

TOASTS

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Toasts by William Pittenger

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WILLIAM PITTENGER

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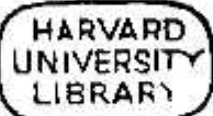
AUTHOR OF "THE DEBATER'S TREASURY"

HOW TO RESPOND TO TOASTS OR
MAKE OTHER PUBLIC ADDRESSES
AND ALWAYS SAY THE RIGHT
THING IN THE RIGHT WAY

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INTRODUCTION

THE author of this manual has at various intervals prepared several treatises relating to the art of speech. Their wide circulation is an indication of the demand for works upon this subject. They were intended to embrace the principles which govern speech-making in the forum, in the pulpit, or at the bar. While these do not differ essentially from the principles applicable to occasions where the subject is only entertainment, yet there are certain well-defined differences which it is the purpose of this little volume to point out. We hope thus to render the same service to a person who is called upon to offer or respond to a toast in a convivial assembly, as the author's previous volumes rendered to those preparing to speak upon subjects of a serious and practical nature.

That help is needed, and may be afforded, no one will deny. A novice called upon to participate in the exercises of a public banquet, an anniversary, or

other entertainment, unless he has an experienced friend to give him a few hints or advice, is apt to be dismayed. He does not even know how to make a start in the work of preparation, and his sense of inability and fear of blundering go far to confuse and paralyze whatever native faculty he may have. A book like this comes to him at such a time as reinforcements to a sorely pressed army in the very crisis of a battle. As he reads, some ideas which seem practical, flash upon him. He learns what others before him have done. If he is to offer a toast, he examines the list furnished in this volume, finding one perhaps that pleases him, or one is suggested which is better adapted to his purpose than any in the book, and he wonders at the stupidity of the author in omitting it. Soon he becomes quite interested in this suggested toast, and compares it with those in the list to find out wherein it differs. Thus gradually and unconsciously he has prepared himself for the part he is to perform.

Or if invited to respond to a toast, he passes through a similar experience. He may find the outline of a speech on that very topic; he either uses it as it is printed or makes an effort to improve it by abridgment or enlargement. Next he looks through the treasury of anecdotes, selects one, or calls to mind one he has read elsewhere which he considers

better. He then studies both of them in their bearings on the subject upon which he is to speak, and longs for the hour to arrive, when he will surprise and delight his friends by his performance. He rises to speak conscious that he knows a great deal, not only about the toast assigned to him, but about other toasts as well—feels that he has something to say which, at least, will fill in the time, and save him from confusion and discredit. He even hopes to win applause by means of the stories and happy turns with which his speech is interspersed.

He has thus satisfactorily taken the first step toward becoming a ready and entertaining after-dinner speaker. The sense of knowing how to do what is expected of him has a wonderfully quieting effect upon his nerves; and thus the study of this book will greatly add to the confidence of a speaker, and the effectiveness of his delivery. Whatever graces of manner he possesses will become available, instead of being subverted by an overmastering fear.

It is not easy to mention all the uses of such a manual. One who has been accustomed to speaking, but fears he is getting into a rut, can turn to this text-book and find something which is *not* so distressingly his own, that his friends expect him to parade it before them on all occasions.