

**ORATORY SACRED AND  
SECULAR; OR, THE  
EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKER,  
WITH SKETCHES OF THE MOST  
EMINENT SPEAKERS OF ALL AGES**

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Oratory sacred and secular; or, The extemporaneous speaker, with sketches of the most eminent speakers of all ages by William Pittenger & John A. Bingham

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**WILLIAM PITTENGER & JOHN A. BINGHAM**

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ORATORY  
SACRED AND SECULAR:  
OR, THE  
UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA  
Extemporaneous Speaker,

WITH

SKETCHES OF THE MOST EMINENT SPEAKERS OF ALL AGES.

BY WILLIAM PITTENGER,  
Author of "Darling and Suffering."

INTRODUCTION BY HON. JOHN A. BINGHAM,

AND

APPENDIX

CONTAINING A "CHAIRMAN'S GUIDE" FOR CONDUCTING PUBLIC MEETINGS ACCORDING  
TO THE BEST PARLIAMENTARY MODELS.

New York:  
SAMUEL R. WELLS, PUBLISHER, 389 BROADWAY.  
1868.

## PREFACE.

WHEN we first began to speak in public, we felt the need of a manual that would point out the hindrances likely to be met with, and serve as a guide to self-improvement. Such help would have prevented many difficult and painful experiences, and have rendered our progress in the delightful art of coining thought into words more easy and rapid. In the following pages we give the result of thought and observations in this field, and trust it will benefit those who are now in the position we were then.

We have freely availed ourself of the labor of others, and would especially acknowledge the valuable assistance derived from the writings of Bautain, Stephens and Holyoake. Yet the following work, with whatever merit or demerit it may possess, is original in both thought and arrangement.

We have treated general preparation with more than ordinary fullness, for although often neglected, it is the necessary basis upon which all special preparation rests.

As the numerous varieties of speech differ in comparatively few particulars, we have treated one of the most

common—that of preaching—in detail, with only such brief notices of other forms as will direct the student in applying general principles to the branch of oratory that engages his attention.

We are not vain enough to believe that the modes of culture and preparation pointed out in the following pages are invariably the best, but they are such as we have found useful, and to the thoughtful mind may suggest others still more valuable.

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## INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

REV. WM. PITTINGER:

CADIZ, O., 1924 Nov., 1957.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for calling my attention to your forthcoming work on *Extemporaneous Speaking*. Unwritten speech is, in my judgment, the more efficient method of public speaking, because it is the natural method. The written essay, says an eminent critic of antiquity, "is not a speech, unless you choose to call epistles speeches." A cultivated man, fully possessed of all the facts which relate to the subject of which he would speak, who cannot clearly express himself without first memorising word for word his written preparation, can scarcely be called a public speaker, whatever may be his capacity as a writer or reader. The speaker who clothes his thoughts at the moment of utterance, and in the presence of his hearers, will illustrate by his speech the admirable saying of Seneca: 'Fit words better than fine ones.'

It is not my purpose to enter upon any inquiry touching the gifts, culture and practice necessary to make a powerful and successful speaker. It is conceded that in the art of public speaking, as in all other arts, there is no excellence without great labor. Neither is it the intent of the writer to suggest the possibility of speaking efficiently without the careful culture of voice and manner, of intellect and heart, an exact knowledge of the subject, and a careful arrangement, with or without writing, of all the facts and statements involved in the discussion. Lord Brougham has said that a speech written before delivery is regarded as something almost ridiculous; may we not add, that a speech made without previous reflection or an accurate knowledge of the subject, would be regarded as a mere tinkling cymbal. I intend no depreciation of the elaborate written essay read for the instruction or amusement of an assembly; but claim that the essay, read, or recited from memory, is not speech, nor can it supply the place of natural effective speech. The essay delivered is but the echo of the dead past, the speech is the utterance of the living present. The delivery of the essay is the formal act of memory, the delivery of the unwritten speech the living act of intellect and heart. The difference between the two is known and felt of all men. To all this it may be answered that the ancient speakers, whose fame still survives, carefully elaborated their speeches before delivery. The fact is admitted with the fur-

ther statement, that many of the speeches of the ancient orators never were delivered at all. Five of the seven orations of Cicero against Verres were never spoken, neither was the second Philippic against Mark Antony, nor the reported defence of Milo. We admit that the ancient speakers wrote much and practised much, and we would commend their example, in all, save a formal recital of written preparations. There is nothing in all that has come to us concerning ancient oratory, which by any means proves that to be effective in speech, what is to be said should be first written and memorised; there is much that shows, that to enable one to express his own thoughts clearly and forcibly, reflection, culture and practice are essential.

Lord Brougham, remarking on the habit of writing speeches, says: "That a speech written before delivery is something anomalous, and a speech intended to have been spoken is a kind of by-word for something laughable in itself, as describing an incongruous existence." This distinguished man, in his careful consideration of this subject, says: "We can hardly assign any limits to the effects of great practise in giving a power of extempore composition," and notices that it is recorded of Demosthenes, that when, upon some rare occasions, he trusted to the feeling of the hour, and spoke off-hand, "his eloquence was more spirited and bold, and he seemed sometimes to speak from a supernatural impulse." If this be true of the great Athenian who notoriously would not, if he could avoid it, trust to the inspiration of the moment, and who for want of a prepared speech, we are told by Æschines, failed before Philip,—might it not be inferred that one practised in speaking, would utter his thoughts with more spirit and power when not restrained by a written preparation and fettered by its formal recital?

Did not Fox often, in the Parliament, achieve the highest results of speech without previous written preparation: and is it not a fact never to be questioned, that the wonderful speech of Webster, in reply to Hayne, was unwritten?

In his admirable lecture on Eloquence, Mr. Emerson says: "Eloquence that so astonishes, is only the exaggeration of a talent that is universal. All men are competitors in this art. \* \* A man of this talent finds himself cold in private company, and proves himself a heavy companion; but give him a commanding occasion, and the inspiration of a great multitude, and he surprises us by new and unlooked for powers." \* \*

Indeed, there is in this lecture of Mr. Emerson, in few words,