly preparing himself for the speaker's platform in Massachusetts, we can begin to see passages all over this book that survived in direct or subtle ways in some of Douglass's best speeches. In the final lines of a speech he first delivered in 1861, entitled "Life Pictures," Douglass declared: "We live in deeds, not years, in thoughts not breaths, in feelings not fingers on a dial. We should count time in heartthrobs; he most lives who thinks the most, feels the noblest, acts the best." Might not some remnants of one of Bingham's dialogues have been echoing in Douglass's inner ear as he wrote those lines? In "Dialogue on Physiognomy," the final lines spoken by one character cautioning the other are: "Learn henceforth to estimate men's hands by their deeds, their lips by their words, and their hearts by their lives."[23]

One of Douglass's most oft-quoted passages is his statement about power and activism from a speech in 1857. He called for faith in the ultimate triumph of emancipation regardless of the endless obstacles. "If there is no struggle there is no progress," said Douglass. "Those who profess to favor freedom but deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. . . . This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will." Douglass's understanding of this timeless dictum, and of power

itself, at least from written sources, may have begun with his reading of Pitt's speeches, such as the one in 1770, where the statesman proclaims: "Power without right is the most odious and detestable object that can be offered to the human imagination; it is not only pernicious to those who are subject to it, but tends to its own destruction."[24] A young, thoughtful slave knew quite well, and may have later been haunted by, the truth in Pitt's description of power.

Douglass and Bingham, through the myriad voices in the old teacher's compilation, had an important, if unknowing, dialogue. As we read Douglass at the turn of the twenty-first century, and continue to learn so much from him about the meaning of slavery and freedom, we may better know one of the reasons why some old books, his and Bingham's, are worth renewed interest—for what they meant in their own time, and for how their ideas endure.

NOTES

[1] Caleb Bingham, *The Columbian Orator: Containing a Variety of Original and Selected Pieces; Together with Rules; Calculated to Improve Youth and Others in the Ornamental and Useful Art of Eloquence,* (1797; rpr. Boston: Manning & Loring, 1800), 57–58. Subsequent references are to this third Boston edition.

[2] Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom,* (1855; rpr. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), William L. Andrews, ed., 105–06.

[3] Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself,* (1845; rpr. Boston: Bedford Books, 1993), David W. Blight, ed., 61. On Douglass's use and remembrance of *The Columbian Orator,* see John W. Blassingame, ed., *The Frederick Douglass Papers: Speeches, Debates, and Interviews,* series one, vol. 1, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), xxii-xxiii; Waldo E. Martin, Jr., *The Mind of Frederick Douglass,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 8–9, 274; Dickson J. Preston, *The Young Frederick Douglass: The Maryland Years,* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 96, 98–100, 152, 161; William S. McFeely, *Fredrick Douglass,* (New York: Norton, 1991), 34–36; and David W. Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War: Keeping*

Faith in Jubilee, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 90–91.

[4] William B. Fowle, "Memoir of Caleb Bingham," *The American Journal of Education* 5, (1858), 325-26; Paul Eugen Camp, "Caleb Bingham," *Dictionary of Literary Biography* 42, (1985), 88.

[5] Caleb Bingham, *The Young Lady's Accidence: or, A Short and Easy Introduction to English Grammar; Designed Principally for the Use of Young Learners, More Especially Those of the Fair Sex, Though Proper for Either,* (Boston: Greenleaf & Freeman, 1785); Noah Webster, *A Grammatical Institute of the English Language; Comprising An Easy, Concise, and Systematic Method of Education, designed for the Use of English Schools in America,* (Hartford: Hudson & Goodwin, 1787).

[6] Fowle, "Memoir," 328–29, 331.

[7] Camp, "Caleb Bingham," 89. Preface quote from *The American Preceptor* in Clifton Johnson, *Old-Time Schools and School Books,* (New York: Macmillan, 1904), 276. Sales statistics on Bingham's books are in Lillian O. Rosenfield, "Caleb Bingham, 1757–1817," unpublished paper written at the Library Science School, Simmons College, January, 1954, 18, copy in American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.

[8] On sales, see Rosenfield, "Caleb Bingham," 18.

[9] On Lincoln, see Stephen B. Oates, *With Malice Toward None: The Life of Abraham Lincoln,* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 22; and Kenneth Cmiel, *Democratic Eloquence: The Fight Over Popular Speech in Nineteenth Century America,* (New York: William Morrow, 1990), 59. Testimony to the antislavery character of *The Columbian Orator* appeared in 1856, at the height of the sectional crisis, when the southern journal, *De Bow's Review,* included the book on a list of abolitionist books found in southern schools. See *DeBow's Review* 10, January, 1856, 69; and Philip S. Foner, *Frederick Douglass,* (New York: International Publishers, 1964), 423, note 10.

[10] Fowle, "Memoir," 341–46; Camp, "Caleb Bingham," 89–90.

[11] Bingham, *Columbian Orator,* 7–8, 12–19.

[12] Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom,* 305–06.

[13] Justin Winsor, ed., *The Memorial History of Boston, Including Suffolk County, Massachusetts, 1630–1880,* (Boston: J. R.

Osgood, 1880-81), 644. On the range of topics covered in *The Columbian Orator,* see Curtis B. Wilken, *"The Columbian Orator* and Frederick Douglass's Development as a Citizen-Orator," M. A. Thesis, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota, 1994, 6–10.

[14] On Everett, see Fowle, "Memoir," 340; Bingham, *Columbian Orator,* 50–54, 72–73, 189–94.

[15] Cmiel, *Democratic Eloquence,* 39, 23–49. Cmiel gives considerable attention to *The Columbian Orator,* especially Bingham's resistance to affected speech (45–46, 48).

[16] On Douglass's oratorical style, and particularly his use of satire, mimicry, humor, and ridicule, see Introduction, Blassingame, *Frederick Douglass Papers* 1, xxxi–xxxv; Bingham, *Columbian Orator,* preface.

[17] "Democratic eloquence" is the expansive but very useful term used in the title of Cmiel, *Democratic Eloquence.*

[18] Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom,* 99–100; Bingham, *Columbian Orator,* 242.

[19] Bingham, *Columbian Orator,* 114, On the potential for "Slaves of Barbary" in Douglass's imagination, see McFeely, Frederick Douglass, 35–36.

[20] Bingham, *Columbian Orator,* 118.

[21] Garry Wills, *Lincoln At Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America,* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992),148–49.

[22] *National Antislavery Standard,* December 10, 1864; *In Memoriam: Frederick Douglass,* (Philadelphia, 1897), 250; and Frederick Douglass' Paper, January 6, 1854. The three quotations are in Blassingame, *Frederick Douglass Papers* 1, xxix–xxx, xxiv.

[23] "Life Pictures," speech delivered at the Parker Fraternity Course, Boston, winter, 1861, in Frederick Douglass Papers (Library of Congress), reel 14, 28; Bingham, *Columbian Orator,* 81.

[24] "West India Emancipation," speech delivered at Canandaigua, New York, August 4, 1857, in Philip S. Foner, ed., *Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass* 2, (New York: International Publishers, 1950), 437; Bingham, *Columbian Orator,* 168.

IDENTIFICATION OF AUTHORS

Not all the authors of Bingham's selections can be identified. Thirty-six of the forty-five authors included in the volume are identified below.

Addison, Joseph (1672–1719), English essayist, poet, man of letters, creator of the literary paper, *The Spectator,* and author of the drama *"Cato"* (1713).

Adet, Pierre-Auguste (1763–1834), French physician and diplomat, signator of the Jay Treaty in 1794, ambassador to the United States, 1796–97.

Ames, Fisher (1758–1808), American, Massachusetts politician, staunch Federalist, noted orator, and proponent of the nationalist and economic philosophies of John Adams and Alexander Hamilton.

Barlow, Joel (1754–1812), American statesman, diplomat, romantic poet, and liberal political thinker during Revolutionary and early national eras.

Barre, Isaac (1726–1802), English soldier and politician from Dublin, Ireland, fought with Wolfe at the battle of Quebec, served in British Parliament, 1761–1774.

Blair, Hugh (1718–1800), English divine, professor of rhetoric in Edinburgh, author of some the earliest modern English writing about grammar and composition, especially the oft-reprinted *Lectures on Rhetoric.*

Buonaparte, Napoleon (1769–1821), general and emperor of France.

Burney, Charles (1726–1814), possibly English musician and author, creator of music schools in England.

Carnot, Lazare Nicolas Marguerite (1753–1823), French general, leader of revolutionary armies, 1792–93, devoted republican, elected one of the five Directors of French revolutionary regime, 1795.

Cassius, Gaius, Roman general and one of the murderers of Julius Caesar.

Cato, Marcus Porcius (234–149 B. B.), Roman statesman, and one of the first major prose writers in Latin.

Cicero, Marcus Tillius (106–43 B. C.), politician and greatest of Roman orators.

Cumberland, Richard (1631–1718), English bishop of Peterborough, a social liberal, advocate of "universal benevolence," and an important writer on ethics.

Davies, Francis (1605–1675), English bishop of Llandaff, noted for his liberality, fasting, and work with the poor.

Dwight, Timothy (7152–1817), American, Congregational minister, president of Yale College, 1795–1817, author of many books on theology, education, and rhetoric.

Erskine, Sir James St. Clair (1762–1837), English general and member or Parliament, helped lead Tory opposition to William Pitt.

Everett, David, a Boston teacher, associate of Caleb Bingham's, and author of most of the original dialogues and one poem in *The Columbian Orator.*

Fauchet, Francois-Claude (1744–1793), politician and a leader in the French Revolution, assassinated in 1793.

Fox, Charles James (1749–1806), English statesman, member of Parliament, and orator, leader of liberal opposition to Crown throughout much of his career.

Franklin, Benjamin (1706–1790), American printer, statesman, Ambassador to France, scientist and philosopher.

Galgachus, a Caledonian chieftain who led the tribes of North Britain against the invading Romans in A. D. 85, defeated at the battle of Mons Graupius.

Garrick, David (1717–1779), English actor and playwright, famous for his support of and performances at the Drury Lane Theatre in London.

Hervey, James (1714–1758), an English devotional writer, whose mystical works were widely popular.

Lathrop, John (1772–1820), American lawyer and poet from Boston.

Littleton, William Henry (1724–1808), English, Baron of Frankley, lawyer and author, wrote a history of Jamaica.

Mansfield, Sir James (1733–1821), member of British Parliament in 1779–1784, lord chief justice of the court of common pleas in 1790s.

Maxcy, Jonathan (1768–1820), American, minister, educator, president of Rhode Island College, Union College, and the University of South Carolina.

Milton, John (1608–1674), English poet, staunch proponent of the republican, parliamentary cause during the English Civil War, author of *Paradise Lost.*

O'Connell, Daniel (1775–1847), Irish statesman, leader of Irish Catholic movement for independence from Great Britain, known as "the Liberator" in Irish history. Bingham mistakenly identifies O'Connell as O'Connor.

Perkins, William (1558–1602), a popular English writer of theology.

Phillips, William (1750–1827), probably the Boston merchant and philanthropist, supporter of American Revolution, and Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts.

Pitt, William (1759–1806), English statesman, acclaimed orator, member of Parliament, opposition leader and reformer, and important figure in British Constitutional thought during the Age of Revolution.

Rowe, Nicholas (1674–1718), English poet laureate and dramatist. His most important play was "Tamerlane" (1702).

Sheridan, Richard Brinsley (1751–1816), English statesman and dramatist, manager of the Drury Lane Theater in London, and a supporter of Charles Fox, the liberal opposition in Parliament, and of the spirit of the French Revolution.

Socrates (470–399 B. C.), the great Athenian philosopher, who avoided politics, but lived the life of a public teacher.

Washington, George (1732–1799), American commander-in-chief during the Revolution, president of the Federal Congress that adopted the United States Constitution (1787), and first president of the United States, 1789–1797.

Young, Thomas (1587–1655), probably the master of Jesus College, Cambridge, close associate of John Milton, and a religious writer.

THE COLUMBIAN ORATOR

PREFACE

NOTWITHSTANDING the multiplicity of School Books now in use, it has been often suggested, that a Selection, calculated particularly for Dialogue and Declamation, would be of extensive utility in our seminaries.

The art of Oratory needs no encomium. To cultivate its rudiments, and diffuse its spirit among the Youth of America, is the design of this Book.

Of the many pieces which this volume contains, three only are to be found in any publication of the kind. A large proportion is entirely original. To those, who have assisted him in this part, the author returns his warmest acknowledgments.

The Columbian Orator is designed for a Second Part to *The American Preceptor;* for the reason, no pieces are inserted from that book.

As no advantage could arise from a methodical arrangement, the Author has preferred variety to system. In his choice of materials, it has been his object to select such as should inspire the pupil with the ardour of eloquence, end the love of virtue. He has spared no pains to render the Work, in every aspect, worthy of the generous patronage, which a liberal public have bestowed on his former publications.

INTRODUCTION

General Instructions for Speaking— Extracted from Various Authors

OF PRONUNCIATION IN GENERAL

The best judges among the ancients have represented Pronunciation, which they likewise called Action, as the principal part of an orator's province; from whence he is chiefly to expect success in the art of persuasion. When Cicero, in the person of Crassus, has largely and elegantly discoursed upon all the other parts of oratory, coming at last to speak of this, he says: "All the former have their effect as they are pronounced. It is the action alone which governs in speaking; without which the best orator is of no value: and is often defeated by one, in other respects, much his inferior." And he lets us know, that Demosthenes was of the same opinion; who, when he was asked what was the principal thing in oratory, replied, Action; and, being asked again a second and a third time, what was next considerable, he still made the same answer.

And, indeed, if he had not judged this highly necessary for an orator, he would scarcely have taken so much pains in correcting those natural defects, under which he laboured at first, in order to acquire it. For he had both a weak voice, and likewise an impediment in his speech, so that he could not pronounce distinctly some particular letters. The former of which defects he conquered, partly by speaking as loud as he could upon the shore, when the sea roared and was boisterous; and partly by pronouncing long periods as he walked up hill; both of which methods contributed to strengthen his voice. And he found means to render his pronunciation more clear and articulate, by the help of some little stones put under his tongue. Nor was he less careful in endeavouring to gain the habit of a becoming and decent gesture; for which purpose he

used to pronounce his discourses alone, before a large glass. And because he had an ill custom of drawing up his shoulders when he spoke, to amend that, he used to place them under a sword, which hung over him with the point downward.

Such pains did this prince of the Grecian orators take to remove those difficulties, which would have been sufficient to discourage an inferior and less aspiring genius. And to how great a perfection he arrived in his action, under all these disadvantages, by his indefatigable diligence and application, is evident from the confession of his great adversary and rival in oratory, Eschines; who, when he could not bear the disgrace of being worsted by Demosthenes, in the cause of Ctesiphon, retired to Rhodes. And, being desired by the inhabitants, he recited to them his own oration upon that occasion. The next day they requested of him to let them hear that of Demosthenes; which, having pronounced in a most graceful manner, to the admiration of all who were present, "how much more (says he) would you have wondered, if you had heard him speak it himself!"

We might add to these authorities the judgment of Quintilian; who says, that "It is not of so much moment what our compositions are, as how they are pronounced; since it is the manner of the delivery, by which the audience is moved."

The truth of this sentiment of the ancients, concerning the power and efficacy of pronunciation, might be proved from many instances; but one or two may here suffice. Hortensius, a cotemporary with Cicero, and while living, next to him in reputation as an orator, was highly applauded for his action. But his orations after his death, as Quintilian tells us, did not appear answerable to his character; from whence he justly concludes, there must have been something pleasing when he spoke, by which he gained his character, which was lost in reading them.

But perhaps there is scarcely a more considerable instance of this, than in Cicero himself. After the death of Pompey, when Cesar had gotten the government into his own hands, many of his acquaintance interceded with him in behalf of their relations and friends, who had been of the contrary party in the late wars. Among others, Cicero solicited for his friend Ligarius; which, Tubero understanding, who owed Ligarius grudge, opposed; and undertook to represent him to Cesar as unworthy of his mercy. Cesar himself was prejudiced against Ligarius; and therefore when

the cause was to come before him, he said, "We may venture to hear Cicero display his eloquence; for I know the person he pleads for to be an ill man, and my enemy."

But, however, in the course of his oration, Cicero so wrought upon his passions, that by the frequent alteration in his countenance, the emotions of his mind were very conspicuous. And when he came to touch upon the battle of Pharsalia, which had given Cesar the empire of the world, he represented it in such a moving and lively manner, that Cesar could no longer contain himself, but was thrown into such a fit of shivering, that he dropped the papers which he held in his hand. This was the more remarkable, because Cesar was himself one of the greatest orators of that age; knew all the arts of address, and avenues to the passions; and consequently was better prepared to guard against them.

But neither his skill, nor resolution of mind, was of sufficient force against the power of oratory; but the conqueror of the world became a conquest to the charms of Cicero's eloquence; so that, contrary to his intention, he pardoned Ligarius. Now that oration is still extant, and appears exceedingly well calculated to touch the soft and tender passions and springs of the soul; but we believe it can scarcely be discernible to any, in reading it, how it should have had so surprising an effect; which must therefore have been chiefly owing to the wonderful address of the speaker.

The more natural the pronunciation is, the more moving it will be; since the perfection of art consists in its nearest resemblance to nature. And therefore it is not without good reason, that the ancients make it one qualification of an orator, that he be a good man; because a person of this character will make the cause he espouses his own; and the more sensibly he is touched with it himself, the more natural will be his action; and, of course, the more easily will he affect others. Cicero says, "It is certain that truth (by which he means nature) in everything, excels imitation; but if that were sufficient of itself in action, we should have no occasion for art."

In his opinion therefore (and who was ever a better judge?) art, in this case, as well as in many others, if well managed, will assist and improve nature. But this is not all; for sometimes we find the force of it so great and powerful, that, where it is wholly counterfeit, it will for the time work the same effect as if it were founded in truth. This is well known to those who have been conversant with

the representations of the theatre. In tragedies, though we are sensible that everything we see and hear is counterfeit; yet such is the power of action, that we are oftentimes affected by it in the same manner as if it were all reality.

Anger and resentment, at the appearance of cruelty, concern and solicitude for distressed virtue, rise in our breasts; and tears are extorted from us for oppressed innocence: though at the same time, perhaps, we are ready to laugh at ourselves for being thus decoyed. If art then has so great an influence upon us, when supported by fancy and imagination only, how powerful must be the effect of a just and lively representation of what we know to be true.

How agreeable it is, both to nature and reason, that a warmth of expression and vehemency of motion should rise in proportion to the importance of the subject, and concern of the speaker, will further appear by looking back a little into the more early and simple ages of the world. For the higher we go, the more we shall find of both. The Romans had a very great talent this way, and the Greeks a greater. The eastern nations excelled in it, particularly the Hebrews.

Nothing can equal the strength and vivacity of the figures they employed in their discourse, and the very actions they used, to express their sentiments; such as putting ashes on their heads, and tearing their garments, and covering themselves with sackcloth under any deep distress, and sorrow of mind. And hence, no doubt, arose those surprising effects of eloquence, which we never experience now.

And what is said here with respect to the action of the eastern nations, was in a good measure customary among the Greeks and Romans; if not entirely of the same kind, yet perhaps as vehement and expressive.

They did not think language of itself sufficient to express the height of their passions, unless enforced by uncommon motions and gestures. Thus, when Achilles had driven the Trojans into their city with the greatest precipitation and terror, and only Hector ventured to tarry without the gates to engage him, Homer represents both king Priam and his queen under the highest consternation for the danger of their son. And therefore, in order to prevail with him to come into the city and not fight with Achilles, they not only entreat him from the walls, in the most tender and

moving language imaginable; but they tear off their gray locks with their hands, and adjure him to comply with their request.

The poet knew very well, that no words of themselves could represent those agonies of mind he endeavoured to convey, unless heightened by the idea of such actions as were expressive of the deepest sorrow. In one of Cicero's orations, he does not stick to argue in this manner with his adversary.—"Would you talk thus (says he) if you were serious? Would you, who are wont to display your eloquence so warmly in the danger of others, act so coldly in your own? Where is that concern, that ardor which used to extort pity even from children? Here is no emotion either of mind or body; neither the forehead struck, nor the thigh; nor so much as the stamp of the foot. Therefore, you have been so far from inflaming our minds, that you have scarcely kept us awake."

The ancients had persons whose proper business it was to teach them how to regulate and manage their voice; and others, who instructed them in the whole art of pronunciation, both as to their voice and gestures. These latter were generally taken from the theatre, being some eminent experienced actors. But, though they made use of actors to instruct their youth in forming their speech and gestures; yet, the action of an orator was very different from that of the theatre.

Cicero very plainly represents this distinction, in the words of Crassus: when speaking of orators, he says, "The motions of the body ought to be suited to the expressions, not in a theatrical way, mimicking the words by particular gesticulations; but in a manner expressive of the general sense; with a sedate and manly inflection of the sides; not taken from the stage and actors, but from the exercise of arms and palestra." And Quintilian says to the same purpose, "Every gesture and motion of the comedians is not to be imitated, nor to the same degree. They thought the action of the theatre too light and extravagant for the imitation of an orator; and therefore, though they employed actors to inform young persons in the first rudiments, yet they were afterwards sent to schools, designed on purpose to teach them a decent and graceful management of their bodies.

Being thus far prepared, they were afterwards sent to the schools of the rhetoricians. And here, as their business was to cultivate their style, and gain the whole art of eloquence, so particu-

larly to acquire a just and accurate pronunciation by those exercises, in which for that end they were constantly employed. Nor, after all this pains and industry, did they yet think themselves sufficiently qualified to take upon them the character of orators. But it was their constant custom to get some of their friends and acquaintance, who were proper judges of such performances, and declaim before them in private.

The business of these persons was to make observations both on their language and pronunciation. And they were allowed the greatest freedom to take notice of any thing thought to be amiss, either as to inaccuracy of method, impropriety of style, or indecency of their voice or actions. This gave them an opportunity to correct any such defects at first, before they became habitual. What effects might not justly be expected from such an institution? Persons trained up in this manner with all those advantages, joined to a good natural genius, could not fail of making very complete orators. Though even after they came to appear in public, they did not lay aside the custom of declaiming.

The influence of sounds either to raise or allay our passions, is evident from music. And certainly the harmony of a fine discourse, well and gracefully pronounced, is as capable of moving us, if not in a way so violent and ecstatic, yet not less powerful, and more agreeable to our rational faculties. As persons are differently affected when they speak, so they naturally alter the tone of their voice, though they do not attend to it. It rises, sinks, and has various inflections given it, according to the present state and disposition of the mind. When the mind is calm and sedate, the voice is moderate and even; when the former is dejected with sorrow, the latter is languid; and when that is inflamed by passion, this is elevated.

It is the orator's business, therefore, to follow nature, and to endeavour that the tone of his voice appear natural and unaffected. And for this end, he must take care to suit it to the nature of the subject; but still so as to be always grave and decent. Some persons continue a discourse in such a low and drawling manner, that they can scarcely be heard by their audience. Others again, hurry on in so loud and boisterous a manner, as if they imagined their hearers were deaf. But all the music and harmony of voice lie between these extremes.

Perhaps nothing is of more importance to a speaker, than a proper

attention to accent, emphasis and cadence. Every word in our language, of more than one syllable, has at least one accented syllable. This syllable ought to be rightly known, and the word should be pronounced by the speaker in the same manner as he would pronounce it in ordinary conversation.By emphasis, we distinguish those words in a sentence which we esteem the most important, by laying a greater stress of voice upon them than we do upon others. And it is surprising to observe how the sense of a phrase may be altered by varying the emphasis. The following example will serve as an illustration.

This short question, "Will you ride to town to-day?" may be understood in four different ways, and, consequently, may receive four different answers, according to the placing of the emphasis.

If it be pronounced thus; Will *you* ride to town to-day? the answer may properly be, No; I shall send my son. If thus; Will you *ride* to town to-day? Answer, No; I intend to walk. Will you ride to *town* to-day? No; I shall ride into the country. Will you ride to town *to-day?* No; but I shall to-morrow.

This shows how necessary it is that a speaker should know ho to place his emphasis. And the only rule for this is, that he study to attain a just conception of the force and spirit of the sentiments which he delivers.

There is as great a difference between one who lays his emphasis properly, and one who pays no regard to it, or places it wrong, as there is between one who plays on an instrument with a masterly hand, and the most bungling performer.

Cadence, is the reverse of emphasis. It is a depression or lowering of the voice; and commonly falls upon the last syllable in a sentence. It is varied, however, according to the sense. When a question is asked, it seldom falls upon the last word; and many sentences require no cadence at all.

Every person who speaks in public, should endeavour, if he can, to fill the place where he speaks. But still he ought to be careful not to exceed the natural key of his voice. If he does, it will neither be soft nor agreeable; but either harsh and rough, or too shrill and squeaking. Besides, he will not be able to give every syllable its full and distinct sound; which will render what he says, obscure, and difficult to be understood. He should therefore take care to keep his voice within reach, so as to have it under management, that he

may raise or sink it, or give it any inflection he thinks proper; which it will not be in his power to do, if he put a force upon it, and strain it, beyond its natural tone.

The like caution is to be used against the contrary extreme, that the voice be not suffered to sink too low. This will give the speaker pain in raising it again to its proper pitch, and be no less offensive to the hearers. The medium between these two is a moderate and even voice. But this is not the same in all; that which is moderate in one would be high in another. Every person therefore must regulate it by the natural key of his own voice. A calm and sedate voice is generally best; as a moderate sound is most pleasing to the ear, if it be clear and distinct. But this equality of the voice must also be accompanied with a variety: otherwise there can be not harmony; since all harmony consists in variety.

Nothing is less pleasing than a discourse pronounced throughout in one continued tone of voice, without any alteration. The equality, therefore, we are here speaking of, admits a variety of inflections and changes within the same pitch. And when that is altered, the gradations, whether higher or lower, should be so gentle and regular as to preserve a due proportion of the parts, and harmony of the whole; which cannot be done, when the voice is suddenly varied with too great a distinction. And therefore it should move from one key to another, so as rather to glide like a gentle stream, than pour down like a rapid torrent, as an ingenious writer has well expressed it.

But an affected variety, ill-placed, is as disagreeable to a judicious audience, as the want of it, where the subject requires it. We may find some persons, in pronouncing a grave and plain discourse, affect as may different tones, and variations of their voice, as if they were acting a comedy; which is doubtless a very great impropriety. But the orator's province is not barely to apply to the mind, but likewise to the passions; which require a great variety of the voice, high or low, vehement or languid, according to the nature of the passions he designs to affect. So that for an orator always to use the same tone or degree of his voice, and expect to answer all his views by it, would be much the same thing as if a physician should propose to cure all distempers with one medicine. And as a perfect monotony is always unpleasant, so it can never be necessary in any discourse.

That some sentences ought to be pronounced faster than others

is very manifest. Gay and sprightly ideas should not only be expressed louder, but also quicker than such as are melancholy. And when we press an opponent, the voice should be brisk. But to hurry on in a precipitate manner without pausing, till stopped for want of breath, is certainly a very great fault. This destroys not only the necessary distinction between sentence and sentence, but likewise between the several words of the same sentence; by which mean, all the grace of speaking is lost, and in a great measure, the advantage of hearing.

Young persons are very liable to this, especially at first setting out. And it often arises from diffidence. They are jealous of their performances, and the success they may have in speaking, which gives them a pain till it is over; and this puts them into a hurry of mind, which incapacitates them from governing their voice, and keeping it under that due regulation which perhaps they proposed to themselves before they began to speak.

And as a precipitant and hasty pronunciation is culpable, so likewise on the other hand, it is a fault to speak too slow. This seems to argue a heaviness in the speaker. And as he appears cool himself, he can never expect to warm his hearers and excite their affections. When not only every word, but every syllable is drawn out to too great a length, the ideas do not come fast enough to keep up the attention without much uneasiness. Now, to avoid either of the two extremes last mentioned, the voice ought to be sedate and distinct. And in order to render it distinct, it is necessary, not only that each word and syllable should have its just and full sound, both as to time and accent, but likewise that every sentence, and part of a sentence, should be separated by its proper pause.

This is more easy to be done in reading, from the assistance of the points; but it is no less to be attended to in speaking, if we would pronounce in a distinct and graceful manner. For every one should speak in the same manner as he ought to read, if he could arrive at that exactness. Now the common rule given in pausing is, that we stop our voice at a comma till we can tell one, at a semicolon two, at a colon three, and at a full period four. And as these points are either accommodated to the several parts of the same sentence, as the first three; or different sentences, as the last; this occasions the different length of the pause, by which either the dependance of what precedes upon that which follows, or its distinction from it, is represented.

It is not in our power to give ourselves what qualities of the voice we please; but only to make the best use we can of what nature has bestowed upon us. However, several defects of the voice are capable of being helped by care and proper means; as on the other hand, the best voice may be greatly hurt by ill management and indiscretion. Temperance is a great preservative of the voice, and all excess is highly prejudicial to it. The voice must necessarily suffer, if the organs of speech have not their proper tone. A strong voice is very serviceable to an orator, because, if he want some other advantages, he is, however, capable to make himself heard. And if at anytime he is forced to strain it, he is in less danger of its failing him before he has finished his discourse.

But he who has a weak voice, should be very careful not to strain it, especially at first. He ought to begin slow, and rise gradually to such a pitch as the key of his voice will well carry him, without being obliged to sink again afterwards. Frequent inflections of the voice will likewise be some assistance to him. But especially he should take care to speak deliberately, and ease his voice, by allowing due time for respiration at all the proper pauses. It is an extreme, much less inconvenient for such a person rather to speak too slow, than too fast. But this defect of a weak voice is sometimes capable of being helped by the use of proper methods; as is evident from the instance of Demosthenes, before mentioned.

Some persons, either from want of due care in their education at first, or from inadvertency and negligence afterwards, run into a very irregular and confused manner of expressing their words; either by misplacing the accent, confounding the sound of the letters, or huddling the syllables one upon another, so as to render what they say, often unintelligible. Indeed, sometimes this arises from a natural defect, as in the case of Demosthenes; who found a method to rectify that, as well as the weakness of his voice. But in faults of this kind, which proceed from habit, doubtless the most likely way to mend them is to speak deliberately.

OF GESTURE

By this is meant, a suitable conformity of the motions of the countenance, and several parts of the body, in speaking, to the subject matter of the discourse. It is not agreed among the learned, whether voice or gesture has the greatest influence upon us. But as

the latter affects us by the eye, as the former does by the ear, gesture in the nature of it seems to have this advantage, that it conveys the impression more speedily to the mind; for the sight is the quickest of all our senses. Nor is its influence less upon our passions; nay, in some instances, it appears to act more powerfully. A cast of the eye will express desire in as moving a manner as the softest language; and a different motion of it, resentment.

To wring the hands, tear the hair, or strike the breast, are all strong indications of sorrow. And, he who claps his hand to his sword, throws us into a greater panic than he who only threatens to kill us. Nor is it in some respects less various and extensive than language. Cicero tells us, he often diverted himself by trying this with Roscius the comedian; who could express a sentence as many ways by his gestures, as he himself could by words. And some dramas, called pantomimes, have been carried on wholly by mutes, who have performed every part by gestures only, without words, in a way very intelligible.

But with respect to oratory, gesture may very properly be called the second part of pronunciation; in which, as the voice should be suited to the impressions it receives from the mind, so the several motions of the body ought to be accommodated to the various tones and inflections of the voice. When the voice is even and moderate, little gesture is required; and nothing is more unnatural than violent motion, in discoursing upon ordinary and familiar subjects. The motions of the body should rise therefore in proportion to the vehemence and energy of the expression, as the natural and genuine effect of it.

But as gesture is very different and various as to the manner of it, which depends upon the decent conduct of several parts of the body, it will not be amiss to consider more particularly the proper management of each of those parts. Now all gesture is either natural, or from imitation. By natural gesture, we mean such actions and motions of the body, as naturally accompany our words, as these do the impressions of our mind. And these either respect the whole body, or some particular part of it.

The speaker should not long continue standing in the same position, like a statue, but be constantly changing, though the motion be very moderate. There ought to be no appearance of stiffness, but a certain ease and pliableness, naturally suiting itself to every expression; by which means, when a greater degree of motion is

necessary, it will appear less sudden and vehement: for as the raising, sinking, and various inflections of the voice must be gradual, so likewise should the motions of the body. It is only on some particular occasions that a hasty vehemence and impetuosity is proper in either case.

As to the several parts of the body, the head is the most considerable. To lift it up too high has the air of arrogance and pride; to stretch it out too far, or throw it back, looks clownish and unmannerly; to hang it downwards on the breast, shows an unmanly bashfulness and want of spirit: and to suffer it to lean on either shoulder, argues both sloth and indolence. Wherefore, in calm and sedate discourse, it ought to keep its natural state, and upright posture. However, it should not be long without motion, nor yet always moving; but gently turn sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, as occasion requires, that the voice may be heard by all who are present; and then turn again to its natural position. It should always accompany the other actions of the body, and turn on the same side with them; except when aversion to any thing is expressed; which is done by stretching out the right hand, and turning the head to the left.

But it is the countenance, that chiefly represents both the passions and dispositions of the mind. By this we express love, hatred, joy, sorrow, modesty, and confidence: by this we supplicate, threaten, soothe, invite, forbid, consent, or refuse; and all this without speaking. Nay, from hence we form a judgment not only of a person's present temper, but of his capacity and natural disposition. And therefore it is common to say, such a one has a "promising countenance," or that he "promises little by his countenance." It is true, this is no certain rule of judging; nor is it in the power of any one to alter the natural make of his countenance.

But the several parts of the face bear their part, and contribute to the proper and decent motion of the whole. In a calm and sedate discourse, all the features retain their natural state and situation. In sorrow, the forehead and eyebrows lour, and the cheeks hang down. But in expressions of joy and cheerfulness, the forehead and eyebrows are expanded, the cheeks contracted, and corners of the mouth drawn upwards. Anger and resentment, contract the forehead, draw the brows together, and thrust out the lips. And terror elevates both the brows and forehead. As these are the natural

signs of such passions, the orator should endeavour to conform to them.

But as the eyes are most active and significant, it is the advice of Cicero, that the greatest care should be taken in their management. And he gives this reason for it:—"Because other parts of the countenance have but few motions; whereas all the passions of the soul are expressed in the eyes, by so many different actions; which cannot possibly be represented by any gestures of the body, if the eyes are kept in a fixed posture." Common experience does in a great measure confirm the truth of this observation. We readily guess at a person's intention, or how he is affected to us by his eyes. And any sudden change or emotion of the mind is presently followed by an alteration in the look.

In speaking, therefore, upon pleasant and delightful subjects, the eyes are brisk and cheerful; as, on the contrary, they sink and are languid, in delivering any thing melancholy and sorrowful. This is so agreeable to nature, that before a person speaks, we are prepared with the expectation of one or the other from his different aspect. So likewise, in anger, a certain vehemence and intenseness appears in the eyes, which for want of proper words to express it by, we endeavour to represent by metaphors taken from fire, the most violent and rapid element; and say, in such cases, the eyes sparkle, burn, or are inflamed. In expressions of hatred or detestation, it is natural to alter the looks, either by turning the eyes aside, or downward.

Indeed, the eyes are sometimes turned downwards upon other occasions, as to express modesty. And if at any time a particular object be addressed, whatever it be, the eyes should be turned that way. And therefore Philostratus very deservedly ridicules a certain rhetorician as guilty of solecism in gesture, who upon saying, O Jupiter! turned his eyes downwards; and when he said, O Earth! looked upward. A staring look has the appearance of giddiness and want of thought: and to contract the eyes, gives suspicion of craft and design. A fixed look may be occasioned from intenseness of thought; but at the same time shows a disregard to the audience; and a too quick and wandering motion of the eyes denotes levity and wantonness. A gentle and moderate motion of the eyes is, therefore, in common, most suitable; always directed to some of the audience and gradually turning from side to side with an air

of respect and modesty and looking them decently in the face, as in common discourse. Such a behaviour will of course draw an attention.

As to the other parts of the body distinct from the head, the shoulders ought not to be elevated; for this is not only in itself indecent; but it likewise contracts the neck, and hinders the proper motion of the head. Nor, on the other hand, should they be drawn down and depressed; because this occasions a stiffness both to the neck and the whole body. Their natural posture therefore, is best, as being most easy and graceful. To shrug the shoulders has an abject and servile air; and frequently to heave them upwards and downwards is a very disagreeable sight. A continued motion of the arms any way, is by all means to be avoided. Their action should generally be very moderate, and follow that of the hands; unless in very pathetic expressions, where it may be proper to give them a more lively spring.

Now, all bodily motion is either upward or downward, to the right or left, forward or backward, or else circular. The hands are employed by the orator in all these, except the last. And as they ought to correspond with our expressions, so they ought to begin and end with them. In admiration, and addresses to Heaven, they must be elevated, but never raised above the eyes: and in speaking of things below us, they are directed downwards. Side motion should generally begin from the left, and terminate gently on the right. In demonstrating, addressing, and on several other occasions, they are moved forward; and in threatening, sometimes thrown back. But when the orator speaks of himself, his right hand should be gently laid on his breast.

The left hand should seldom move alone, but accommodate itself to the motions of the right. In motions of the left side, the right hand should not be carried beyond the left shoulder. In promises, and expressions of compliment, the motion of the hands should be gentle and slow; but in exhortations and applause, more swift. The hands should generally be open; but in expressions of compunction and anger, they may be closed. All finical and trifling actions of the fingers ought to be avoided; nor should they be stretched out and expanded, in a stiff and rigid posture, but kept easy and pliable.

The gestures we have hitherto discoursed of, are such as naturally accompany our expressions. And we believe those we have

mentioned, if duly attended to, will be found sufficient to answer all the purposes of our modern pronunciation. The other sort of gestures above mentioned are such as arise from imitation; as where the orator describes some action, or personates another speaking. But here great care is to be taken not to overact his part by running into any ludicrous or theatrical mimicry. It is sufficient for him to represent things of this nature, as may best convey the image of them in a lively manner to the minds of the hearers; without any such changes either of his actions or voice, as are not suitable to his own character.

SOME PARTICULAR RULES FOR THE VOICE AND GESTURE

We shall begin with the parts of a discourse, and treat of them in their natural order. And here the view and design of the speaker in each of them will easily help us to see the proper manner of pronunciation. Let us suppose then a person presenting himself before an assembly, in order to make a discourse to them. It cannot be decent immediately to begin to speak so soon as ever he makes his appearance. He will first settle himself, compose his countenance, and take a respectful view of his audience. This prepares them for silence and attention.

Persons commonly form some opinion of a speaker from their first view of him, which prejudices them either in his favour or otherwise, as to what he says afterwards. A grave and sedate aspect inclines them to think him serious; that he had considered his subject, and may have something to offer worth their attention. A haughty and forbidding air occasions distaste, as it looks like disrespect. A wandering, giddy countenance argues levity. A dejected drooping appearance is apt to raise contempt, unless where the subject is melancholy. And a cheerful aspect is a proper prelude to a pleasant and agreeable argument.

To speak low at first has the appearance of modesty, and is best for the voice; which by rising gradually, will with more ease be carried to any pitch that may be afterwards necessary, without straining it. However, some variation of the voice is always proper, to give it harmony. Nay, and sometimes it is not improper for an orator to set out with a considerable degree of warmth. We have some few instances of this in Cicero; as in his oration for Roscius Amerinus,

where the heinousness of the charge could not but excite his indignation against the accusers. And so likewise, in that against Piso, and the two first against Catiline, which being in the same manner, from the resentment he had conceived against their persons and conduct.

In narration, the voice ought to be raised to somewhat a higher pitch. Matters of fact should be related in a very plain and distinct manner, with a proper stress and emphasis laid upon each circumstance, accompanied with a suitable address and motions of the body to engage the attention of the hearers. For there is a certain grace in telling a story, by which those who are masters of it, seldom fail to recommend themselves in conversation.

The proposition, or subject of the discourse should be delivered in a very clear and audible voice. For if this be not plainly heard, all that follows in proof of it, cannot be well understood. And for the same reason, if it be divided into several parts or branches, they should each be expressed very deliberately and distinctly. But as the design here is only information, there can be little room for gesture.

The confirmation admits of great variety both of the voice and gesture. In reasoning, the voice is quick and pungent, and should be enforced with suitable actions. And as descriptions likewise have often a place here, in painting out the images of things, the orator should so endeavour to adapt both his voice, and the motions of his body, particularly the turn of his eyes, and action of his hands, as may best help the imagination of his hearers. Where he introduces another person speaking, or addresses an absent person, it should be with some degree of imitation. And in dialogue, the voice should alter with the parts. When he diverts from his subject by any digression, his voice should be lively and cheerful; since that is rather designed for entertainment than instruction.

In confutation, the arguments of the adverse party ought first to be repeated in a plain and distinct manner, that the speaker may not seem to conceal, or avoid the force of them. Unless they appear trifling and unworthy of a serious answer; and then a facetious manner, both of expression and gesture, may be the most proper way to confute them. For, to attempt to answer, in a grave and serious manner, what is in itself empty and ludicrous, is apt to create a suspicion of its having more in it than it really has.

But caution should be used not to represent any argument of weight in a ludicrous way, lest by so doing the speaker should more expose himself than his adversary. In the conclusion, both the voice and gesture should be brisk and sprightly; which may seem to arise from a sense of the speaker's opinion of the goodness of his cause, and that he has offered nothing but what is agreeable to reason and truth; as likewise from his assurance that the audience agree with him in the same sentiment. If an enumeration of the principal arguments of the discourse be convenient, as it sometimes is, where they are pretty numerous, or the discourse is long, they ought to be expressed in the most clear and forcible manner. And if there be an address to the passions, both the voice and gesture must be suited to the nature of them.

We proceed now to the consideration of particular expressions. And what we shall offer here, will be in relation to the single words, sentences, and the passions. Even in those sentences which are expressed in the most even and sedate manner, there is often one or more words which require an emphasis, and distinction of the voice. Pronouns are often of this kind; as, *this* is the man. And such are many words that denote the circumstances and qualities of things. Such as heighten or magnify the idea of the thing to which they are joined, elevate the voice; as, *noble, admirable, majestic, greatly,* and the like. On the contrary, those which lessen the idea, or debase it, depress the voice, or at least protract the tone: of which sort are the words, *little, mean, poorly, contemptibly,* with many others.

Some tropes, likewise, as metaphors and verbal figures, which consist in the repetition of a single word, should have a particular emphasis. As when Virgil says of the river Araxes, "It *disdained* a bridge." And Nisus of himself, in the same poet, "I, *I* am the man;" where the repeated word is loudest. This distinction of words, and giving them their proper emphasis, does not only render the expression more clear and intelligible, but very much contributes to the variation of the voice and the preventing of a monotony.

In sentences, regard should be had to their length, and the number of their parts, in order to distinguish them by proper pauses. The frame and structure of the period ought likewise to be considered, that the voice may be so managed as to give it the most musical accent. Unless there be some special reason for the contrary, it

should end louder than it begins. And this difference of tone between the end of the former sentence and the beginning of the next, not only helps to distinguish the sense, but adds to the harmony of the voice.

In an antithesis, or a sentence consisting of opposite parts, one contrary must be louder than the other. As, "He is gone, but by a *gainful* remove, from *painful labour* to *quiet rest;* from *unquiet desire* to *happy contentment;* from *sorrow* to *joy;* from *transitory* time to *immortality.*" In climax or gradation, the voice should generally rise with it. Thus, "There is no enjoyment of property without government; no government without a magistrate; no magistrate without obedience; no obedience where every one acts as he pleases." And so in other gradations of a different form; as, "Since concord was lost, friendship was lost, fidelity was lost, liberty was lost, all was lost."

That the passions have each of them both a different voice and action, is evident from hence, that we know in what manner a person is affected, by the tone of his voice, though we do not understand the sense of what he says, or many times so much as see him; and we can often make the same judgment from his countenance and gestures. Love and esteem are expressed in a smooth and cheerful tone; but anger and resentment, with a rough, harsh, and interrupted voice; for when the spirits are ruffled, the organs are moved unequally. Joy raises and dilates the voice, as sorrow sinks and contracts it. Cicero takes notice of a passage in an oration of Gracchus, wherein he bewails the death of his brother, who was killed by Scipio, which in his time was thought very moving: "Unhappy man (says he) whither shall I betake myself? Where shall I go? Into the capitol? that flows with my brothers blood. Shall I go home, and behold my unhappy mother all in tears and despair?"

Though Gracchus had a very ill design in that speech, and his view was to excite the populace against their governors, yet (as Cicero tells us) when he came to this passage, he expressed himself in such moving accents and gestures, that he extorted tears even from his enemies. Fear occasions a tremor and hesitation of the voice, and assurance gives it strength and firmness. Admiration elevates the voice, and should be expressed with pomp and magnificence. "O surprising clemency, worthy of the highest praise and greatest encomiums, and fit to be perpetuated in lasting monu-

ments!" This is Cicero's compliment to Cesar, when he thought it for his purpose. And oftentimes this passion is accompanied with an elevation both of the eyes and hands. On the contrary, contempt sinks and protracts the voice. All exclamations should be violent. When we address inanimate things, the voice should be higher than when animated beings; and appeals to Heaven must be made in a loftier tone than those to men. These few hints for expressing the principal passions may, if duly attended to, suffice to direct our practice in others. Though, after all, it is impossible to gain a just and decent pronunciation of voice and gesture, merely from rules, without practice and an imitation of the best examples: which shows the wisdom of the ancients, in training up their youth to it, by the assistance of masters, to form both their speech and actions. But here, as has been before observed, great caution should be used in directing our choice of an example. An affected imitation of others, in pronunciation or gesture, especially of stage-players, whose pretensions to literature are seldom considerable, and who are generally too fond of *singularity,* ought to be carefully avoided. For nothing can appear more disgusting to persons of discernment than affectation.

PRACTICAL PIECES FOR SPEAKING

Consisting of Orations, Addresses, Exhortations from the Pulpit, Pleadings at the Bar, Sublime Descriptions, Debates, Declamations, Grave and Humorous Dialogues, Poetry, &c, Variously Interspersed

EXTRACT FROM AN ORATION ON ELOQUENCE, PRONOUNCED AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY, ON COMMENCEMENT DAY, 1794 *(Perkins)*

THE EXCELLENCE, UTILITY, AND IMPORTANCE OF ELOQUENCE; its origin, progress, and present state; and its superior claim to the particular attention of Columbia's free-born sons, will exercise for a few moments the patience of this learned, polite, and respected assembly.

Speech and reason are the characteristics, the glory, and happiness of man. These are the pillars which support the fabric of eloquence; the foundation, upon which is erected the most magnificent edifice, that genius could design, or art construct. To cultivate eloquence, then, is to improve the noblest faculties of our nature, the richest talents with which we are entrusted. A more convincing proof of the dignity and importance of our subject, need not, cannot be advanced.

The benevolent design, and the beneficial effects of eloquence, evince its great superiority over every other art, which ever exercised the ingenuity of man. To instruct, to persuade, to please; these are its objects. To scatter the clouds of ignorance and error from the atmosphere of reason; to remove the film of prejudice from the mental eye; and thus to irradiate the benighted mind with the cheering beams of truth, is at once the business and the glory of eloquence.

To promote the innocent and refined pleasures of the fancy and intellect; to strip the monster vice of all his borrowed charms, and expose to view his native deformity; to display the resistless attractions of virtue; and, in one word, to rouse to action all the latent energies of man, in the proper and ardent pursuit of the great end of his existence, is the orator's pleasing, benevolent, sublime employment.

Nor let it be objected, that eloquence sometimes impedes the course of justice, and screens the guilty from the punishment due to their crimes. Is there any thing which is not obnoxious to abuse? Even the benign religion of the Prince of Peace has been made the unwilling instrument of the greatest calamities ever experienced by man. The greater the benefits which naturally result from any thing, the more pernicious are its effects, when diverted from its proper course. This objection to eloquence, is therefore its highest eulogium.

The orator does not succeed, as some would insinuate, by dazzling the eye of reason with the illusive glare of his rhetorical art, nor, by silencing her still small voice in the thunder of his declamation; for to her impartial tribunal he refers the truth and propriety of whatever he asserts or proposes. After fairly convincing the understanding, he may, without the imputation of disingenuousness, proceed to address the fancy and the passions. In this way he will more effectually transfuse into his hearers, his own sentiments, and make every spring in the human machine co-operate in the production of the desired effect.

The astonishing powers of eloquence are well known, at least to those who are conversant in ancient history. Like a resistless torrent, it bears down every obstacle, and turns even the current of opposing ignorance and prejudice into the desired channel of activity and zealous compliance. It is indisputably the most potent art within the compass of human acquirement. An Alexander and a Cesar could conquer a world: but to overcome the passions, to subdue the wills, and to command at pleasure the inclinations of men, can be effected only by the all-powerful charms of enrapturing eloquence.

Though it be more than probable, that oratory was known and cultivated in some degrees in those eastern nations, where science first began to dawn upon the world; yet it was not till Greece became civilized and formed into distinct governments, that it made its appearance in its native, peerless majesty. Here we may fix the era of eloquence; here was its morn; here its meridian too; for here it shone with splendor never since surpassed.

It is a common and a just remark, that eloquence can flourish only in the soil of liberty, Athens was a republic, where the affairs of state were transacted in the assembly of the whole people. This afforded to eloquence a field too fertile to remain long uncultivated by the ingenious Athenians. Orators soon made their appearance, who did honour to language, to Greece, to humanity.

But though the names of many have been transmitted to us, whose genius and eloquence demand our veneration and applause; yet, like stars when the sun appears, they are lost in the superior blaze of the incomparable Demosthenes. His story is well known; and his example affords the greatest encouragement to students in eloquence; as it proves, that, by art, almost in defiance of nature, a

man may attain such excellence in oratory as shall stamp his name with the seal of immortality. Demosthenes, and the liberty of Greece, together expired; and from this period we hear very little more of Grecian eloquence.

Let us now direct our attention to that other garden of eloquence, the Roman commonwealth. Here, as in Greece, a free government opened the list to such as wished to dispute the palm in oratory. Numbers advance and contend manfully for the prize. But their glory is soon to fade; for Cicero appears; Cicero, another name for eloquence itself. It is needless to enlarge on his character as an orator. Suffice it to say, that if we ransack the histories of the world to find a rival for Demosthenes, Cicero alone can be found capable of supporting a claim to that distinguished honour.

And when did Greece or Rome present a fairer field for eloquence than that which now invites the culture of the enlightened citizens of Columbia? We live in a republic, the orator's natal soil; we enjoy as much liberty, as is consistent with the nature of man; we possess, as a nation, all the advantages which climate, soil, and situation can bestow; and nothing but real merit is here required as a qualification for the most dignified offices of state. Never had eloquence more ample scope.

And shall we rest satisfied with only admiring, or at most with following at an awful distance the most illustrious orators of Greece and Rome? Shall every other useful and ornamental art speed swiftly towards perfection, while oratory, that most sublime of all arts; that art, which could render one man more dreadful to a tyrant, than hostile fleets and armies, is almost forgotten? It must not, cannot be. That refinement of taste, that laudable ambition to excel in every thing which does honour to humanity, which distinguishes the Americans, and their free and popular government, are so many springs, which, though not instantaneous in their operations, cannot fail in time to raise Columbian eloquence "above all Greek, above all Roman fame."

With pleasure we descry the dawning of that bright day of eloquence, which we have anticipated. The grand council of our nation has already evinced, that in this respect, as in all others, our republic acknowledges no existing superior. And we trust, that, as our sacred teachers make it their constant endeavour to imitate the great learning, the exemplary virtue, the exalted piety, and the

extensive usefulness of the great apostle of the Gentiles, they will not fail to resemble him in that commanding, that heavenly eloquence which made an avaricious, an unbelieving Felix tremble.

May Columbia always afford more than one Demosthenes, to support the sacred cause of freedom, and to thunder terror in the ears of every transatlantic Philip. May more than Ciceronian eloquence be ever ready to plead for injured innocence, and suffering virtue. Warned by the fate of her predecessors, may she escape those quicksands of vice, which have ever proved the bane of empire. May her glory and her felicity increase with each resolving year, till the last trump shall announce the catastrophe of nature, and time shall immerge in the ocean of eternity.

EXTRACT FROM PRESIDENT WASHINGTON'S FIRST SPEECH IN CONGRESS, 1789

FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE SENATE, AND OF THE HOUSE OF Representatives, among the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties, than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the 14th day of the present month. On the one hand, I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years. A retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health, to the gradual waste committed on it by time.

On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust, to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens, a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies.

In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every