

**PUBLIC SPEAKING
TODAY: A HIGH
SCHOOL MANUAL**

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Public Speaking Today: A High School Manual by Francis Cummins Lockwood & Clarence De Witt Thorpe

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FRANCIS CUMMINS LOCKWOOD & CLARENCE DE WITT THORPE

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TODAY

A HIGH SCHOOL MANUAL

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TO OUR PARENTS
WHOSE CHIEF ELOQUENCE
WAS THE ELOQUENCE
OF KIND THOUGHTS AND LOVING DEEDS
THIS BOOK
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFACE

PUBLIC SPEAKING TODAY is planned as a practical textbook for use in a general year's course in high school public speaking. The authors believe that in public speaking classes there is usually too much talk by the teacher, too much reading about principles of elocution and oratory, too little speaking by the students. They have therefore, above all else, provided an abundance of exercises.

In its special field, this book seeks to show the young student that public speech, if it achieve its true place of honor and usefulness, must be natural, simple, and direct. The authors do not belittle in any measure the noble and thrilling oratory that has come down to us out of the past. Yet, sincere and noble as was the oratory of the past, it is not adapted to our times and ways. The kind of public speaking that men care most for today is plain, strong, earnest talk; like everyday conversation, only more carefully considered, more orderly, more forceful.

The chapter on the spoken drama is included in response to what seems a pressing demand for a simple treatment of the subject that will serve the teacher of dramatics both for reference and as a guide for from six to eight weeks' class work. There could scarcely be a better means for a natural development of the direct conversational manner than practice in the vocal interpretation of the lines of good plays.

The book is intended for use in high schools in the junior or senior year, taking the place of the usual rhetoric or literature, or both. It is not unreasonable to believe that there will be a distinct impetus given to the work in English by thus presenting the subject from a fresh point of view. Composition work there would be a-plenty, but with a new motive—that of addressing a definite audience for a definite purpose. There would also be literature study of the most vital type—that included in the field of living oratory and the spoken drama—which would open new fields of thought and feeling for the pupil.

Public speaking courses of today should train for expression on such occasions as ordinarily confront the average educated man or woman. One of the most sincere advocates of public speaking we know is the dean of the engineering college in one of our state universities. He insists that successful engineers must know how to talk in public if they

are to gain even a hearing for their projects, to say nothing of convincing men with capital to invest that a given plan is worth trying. Real estate firms often employ men of tried ability in speaking to present their propositions to the public. These are but two of many examples that might be cited.

Educators as well as men of affairs recognize the value and importance of training in public speaking. The high schools lay great stress upon this branch of English instruction. The colleges, especially the state universities, stimulate among the high schools oratorical, debating, discussion, and dramatic contests. Yet when the authors began to search for a complete modern textbook on the general subject of public speaking, written for high school students and adapted to their particular needs, they were able to find only a bare beginning in the field.

It is with the hope, then, of meeting a real need that the authors offer this book to the school public. Not more than five per cent of our population graduate from high school. As education goes in America a high school graduate is eminently educated and is stamped as a leader among his fellows. So, if this book shall prove helpful in training this select group of young people to express themselves effectively in matters of public interest whenever occasion demands—in church, club, city council, board of directors, mass meeting, court, and legislature—it shall have justified the hope with which it was undertaken.

The authors shared in the writing of the book as follows. Mr. Lockwood wrote the Introduction and the chapters on How to Get Material for the Speech, How to Build the Speech, How to Win and Hold an Audience, The Informal Address, The Formal Address, The Oration, The After-Dinner Speech, Everyday Conversation, and How to Make the Most of a Public Meeting. Mr. Thorpe wrote the chapters on How to Utter Speech, Debate, The Impromptu Talk, The Spoken Drama, The School Organization, and What to Do and How to Do It. The exercises were written or selected by Mr. Thorpe. The book is, however, in a real sense the product of collaboration: the plan of the book and of each individual chapter was thoroughly discussed by both authors, and the work of each author criticized by the other.

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