

The Home Circle.

LABOR.

If there be good in that I wrought,
Thy hand compelled it, Master, Thine;
Where I have failed to meet Thy thought,
I know, through Thee, the blame is mine.

One instant's toil to Thee denied
Stands all eternity's offense;
Of that I did with Thee to guide,
To Thee, through Thee, be excellence.

Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,
Bringst Eden to the craftsman's brain,
Godlike to muse o'er his own trade
And manlike stand with God again.

The depth and dream of my desire,
The bitter paths wherein I stray,
Thou knowest who has made the fire,
Thou knowest who has made the clay.

One stone the more swings to her place
In that dread temple of Thy worth;
It is enough that through Thy grace
I saw naught common on Thy earth.

Take not that vision from my ken,
O, whatsoever may spoil or speed,
Help me to need no aid from men
That I may help such men as need.

—Rudyard Kipling.

THE ORATORS AND ORATORY OF THE STUMP.

The pulpit, the bar and the stump are the three conspicuous arenas of American oratory. To these may be added a fourth, hardly less conspicuous, the legislative assembly; and a fifth, now grown to notable influence, the political convention. Of these, the last three may properly be used to illustrate the American notion of political eloquence. The stump speech is a borrowed institution in everything except its name, though under that somewhat primitive description it has flourished here more luxuriantly than in its native land. Beginning in the form of an appeal of the candidate to the electors in his own behalf, it has broadened, until it includes all forms of political discussion addressed to the public at large in mass-meeting assembled.

Both here and in other English-speaking countries it has drawn to itself a shade of disrepute, arising in part from the disdain with which a certain class of people look upon politics, and in part from the fact that cheap and unscrupulous arts which would not be tolerated in the church, or even in the court-house, have always felt more or less at home in the furious antagonisms of party strife.

The stump orator has not yet entirely recovered from the influence of Thomas Carlyle's fierce satire printed fifty years ago, a satire which was in itself a tribute to the influence of the hustings; since in order to reach the object of his attack he had to impeach the intelligence of the "two finest nations in the world," and give them up in despair as "having gone away after talk and wind." It is easy to see that this clumsy criticism is only a part of his general complaint against the progress of society—the voice of the old regime recording its malediction against the new era.

The stump has suffered in prestige far more, in our own times, on account of a certain want of seriousness in their work exhibited by the orators themselves. This was illustrated at the end of General Harrison's first campaign, when the speakers who had taken part in it gave themselves a dinner in New York, at which they organized the Spellbinders' Association. They gained the title on account of the interesting uniformity of language in which their speeches were habitually reported in the press. Mr. Everts, in his argument in defence of Andrew Johnson, said that no speech could be so poor that the newspapers would not describe it as able and eloquent, these being the lowest terms to which friendly reporters could reduce even a worthless discourse. So that the National Committee, finding every speech that was delivered described in prompt letters to the headquarters, and by invariable reports in the local newspapers, as having held the audience "spellbound" for over two hours, very naturally fell into the way of designating the speakers in words suggested by this phrase. The jest has been perpetuated and has undoubtedly taken away from the stump some of the prestige and dignity with which this form of popular oratory was once clothed.

STUMP SPEAKING IS DEMOCRATIC. But notwithstanding all that the stump has to contend with, it still remains, and must always remain, a potent centre of influence. The satire bred in high intellectual atmospheres, which derides it, is aimed at our form of government,

at the management of their own affairs by the people themselves, at parliaments and all manner of representative assemblies, at that tremendous revolution which is gradually preparing the whole world for the new order of things; at "the count of heads" as much as at "the clack of tongues."

A LATTER DAY EVIL.

Another thing has contributed to the decline of stump speaking in popular respect. There was a time when the honor of addressing the people was regarded as a sufficient reward for the time and labor involved. No one expected any other compensation than the good will of the community, finding expression ultimately in a call to the public service. It is a matter for regret that very little of the campaign speaking of to-day finds its recompense in glory either abstract or concrete, but rather in an agreed allowance in the standard coin of the realm. This is unfortunate, for the inquiry which naturally arises in the minds of the audiences as to the amount of the speaker's *per diem* obviously interferes with the attitude of mind which induces the eager acceptance of truth. The situation is emphasized when an orator, as in the case of one of the most famous of the present time, appears in one campaign for one party, and in the next for the other. Such a thing gives a look of bloodless attorneyism to the whole business, and puts the audience on its guard against the loss of self control which is sometimes brought on by the passion of the speaker.

HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY AND YOU CAN SAY IT.

There is no limit to the demand for speakers, and the supply appears to be limited only by the severe tests required by a more enlightened public taste. There was a time when the lawyer furnished practically all the secular eloquence consumed in the country; but the every-day citizen is beginning to find his voice, since nothing is more natural than that an age which desires to learn should be willing to sit at the feet of any one who knows the practical realities of life. The idea is slowly gaining ground that whoever knows anything with thorough accuracy has little trouble in telling it in a form entirely acceptable. This was illustrated in the recent national campaign, when Senator Hanna, who was sixty years old before he attempted to make a public address, was everywhere accorded a distinction as an orator rarely attained after a lifetime of training.

DEEPENING THE CONVICTIONS OF THE HEARER.

There is nothing in the fact that a speech is printed in the newspapers to lead a wise man to lower the standard of his art in presenting it to an audience. The influence which the press has had on oratory lies in another direction. The enterprise of the modern newspaper tends to exhaust subjects, to saturate the public with knowledge of the things about which the orator is to speak, taking away from him the interest which attaches to novelty and exclusive information. It is easy to see that all this has tended to kill certain kinds of oratory, and to put under a high pressure all who seek to influence the public thought, that they may present common forms of knowledge in such a way as to hold the attention and impress the judgment of those who hear. Indeed some, with strange per-

versity, have claimed that the highest attainment of the orator possible in these days is to deal with the convictions of the audience in such a way as to emphasize the truth already in their minds. Such was the achievement of Mr. Bryan at Chicago. He stated no new facts, the body of his discourse being taken almost verbatim from speeches which he had been delivering in various parts of the country for the space of two years. There was nothing in what he said to convert anybody to the views which he was defending, and in fact he converted nobody to those views. But he did a thing even more remarkable; he converted everybody that held those views to him, in such a way that they have taken a special interest in him ever since. He found an audience already of his way of thinking, though when he took the floor the majority of the convention were in despair because nobody had been able to make an intelligible statement of his opinions in a tone of voice loud enough to be heard. At last this young man got the opportunity which he went there to seek. He had the look of an athlete as he stood up in that tumultuous assembly. His voice was strong and musical and he had learned how to use it. It reached the extreme limit of the amphitheatre, and as he spoke he made every inflection count; so that while he did not add an idea to the sum of knowledge and added but few striking phrases to the familiar vocabulary of the discussion, it gradually dawned upon the convention that they had found in him their appointed leader in the great controversy upon which they were about to enter. Yet his whole art consisted in summarizing the prejudices and convictions of the convention audibly, so that they could be heard and understood. HARD WORK AND YOUR BEST EFFORTS.

There are orators who affect to despise the smell of oil and to count it as a superiority that they speak extemporaneously; but such can get little comfort out of the study of the lives and labors of those who have made a permanent impression on the art; and, too, most of them do not tell the truth, but are trying to have credited to their genius what in reality belongs to their labor, forgetting altogether that there is no genius except hard work.

The stump has been the last field of oratory to submit to the exacting of toil and care and unremitting attention to details. This has been partly the fault of the public, which has allowed itself to be imposed upon by patiently receiving all sorts and conditions of speeches. The schoolhouse and the newspaper have gone far to restore even the remote rural districts to their natural rights in these matters. Charles James Fox once said that however humble his audience he always felt that it was his duty to do his best. That course was a good thing for the audience and undoubtedly a good thing for the orator, for in no art is it ever safe for a man to fall below the best that is in him.—Senator Jonathan P. Dolliver, of Iowa, in Saturday Evening Post.

THE WONDERS OF A MAGICAL NUMBER.

Everybody knows the tricks that can be played with the number 9—that mysterious property known as the "power of nine." But strange things are sometimes discovered with regard to other numbers, even when we get into hundreds and thousands. There is the number 142,857, for instance. At first sight one would not suspect it of anything singular; it is only when we take to multiplying it that we discover its powers. We shall find that if we multiply it by any number, from one up to six, we shall arrive at products expressed by exactly the same figures as the original. Not only so, but, with the exception that a different order of figures leads off each time, the order of figures is the same.

142,857 multiplied by 1 is the same.
142,857 " by 2 is 285,714.
142,857 " by 3 is 428,571.
142,857 " by 4 is 571,428.
142,857 " by 5 is 714,285.
142,857 " by 6 is 857,142.

But with this multiplying by 6 the strangeness stops, though the result of multiplying the number by 7 gives the rather odd figure of 999,999, simply lacking one to make the million. If the process is carried further and the number is multiplied by 8, 9, 10, 11, etc., the result will be almost as startling as in the case of the smaller multipliers.

CHOOSING THE HIGHER.

As any book, however good, may be a bad one to us, if it takes the time which might be spent reading a better one, so any work, any occupation, may be comparatively bad for us,—if we are free to choose,—if we are adapted to something higher. In other words, we should aim to do the highest and noblest things possible and practicable.

No man has a right, for instance, to develop his brute qualities, while his higher nature lies dormant or atrophied. It is a shame for a young man with a vigorous physique, a fine brain, and great possibilities, to choose a career which brings his purely animal qualities into activity and destroys his higher manhood,—for his nobler qualities must inevitably perish for want of exercise. Nature's law—"Use or lose,"—is inexorable.

How many young men of ability, of fine education, and robust health, are literally throwing away their lives in some degrading business, which elevates nobody, but, on the contrary, demoralizes and contaminates everyone who comes in contact with it. Does it pay a young man of godlike powers and infinite capabilities to ostracize himself from society, to forfeit the respect of his fellow-men, for the sake of a few paltry dollars which he has accumulated at the cost of a debauched conscience, and the destruction of his better self? Can any amount of money or any physical pleasure compensate for a career on which society frowns, and which one's better self condemns?—Dr. O. S. Marden, in Success.

A COUNTRY LIBRARY.

R. C. Sackencen of Keystone, Ill., writes as follows in regard to a country library:

"Where the farmer's means are limited, and that is the case with most of us, a plan of co-operation among the book lovers of a community should be adopted. In this way quite a circulating library can be maintained at a very moderate individual expense. One has been in existence in my neighborhood for a number of years. It now contains about 175 volumes; has a membership of twenty-four. The funds have been raised chiefly through basket sociables, lap suppers and the like. A president and librarian are chosen annually. When a sufficient amount of money is on hand a special meeting is called or a committee appointed by the president for the purpose of selecting new books. These we buy in the open market at the lowest possible figure. We are thereby able to affect a considerable saving over the regular prices of dealers and agents. Contributing to the support of a book agent should be considered as one of the small leaks on the farm."

PLEASE EXCUSE HASTE.

An Army officer says that in one engagement there were numbers of young fellows who smelt powder for the first time, and it is not surprising that at times the recruits were a trifle unsteady.

"However," said the old officer, "I only remember one case of actual flight, and when I think of it I can scarcely refrain from laughing."

"In the very thick of a hotly contested engagement one of my men threw down his rifle and bolted."

"Here, you coward," I roared after him, "what are you running for?"

"Without so much as a glance over his shoulder, the fellow replied: 'Because I'm in a desprit hurry, an' I can't fly!'"

EUGENE FIELD'S ARITHMETIC.

The first book which Eugene Field had printed was the "Tribune Primer," published in Denver in 1882. It was composed of short lessons in different lines of study. As there are said to be not more than seven or eight copies of the book now in existence, readers may be glad to see two specimen paragraphs from the lessons in "mental arithmetic":

"If you have Five Cucumbers and eat Three, what will you have left? Two. No; you are wrong. You will have more than that. You will have Colic enough to double you up in a bow Knot for Six Hours. You may go to the foot of the Class."

"If a Horse weighing 1,600 pounds can Haul four tons of Pig Iron, how many seasons will a Front Gate painted Blue carry a young Woman on One Side and a young man on the Other?"

TO TEST BUTTER.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

A recent bulletin of the Department of Agriculture gives two simple tests whereby housekeepers may ascertain whether they are getting pure butter, oleo or renovated butter. One of these tests is by boiling and the other by a method designed by Mr. C. H. Waterhouse.

The first test may be conducted in the kitchen as follows: Take a piece of the sample about the size of a chestnut, put it in an ordinary tablespoon and hold it over a gas or kerosene lamp, turned low, with chimney off. Hasten the melting by stirring with a splinter of wood; then increase the heat and bring it to a brisk boil as possible. After the boiling has begun, stir the contents of the spoon thoroughly, not neglecting the outer edge, two or three times at intervals during the boiling—always shortly before the boiling ceases. Oleomargarine and renovated butter boil noisily, sputtering (more or less) like a mixture of grease and water when boiled, and produce no foam, or but very little. Renovated butter usually produces a very small amount. Genuine butter boils usually with less noise and produces an abundance of foam. The difference in regard to foam is very marked. The Waterhouse test is as follows: Half fill a 100 cc. beaker with sweet milk; heat nearly to a boiling and add from five to ten grains of butter or oleomargarine. Stir with a small wooden rod, about the size of a match, until the fat is melted. The beaker is then placed in cold water and the milk stirred until the temperature falls sufficiently for the fat to congeal. At this point the fat, if oleomargarine, can easily be collected together on one lump by means of the rod, while if butter, it will granulate and cannot be so collected. The bulletin, which gives detailed instructions, can be obtained from members of Congress. MARRIOTT.
Washington, D. C.

VALUE OF ART IN THE HOME.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer.

The excellent article from the pen of Prof. Jerome Dowd, of Trinity College, published in The Progressive Farmer of June 4th under the title "Art in the South," deserves a wide reading. In this materialistic age, the value of art is often discredited. Our farmers too often think that the ground which their wives and daughters use for growing flowers ought to be producing beets or cabbage; and the same spirit pervades many walks of life. This idea is very ably combated by Prof. Dowd himself, who says:

"If art had no moral or religious significance, still it ought to be cultivated because it adds to human happiness and makes life a little more worth living. It is quite common to have people say, 'Well, we have plenty to do with the necessary things of life. Art is not necessary. Let us leave it alone.' Certainly it is not necessary. Swine and gorillas do very well without it; they are satisfied to occupy their days in a scramble for food. Their minds minister only to their stomachs. It is possible for men to live on the same plane, and many of them do."

"But is it all of life to eat, drink or sleep? If so, the teachings of Scripture are falsified, and instead of man being made a 'little lower than the angels,' he is indeed on a level with the brutes. The ability to produce art, and the finding in it one of the joys of life, are the distinguishing marks between man and the lower species. 'Man lives not by bread alone.' Instead of despising art we should glory in it as a sign of superior being. Who can listen to the songs of birds, the sighing of winds, the roar of the breakers; or look at flowers, trees and landscapes and sunsets, or behold the lighted dome of heaven, and not believe that God intended mankind to find a large measure of his happiness in the realms of Art?"

But my purpose in writing this letter is to call attention to the commencement address of Hon. Carroll D. Wright delivered before the graduating class of the A. & M. College, Raleigh, May 29th, which the writer had the pleasure of hearing. I was struck with some expressions of his regarding the same subject so ably treated by Prof. Dowd, which I send you for publication if you think them worthy. Said he:

"Art in any of its forms stimulates ethical conduct. It induces the moral state that is essential to happy relations in society. It awakens slumbering possibilities. It induces in-

tellectual activity. It brings members of society to realize that deep, true religious life which, after all, concerns happiness more than any other one element, makes sacrifices easy, stirs our souls to the loftiest contemplation of creative power. In short, it helps to make the true man and the true woman. Every work of creative art is a revelation to divine beauty; hence it is of the deepest significance to religion and to every element of social well being. Even the lowest forms of artistic expression, so long as they embody art ideas at all, are beneficial. Especially among the common people is this true. The cheap prints that adorn the humblest homes have an uplifting influence, and must be considered as positive evidence of the existence of an aspiration to something better. Cheap reproductions of art works help to educate and beautify the lives of the masses of the people.

"Some time ago, in riding up town in New York on the elevated, I happened to sit beside a shop girl. Her whole attention was engaged in studying a popular magazine, and my curiosity was excited to the extent of watching her face and learning the subject which was attracting her. I found she was reading an article relative to some of the great works of our best artists, and in studying the engravings which accompanied it. At the cost of a dime, she was bringing into her life, at the close of her day's labor, the company of the world's greatest artistic geniuses. She was forgetting her hard lot, and drinking in some of the inspiration which enables the artist to bring forth his highest creation; she was ennobling her own mind by the ennobling influences of the work of others; she was fitting herself to insist that in her own home surroundings there should be something to cheer, something to attract, and something to inspire; and I believe that could she have been followed to her home there would have been found some evidences of art production, cheap it may be, possible common, but nevertheless a sure indication of the existence in her own soul of an inspiration after something higher than the drudgery which she was compelled to follow."

H. P. RANES.

A PROPHECY THAT CAME TRUE.

Mr. Greville was persuaded when he was over sixty years of age to attend a spiritualistic seance. Foster, the presiding medium, was in great form, and the revelations were astounding. Greville sat silent, and his aged, wizened face was as emotionless as a mask. Suddenly the medium grew excited, and said to the old gentleman:

"A female form is bending over you. Oh, the extraordinary likeness!"

Greville sighed.

"It is your mother!"

"Ah, poor thing," said Greville.

"I am glad of that."

"She smiles at you; she says all is well with her."

Greville sighed again, and said:

"I am delighted."

"She says she will see you soon. You are old, and you must meet her before long."

Then Greville smiled, and quietly observed:

"That's certainly true. I'm going this evening to take tea with her."

WHEN THE CHILD "PLAYS HOOKEY."

Children sometimes pretend to be ill to escape going to school. Feigning illness to escape duty is called in the army malingering and is always punished when detected. A child who habitually complains of headache just before school time should be put on a sofa in a darkened room, not permitted to read, nor look at pictures, and have a hot-water bag placed at his feet. If the ailment is real this is the best treatment for the early stages; if it is feigned the silence and solitude soon becomes so irksome that the culprit is glad to do anything to escape from them. Other affected pains should be treated as if they were real, and it should be distinctly understood in the family that the child who is too ill to go to school, and to learn his lessons, is too ill to be out of bed. If a child play truant the lessons he loses should be made up at home in his play-time, and the mother should take pains to see that this is done, so that he may find truancy unprofitable. He may be put to bed as soon as he returns home on the assumption that he must be ill, because nothing but illness should keep him from going to school.—Ladies' Home Journal.