Social Aspects of Nineteenth Century American Elocution.

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SOCIAL ASPECTS OF NINETEENTH CENTURY

AMERICAN ELOCUTION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech

By

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B. A., Wayne State Teachers College, 1935
M. A., Louisiana State University, 1938
August, 1948
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To Dr. Giles W. Gray the writer expresses his deepest appreciation for his helpful guidance, encouragement, and his valuable suggestions and criticisms in this endeavor.
To

Elizabeth and Wynn
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Abstract

For an understanding of the social aspects of nineteenth century American elocution it is necessary first to describe the general social background in the early part of the century, which gave rise to the widespread development of elocutionary training. This investigation has concerned itself with that part of the American populace who lived for the most part in undeveloped regions with little public education and slow and cumbersome communication facilities.

The chief source of information for the investigation of the American elocutionary movement was the extensive resources of the Library of Congress, where the investigator spent two years in study. Books, magazines, catalogs and published and unpublished theses dealing with the subject of elocution gave an understanding of the problem. Personal interviews and visits to various libraries in the East, the Middle West and the South gave additional insight.

It was revealed that living conditions in the extensive rural sections were rudimental. Language was crude and the manner of speaking was faulty. Rural America was favorably impressed far more with emotional speaking than with logical argument. Preachers, politicians and lawyers alike, instrumental in assembling isolated people together, stirred their hearers emotionally.

As small settlements grew into towns and cities, and public education and a more diffuse communication began to make for a more enlightened citizenry, increasing attention was paid to the necessity of restrained speech.
Moreover the growing importance of the common man in community, state and national affairs placed on potential speakers new obligations for persuasive speech. Recorded statements indicated a growing demand for the study of elocution.

An examination of these and periodicals, as well as of contemporary textbooks, indicates that many elocutionary concepts had their origin as far back as the teachings of the ancients before the time of Christ. During that period, delivery was considered under the term *pronunciatio*, the meaning of which is essentially equivalent to that of *elocution* as the word was used in the middle of the eighteenth century in England. As in democratic Athens, Great Britain as early as the sixteenth century strongly realized the need for eloquent voices in its people. Objection to learning Latin instead of the cultivation of the vernacular resulted later in the use of the mother tongue in the schools. A number of educators insisted that a system of instruction ought to be devised whereby the student could more easily learn the correct inflection, cadence, force and gesture. Consequently, notations for both the voice and bodily movements were developed in the late eighteenth century. Rhetoricians, however, detested these teaching techniques, and called them harmful practices.

As in England the continental rhetoricians and the classicists were of great significance in American speech training. But the use of foreign languages in disputations and declamations gave way during the eighteenth century to the use of the vernacular. Literary societies later promoted interest in speech and provided much experience in the
development of a good delivery. Witherspoon, Webster, Adams, Channing, Goodrich and Porter were among the most prominent teachers in speech training in the late colonial and early National period up to 1827.

Dr. James Rush, outstanding in his work on the human voice in 1827, indisputably laid the foundation for an American system of elocutionary instruction. From his scientific contributions dealing with vocal expression were inaugurated innumerable principles used by teachers of elocution and speech for a hundred years.

In the late 1830's, in addition to a number of "Readers," containing elementary instruction on elocution, basic textbooks specifically on elocution began to appear on the American frontier. Through the lectures and recitations by itinerant elocution teachers in community and college halls, interest was aroused in elocutionary training. Innumerable private schools of elocution and oratory throughout the country came into existence to meet the demands of the American people for private instruction in vocal and bodily expression. Much emphasis was laid on stringent exercises to obtain distinctness, good pronunciation and suitable variations in quality, force, rate and pitch. Correction of foreign dialects and elimination of speech deficiencies were also included in the programs by some teachers. Close attention was paid to breathing exercises, which elocution teachers believed would not only enable the performer to speak for longer periods without exhaustion, but would improve health.

Examination of the outward behavior of the early nineteenth century American disclosed evidence that awkwardness was widely prevalent. Many
readers and speakers were observed to be entirely inadequate in bodily expression. Students were given numerous physical exercises directed toward the development of a pleasing physical expression. In this important function, elocution teachers were influenced in the development of the late nineteenth century elocution by Delsarte, who became the most influential figure of the period. Out of his theories, as brought to America by his student MacKaye, a number of grossly exaggerated practices appeared in the elocution schools. In addition, wide differences of opinion existed in the matter of teaching gesture. In general, however, the elocution teachers desired natural, rather than mechanical performance.

Throughout the history of speaking it was evident that excesses in the manner of addressing an audience occurred particularly among the uneducated people. Furthermore, it was noted that ignorant teachers did not alleviate this condition, and that in many cases inferior practices were actually promoted. Educated teachers, aware of this fault in their profession, organized the National Association of Elocutionists to keep the subject of elocution from falling into complete disrepute.

The scholarly-minded teachers were successful in the establishment of courses in public speaking having the same status as other disciplines in academic institutions. It is commonly held that the first outstanding separate department was that established by Trueblood in Michigan in 1892.

To disassociate themselves completely from the professional schools of elocution, as well as from the dominance of the National Council of
Teachers of English, seventeen academic teachers of public speaking organized in 1914 the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, currently known as the Speech Association of America. Thus the elocutionary period which began with Rush in 1827 closed logically with Trueblood in 1892, and by 1914 a new epoch was under way.
INTRODUCTION

The cultural growth of nineteenth century America presents many interesting and significant facets. Although men and women of this frontier era were busy asserting themselves in their struggle for economic advantage, faint beginnings of civilizing agencies were discernible. Clergymen, lawyers, politicians, readers and lecturers were no doubt the first hopeful refining forces to penetrate the western wilderness. Among the people a keen awareness existed in the belief that the bulwark of government lay in the cultivation of an intelligent citizenry to deal with the numerous problems, coexistent with free institutions and government. To speak out on these and other profound topics required courage, ability, and experience, and the spokesman who could impart his views with clarity and in a convincing manner was widely acclaimed and respected. It very soon became apparent to all classes that immense utility lay in eloquence and that skill in the art of speaking was an acquisition to be envied and therefore to be pursued. With exceptions among the intellectual and culturally-minded minority, extravagance on the platform was the accepted mode of expression, especially in the developing frontiers, until its excess could no longer be tolerated by a people who were gradually throwing off the shackles of ignorance. Numerous criticisms among various observers resulted in widespread demands for training in distinct utterance and proper bodily expression. To meet these expressed desires for instruction there appeared throughout the country a multitude of teachers and private schools in elocution during
the nineteenth century which far exceeds the imagination of those interested in the cultural life of America.

In this study emphasis has been primarily centered on the period of elocutionary activity between 1827 and 1892. The earlier date has been chosen because it was in this year that James Rush, a physician in Philadelphia, developed for the first time an indigenous system of American elocution. The date 1892, on the other hand, represents something of a turning point in the history of speech education. It was at this time that the National Association of Elocutionists became organized for the purpose of taking active steps in elevating speech work to a more sound academic level. In addition, it was in the year 1892 that the granting of a separate department of public speaking to Thomas C. Trueblood at the University of Michigan and the accrediting of the courses taught by him, mark, by tradition at least, the first formal and complete recognition of the subject, on the same basis as other subjects on the campus, by an institution of higher learning. The year 1892, then, seems to be generally accepted as a milestone in the academic teaching of speech in the United States.

A complete analysis of the content of the innumerable elocution textbooks and the teachings of individual elocutionists in the professional schools, the elementary schools, the academies, the seminaries, the high schools, the colleges and the universities would entail too great an amount of repetition. No suggestion is offered that the works referred to in this study include all that was written during the sixty-five years covered. Rather, representative works have been chosen to illustrate the typical theories and practices of the nineteenth century elocutionists from Rush to Trueblood.
Specific questions have been raised in this historical and social investigation concerning the teaching of American elocution and its social aspects. These are:

(1) What were the social conditions of the nineteenth century which indicated a need for elocutionary training?

(2) By whom, and to what extent, was this need recognized?

(3) What were the sources of the early theories of elocution prior to the development of American elocution?

(4) Who were the outstanding contributors to elocutionary teaching in the nineteenth century and what sources did they use generally? What were their specific teachings in vocal and bodily expression?

(5) In what ways was elocutionary teaching of social value to the American people?

(6) What were some of the causes of the decline of elocution, and what trend supplanted the movement?

The most valuable and extensive sources for the answers to these questions have been found in the Library of Congress, where the author found unceasing assistance from Mr. Willard Webb and his staff. Other libraries which were personally visited, from which the author received many courtesies, are the libraries in the following institutions: The Universities of Maryland, Virginia, Minnesota, Missouri, Kentucky, and Georgia; Louisiana State University, Transylvania University, Salem College and Shepherd College. Also visited were public libraries located in Baltimore, Maryland; Washington, D. C.; Lexington, Kentucky; Greenbelt, Maryland; St. Louis, Missouri; and Hagerstown, Maryland.

A number of sources were also secured through the splendid cooperation of the libraries of the University of Wisconsin, the State University of Iowa, Columbia University, The University of Southern California, New York University, The Ohio State University, Northwestern University,
Cornell University and the University of Chicago. Personal interviews with those who have heard the elocutionists perform, those who have taught elocution, and those who have been students of the elocution teachers, greatly aided the writer to comprehend more fully nineteenth century American elocution in its social aspects.
Chapter I

Early American Nineteenth Century Frontier Conditions

Rural Nature of America. To understand American elocution in the early nineteenth century it is in some measure necessary to consider the habits, customs, and living conditions of the common man. The setting, economical, cultural, intellectual, religious, and political, in which the system of elocutionary training developed, was in many instances backward and primitive. Because of the incessant shifting of population, the lack of widespread public education and rapid communication, the society of America was, in the early part of the century, characterized by emotional instability.

Of special significance is the fact that most of the people lived in rural areas. At the time Dr. James Rush of Philadelphia originated the American system of elocutionary training in the late twenties, only six percent of the total population lived in communities of eight thousand and upward. Moreover, it is important to realize that this small percentage of the twelve million inhabitants resided in towns which in themselves were also rural in nature. Even in the urban areas, much of the industrial activity took place in the individual homes and in the blacksmith shops.

1 Beyond the Alleghanies in particular the region was an "unwon wilderness." As a whole the nation's common schools in 1830 were in a deplorable condition. See Frederick Jackson Turner, The United States, 1830-1850, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), 14-17.


In the expanding rural settlements the many American pioneers found themselves at first destitute of religious and moral instruction and remote from every social refinement. An excellent possibility was afforded for families to degenerate into a state of near barbarism and almost brutality. Material aspects of life were not conducive to comfort or inspiration. The furniture was crude and the clothing usually homespun. The methods of farming were slow and clumsy, even in the East in the thirties, and rotation of crops and fertilization of the soil were hardly known. The ignorance of the proper care of livestock was unbelievable. Packs of wolves and other animals rent the evening air "in sounds most terrific."

America was for the most part bred in a cabin, but in due time she replaced this crude home of unhewn logs for a framed building or graduated to a mansion of brick. This sequence was followed in thousands of instances along the Eastern seaboard, in the Alleghanies, and in the vast spaces of the West during the early part of the nineteenth century. Although these changes in the type of homes prevailed, many of America's cabin habits were unconsciously retained, to be replaced later by the refinements of advancing civilization. That America's

4 Hugh Murray, Historical Account of Discoveries and Travels in North America; including the United States, Canada, The Shores of the Polar Sea, and the Voyage in Search of a North-West Passage; With Observations on Emigration. (London: Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1829), 1,450.


6 Ibid.
problem during the early part of the century was to free herself from the shackles of her frontier habits is apparent in a statement by Mark Sullivan, who declared that even as late as 1900 there was still the unmistakable evidence of a country being largely rural in habit. He writes that:

... America presented to the eye the picture of a country that was still mostly frontier of one sort or another, the torn edges of civilization's first contact with nature, man in his invasion of the primeval... Only the Eastern seaboard had the appearance of civilization having really established itself and attained permanence. From the Alleghenies to the Pacific Coast, the picture was mainly of a country still frontier and of a people still in flux...  

The Nature of Urban Life. The culture of the eighteen twenties existed primarily in the urban centers of the East, which consisted of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, and Charleston. Each of these rapidly growing cities had approximately twenty thousand people and upward. Other trade centers steadily growing in population, industry, and culture along the seacoast were Portland, Salem, Portsmouth, Newburyport, New Bedford, Newport, Providence, New Haven, Norfolk, Savannah and New Orleans on the Gulf coast.

Few as were city conveniences in the early decades of the century, life in these centers was still superior to that of the rural districts. Here the love of intellectual improvement noticeably existed in the establishment of libraries. Outstanding as one example in this connection is the Boston Athenaeum which was organized in 1805. In this famous library a large number of American and foreign newspapers,

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See U. S. Bureau of Census, op. cit.
scientific journals, gazettes, magazines and political pamphlets in addition to thousands of books and a lecture room increased the knowledge, refinement and conversational abilities of those who employed its use in Boston. Private academies and colleges with a classical curriculum were also evident and the citizenry appeared to possess more politeness and delicacy of manners. However, the narrow, crooked streets of poorly laid cobbles filled with wood and inadequately lighted at night, with straying pigs aimlessly roaming here and there, gave an unfavorable but actual conception of city living conditions. In addition poor sanitation was a constant menace to urban life. These conditions, however, did not apply to the large homesteads surrounded by spacious grounds which were, as in the case of Philadelphia, sufficiently beautiful to adorn any city in the world.

The rooms of these imposing mansions were decorated in gorgeous and extravagant furnishings. Isolation was typical in these urban dwellings, since most of these people lived apart from their neighbors and the home and family life maintained a position of prime importance commensurate with the lack of outside competition from organizational duties.

The Nation's Capital had been moved at the turn of the century from Philadelphia to Washington for a more central location. Thirty years later this scattered, straggling city amidst its muddy streets


10 Murray, 447.

11 Stuart, II, 98.

and brick pavements had erected a small number of buildings and brick houses. The White House was, for example, unfinished, and the Capitol was still in the process of construction. Deficient in harbor facilities, and lacking rich soil in the immediately neighboring counties of Virginia and Maryland, Washington did not develop the agricultural and commercial trade which the seaboard cities enjoyed. However, the construction of departmental government buildings and the paving of streets gave it something of the air of unity during the middle thirties.\textsuperscript{13}

It was generally called a "City of Magnificent Distances," but Charles Dickens in his visit to America in the forties saw fit to name it "the City of Magnificent Intentions."\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Communication by Roads.} Almost the entire amount of mail and supplies between the cities of the seaboard in the early part of the century was carried either upon the backs of horses, by boat, by teams, or by great lumbering stage-coaches over rough roads. The conventional vehicles had seats of plain board, no springs, no protection from cold weather, and as a whole were an unpleasant mode of conveyance. Visiting travelers and frontier editorialists issued complaints against this arduous means of travel and of the unsatisfactory transportation of mail. In 1828 the National Road was near a ruinous state near Cumberland, Maryland, from the heavy loads and frequent use. This was the road on which the triumphant Andrew Jackson from Tennessee traveled

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\textsuperscript{14} Charles Dickens, \textit{American Notes and Pictures From Italy}, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), 98. (Dickens is admittedly critical in his observations but he is supported by other, less biased observers.)
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amidst wildly enthusiastic crowds via stage-coach to Washington. Toll
gates had to be built to raise money for the repair and extension of
this road into Ohio. According to one editorialist, this gateway to
the West through the mountain gaps would have become entirely impassable
and would have been lost to public use had it not been for federal ap-
propriations to help defray the cost of improvement.\(^\text{15}\)

On the roads the inevitable rocky obstructions, frequent deep
ruts, shallow streams and logs placed across the holes to fill up the
unequal surface added to the delay of the passage of vehicles. Dr.
Thomas Low Nichols, in his remarkable sociological study, \textit{Forty Years
of American Life}, observed that because of this primitive transporta-
tion system a tremendous amount of commercial traffic had to be carried
on in the winter when the snow made good roads for sleds. Farmers
two hundred miles from Boston, he states, hauled large sled loads of
frozen hogs, butter, cheese, honey, home-made cloth, woolen socks,
mittens and dried apples into the city to be exchanged for salt, sugar,
molasses, foreign luxuries, frozen fish and rum.\(^\text{16}\)

Stuart, in his travels in the Mid-west\(^\text{17}\) in the thirties, noted
that the roads were merely tracks, which were difficult to traverse
when the ground was wet or where there were low, swampy regions. Often
travelers were detained unless dry land in the fields could be found

\(^{15}\) \textit{Niles Weekly Register}, July 5, 1828.

\(^{16}\) Thomas Low Nichols, \textit{Forty Years of American Life}, (London: John Maxwell and Company, 1860), I, 32.

\(^{17}\) There was no separate and distinct line drawn in the thirties
as to what constituted actual western life. See Carl R. Fish, \textit{The
Rise of the Common Man}, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1927), VI,
28.
for travel. Moreover, it was often necessary to vacate the stagecoach to enable the horses to get it over mountains and through mudholes. On these journeys the miserable riders were tossed back and forth relentlessly. Dickens related the precariousness of travel on a trip he took through Ohio in the fifties:

... At one time we were all flung together in a heap at the bottom of the coach, and at another we were crushing our heads against the roof. Now, one side was down deep in the mire, and we were holding on to the other. Now, the coach was lying on the tails of the two wheelers; and now it was rearing up in the air, in a frantic state, with all four horses standing on the top of an insurmountable eminence, looking coolly back at it, as though they would say, 'Unharness us. It can't be done.'

Sir Charles Lyell in his second visit to the United States in the fifties also found much fault in this form of travel and transportation because of the numerous uncertainties it wrought.

The pony express in 1860 marked the spectacular completion of overland service in American communication and transportation and was hailed with acclaim. Well-bred horses were exchanged approximately every ten miles and the riders rode in relays of fifty miles. The news of Lincoln's election was carried from St. Joseph to Sacramento in seven days and seventeen hours. Upon the inauguration of this system of carrying mail there was great excitement and enthusiasm by crowds of.

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people along the way. From a financial standpoint the pony express was a losing venture however, and with the coming of the transcontinental telegraph in 1861 and the unification of the country by railroad in 1869, it was discontinued. That this slow form of communication in the nineteenth century would be replaced by other forms of transportation more speedy and comfortable and which had already been developed in the East was inevitable.

The Development of Canals and Rivers. With improvements in travel and communications, cultural advantages increased markedly. The War of 1812 and the protective tariff following the war did much to stimulate private manufacturing and foreign trade in America. Of these two enterprises foreign commerce was the more common pursuit, but American manufacturing was steadily increasing, thereby making the country less dependent upon the finished products of Europe. This development of industry was responsible for the rapid growth of eastern coastal cities and of the settlements farther inland in the mountainous regions such as Pittsburgh and Wheeling. In these cities materials were abundant and the finished products found a flourishing domestic market; but a means of transporting heavy cargo over the long distances was needed.

The American transportation system was totally inadequate to meet the increased demand by both the producer and consumer for goods of all kinds. In the leading cities there was much discussion in the

22 Ibid., 273.
23 Murray, 446.
mid-twenties regarding the digging of canals to connect the important
manufacturing centers with the western sources of supply. The suc-
cessful digging of the Erie canal in 1825 between Albany and Buffalo,
which was largely responsible for the rapid growth of New York City
and a line of towns and villages along its banks,24 at once gave im-
petus to the demand for additional waterways elsewhere. Passenger
travel, however, was very slow on this canal and the necessary locks25
were so frequent that travelers preferred to take the stage.26 Between
1826 and 1834 Philadelphia hurriedly built a series of canals from the
Delaware to the Ohio. The Pennsylvania canal, a more extensive enter-
prise, was constructed for the purpose of bringing to Philadelphia a
large share of the western goods. This canal, which extended between
three and four hundred miles,27 connected Philadelphia and Pittsburgh
with a continuous chain of canals and locks. To the south, Maryland
and Virginia combined their efforts in the building of the Chesapeake
and Ohio Canal, which was originally intended to unite the water of
the Potomac at Washington with the Ohio River and the Pennsylvania
Canal at Pittsburgh,28 but the project was never extended beyond the
mountains in Western Maryland. Dedications of these canals aroused

24 Niles Weekly Register, June 2, 1827.
25 "Chronology." The Monthly Register, III, (March, 1842),
182-191.
26 Stuart, I, 64.
27 Timothy J. Flint, The History and Geography of the Mississippi
28 Stuart, II, 63.
such enthusiasm among the people. Williams gives his account of the dedicating of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and the ornate style of speaking employed in the following:

The dedication of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal was met with great fanfare. The speeches were filled with exuberant language contemplating a conquest over physical nature such as has never been achieved by man. The wonders of the ancient world, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Collosus of Rhodes, the Temple of Ephesus, the Mausoleum of Artemisia, the wall of China sink into insignificance before it . . . .

The digging of the western canals in the thirties and forties was also hailed with loud acclamations and "full demonstrations of pleasure" among the isolated and culturally starved settlers. It meant to them communication, culture, and new settlers. The marked prevalence of this mode of travel is noted by Flagg. In his western travels in the thirties on various canals, he reported seeing numerous boats heavily loaded with immigrants and their household utensils.

To improve the trade operations, canals linked together the surrounding territory of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers with that of the northern lakes. Indiana, for example, constructed the Wabash and Erie, while Illinois built the Illinois and Michigan canal. Approximately thirty of these canals had been built by the fifties. Governor Thomas Ford

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32 Stuart II, 366.

of Illinois observed that the numerous vessels which brought loads of settlers, their money and their means increased greatly such communities as Chicago. In time this city became the commercial capital of the Mid-West. Stuart describes the American canal projects in these words:

The successful execution of this great work has led to splendid continuations of the system of water communication, especially to the canal, now far advanced, from Lake Erie to the Ohio, which continues the internal navigation from New York to the Ohio, Missouri, and Mississippi, and of course to Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, St. Louis, New Orleans, and the Gulf of Mexico, -- a length of internal water communication unparalleled in the world.

Transportation on the rivers by the first settlers throughout the West was of unusual importance because no other mode of hauling heavy freight long distances was possible. A large number of towns along the rivers owed their very existence to flatboats and steamboats and became in time thriving trade centers. To accommodate the widespread demands for transportation of goods, efforts were made to navigate every stream and tributary. Bulky materials from all the western region were exported down the rivers through New Orleans. Following

37 Power, 42.
38 Bishop Davenport, A New Gazetteer, or Geographical Dictionary, (Baltimore: Published by George M. Dowell, 1835), 121.
the effective utilisation of the Ohio and its tributaries, together with the lower Mississippi, came the extended use of the upper Mississippi and the Missouri. Trade from Minneapolis to St. Louis grew into large proportions. Far up the Missouri River moved much traffic to such points of departure as Kansas City, St. Joseph, Leavenworth, Omaha, and Sioux City and the western hinterland. To overstress the part played by these rivers in furthering the early growth of commerce in the broad expanse of territory in the West is impossible.39

It was a common experience for the pioneers to build a flatboat to travel great distances, as did Lincoln in 1831, when he drifted four to six miles an hour down to New Orleans. It was there that he saw a slave auction and resolved to hit that practice hard. After a month's stay he returned to Illinois by working his passage on a steamboat.40 Audubon, who traveled in the thirties along the Ohio and Mississippi valleys scrutinising American scenery and character, reported a number of these flatboats proceeding on their courses sluggishly,41 heavily loaded with goods and immigrants from distant parts. Nichols observed the tendency of the multitudes to travel likewise on magnificent flat-bottomed steamboats in the West regardless of the speed.42

to Stuart, however, this form of travel was hazardous, for accidents were numerous on the waterways and in many instances the engineers and pilots were inexperienced and untrustworthy. These flatboats and steamboats were a valuable means of transportation in the civilizing of the West, for on them travelled early day preachers, lawyers, teachers, physicians and lyceum lecturers. However, their rate of speed was slow and the great areas between rivers and canals could not be supplied with commercial goods and cultural agencies.

**Rise of the Railways.** Almost simultaneous with the building of canals and turnpikes was the development of American railways to relieve overcrowded steamboat transportation facilities. In the late twenties the first railroad made its initial run on the tracks of the present Delaware and Hudson. Early in the thirties railroads began to operate between cities like Albany, Schenectady, Boston, Baltimore, Charleston and Savannah, whose commercial trade had been less heavy than cities having access to canals. This unbalanced condition of trade throughout the expanding nation, together with the slowness of prevailing accommodations, made the railroad more satisfactory than the road or canal. According to the *Monthly Chronicle* in 1842, the railroad claimed it could handle a larger proportion of the coal business, not only faster but at a lower cost than could be accomplished by the primitive canals. Horace Greeley pointed out that railroads could unite the

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East and West and swiftly end their cultural isolation.\textsuperscript{45} The most efficient engineering talent of America was therefore engrossed in the building of better railroads. Fares on the various railroads were reasonable, yet high profits were enjoyed by the railway systems because of the "free land" crossed.\textsuperscript{46} Even though the early trains were much faster than canal barges or river steamboats, still they travelled very slowly, puffing along at fifteen miles per hour.\textsuperscript{47} The seats of the first railroad cars were uncomfortable and the rails uneven. In this primitive condition Hancock reports that the "effect upon the traveler is very similar to that produced by being jolted over a ploughed field in a farm-cart without springs."\textsuperscript{48} Dickens recalled the stove in the center of the "carriage" and the insufferable closeness of the air.\textsuperscript{49}

Despite its shortcomings, the growth of this venture was tremendous. In twenty years' time thirteen thousand miles of fairly well constructed railway tracks had been laid to enable goods and travelers to be transported between the East and West.\textsuperscript{50} Through government subsidy the completion near Ogden, Utah, of the transconti-

\textsuperscript{45} Horace Greeley, \textit{An Overland Journey From New York to San Francisco in the Summer of 1859}, (New York, C. M. Saxton, Barker and Company, 1860), 379.

\textsuperscript{46} Lyell, I, 41.

\textsuperscript{47} Sandburg, I, 116.

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Op. cit.}, 229.

\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Op. cit.}, 53.

\textsuperscript{50} Mitchell, 7.
nental railway in 1869 symbolized the unification of the country. This railway project, together with the phenomenal development of other railway systems up to 1890, amounted to over one hundred sixty thousand miles of railroad tracks.

The crude conditions of railroad travel improved considerably in the latter part of the century because of the tremendous amount of business and the competition among the lines.

For western civilization the development of the railroad was an extreme necessity. Although it took a number of decades for this mode of communication to develop, from the first it lessened privations, decreased the vastness of distances and unified the country to a greater extent. It was but natural that the railroads promoted an unparalleled production in grain and mineral resources. Into these new areas pressed thousands of settlers to take advantage of golden opportunity. Generous encouragement to railway construction, including land privileges, was given by numerous individuals and communities who hungered for intellectual and social contact with other sections.

**The Manufacturing Industry.** A new form of civilization was shaping itself in the development of industry. During the nineteenth century there was brought into focus two opposite factions—labor and management. The demand for laborers had as a consequence the shifting of a large proportion of the rural population to industrial centers. In New England a fair living wage attracted many farmers to the principal


52 Miller, 69.
manufacturing industries making boots and shoes, candles, soap, cutlery, hardware items, paper, powder and firearms. In Pennsylvania the iron industry was assured of increased production in the thirties when the railroad and iron steamboats were developed in America. The expansion of the iron industry into diverse products of American commercial life, according to the American Laborer in 1842, marked the advance of civilization more than any other manufacture, and constituted the country's "best evidence of wealth." Its effect on labor was a tremendous advance in jobs for men, women and children, over two hundred thousand being employed in the manufacturing of iron in 1842.

The shift from water power to steam was significant in that it permitted industry to develop along broader lines independently of streams. The early growth of industry in New England was largely due to the presence of ample water power. Other manufacturing enterprises which tended to increase the number of laborers in industrial centers were such trade pursuits as steam flour mills, carding and spinning mills, distilleries, breweries, brick-yards, air furnaces, lead factories, glass establishments, tobacco factories, and tanneries. Combe observed these rapid industrial developments in the following:

53 Hancock, 177.
54 James M. Swank, Introduction to a History of Ironmaking and Coal Mining in Pennsylvania, (Philadelphia: Published by the author, 1878), 91.
56 Ibid.
57 Stuart, II, 476.
The formation of railroads and canals, the multiplication of steamboats, ships, machinery, manufactories, and houses, the extension of the productive soil; in short, the advance of all that ministers to the well-being of "the external condition of man" proceeds in the United States on a gigantic scale, and with extraordinary rapidity. 58

A noticeable characteristic of the rapidly increasing manufacturing industries in the latter half of the century was the further concentration of particular types of industries into few but larger plants. In 1860 there were approximately two thousand woolen mills, but ten years later the number was reduced to a little over one thousand. In the same period iron and steel mills decreased by one-third, while their products increased by one-half. Through this concentration of industry, mass production, less waste, more profit, and simpler laboring tasks resulted. Another shift of population then took place from the smaller manufacturing centers to the larger cities, where manufacturing was a much larger enterprise. Thus was continued the significant trend away from rural life.

The Industrial Revolution did, of course, improve social conditions in the homes in the cities and the farms by supplying needed equipment and better clothing. Transportation facilities and such communication lines as the telegraph in the thirties, and the telephone invented in the seventies, raised the standard of living considerably. Particularly important to cotton producers and textile manufacturers was Eli Whitney's cotton gin, which had been invented in 1793. This new machine separated the fiber from the seed three hundred times as rapidly as

it could be accomplished by hand. As a result of the more rapid processing of the fiber, planters had found that cotton could be grown profitably on a gigantic scale. Because slave labor was suitable to the cotton industry, slavery was securely established in the states adaptable to the growth of cotton. Together with the huge production of cotton was the marked success of tobacco growers in producing enormous profits from the tobacco crops. By 1840, according to the Merchant's Magazine and Commercial Review, one large cargo of tobacco shipped at New Orleans for foreign markets was alone valued at two hundred thousand dollars. The great increase in the production of tobacco and cotton made its imprint on the southern markets, necessitating greater accommodations for trade in these cities. There was a demand for presses for compressing, commercial houses for merchants and wharves for the shipping of tobacco and cotton bales. The promising attraction of plantations with good buildings, gins, mills, teams, and numerous slaves stimulated swarms of migrants from the East to move South to engage in growing cotton and tobacco. Settlers were lured by such other commercial pursuits as paper mills, saw mills, the turpentine industry, and whiskey distilleries. Occasionally a migrant brought with him a slave or two. Those from Virginia frequently possessed "this species of property."

60 Ibid., 264.
61 W. H. Sparks, The Memories of Fifty Years, (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen and Haffelfinger, 1870), 441.
62 Fisk, 30.
63 Ibid., 20.
**American Aristocracy.** The huge profits from the extensive scale of production together with the free labor from slaves and the modest cost of land facilitated a pretentious aristocracy in the South, although as yet few millionaires were to be found among their number.  

The standard of living was reflected in enormous mansions with Grecian pillars which stood amidst the numerous shacks and cabins of the slave population. Wealth made for unusual opportunities in education, culture and the luxuries of travel. Youth were often sent to eastern universities and abroad for their education. Much private tutoring could be afforded the young. This was the case of Bennet H. Barrow in West Feliciana Parish in Louisiana, who in the twenties was sent to Washington, D.C., for further schooling, after which it was felt that he could more capably participate in the affairs of plantation life.  

The mansion was the nucleus of the social life of the planter class and formal and fashionable calls were exchanged. At the parties there was much dancing, good food and wine. Fishing expeditions, sporting events, and traveling were other pastimes also enjoyed by this privileged class.

In other parts of the country those who had made money out of land speculation and out of the nascent manufacturing industries with their cheap labor were beginning to coalesce into a special "moneyed"

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66 Davis, 52-59.
In the industrial centers the suburban mansions of the recipients of sudden wealth stood out in sharp contrast to the numerous poorly built homes of the laborers. A most extravagant expenditure among the wealthy class in the decoration of their houses was reported by Hancock in the mid-century. 67

Labor. Although many thousands of inventions advanced working conditions in the factory, the farm, and the home in the first half of the century, progress in the field of labor relations itself was slow. Such evils as long hours of work, unsanitary and dangerous working conditions, child labor and wages which did not reflect business advances, brought widespread labor agitation in the United States. According to the noted economist Ely the result was that of the organization of labor into a number of national trade unions. 68 These spirited organizations made the laboring classes particularly in the thirties and forties conscious of their status in the community as not being identical with that of other social classes. The new motto of the republic came to be "Respect for labor." 70 The trade unions and labor organizations were designed therefore to remove the disadvantages of financial and social inequalities from which the great mass of workingmen suffered. Relief was to be obtained by voluntary cooperation or by combined


70 Hancock, 86-87.
political action. Highly displeased by prevalent industrial conditions, by the depletion of land caused by ignorance in soil management and by the existing social order, men looked longingly to the West with hope. There seemed to be no alternative. New soil, natural rights, and the opportunity to exploit the natural resources of the new frontier produced various shifts of population. The great westward movements extended by 1849 as far west as the Pacific coastline.

The Westward Movement East of the Mississippi. A striking tendency in the history of the United States during the whole nineteenth century is to be found in the westward expansion of the people. With the spirit of adventure pervading, millions of freedom-seeking people took part in the great trek over trails, across trackless plains, through mountain gaps, in mud and dust, over swollen rivers and treacherous fords in a gigantic shift of population. They appeared a crazed and land-hungry people pushing across the Alleghany Mountains into the western and southern settlements, determined to find what they were seeking. "Old America" seemed to be giving away to the new frontier which had been partially settled by the explorers and missionaries of the previous century.

Wagons were draped with some kind of a cover and built as light as possible, but were sturdy enough to handle bedding, utensils, and

\[\text{71 Ibid., 96.}\]
\[\text{72 Murray, 471.}\]
\[\text{73 C. W. Dana, The Great West, or the Garden of the World; Its Wealth, Its Natural Advantages, and its Future. (Boston: Wentworth and Company, 1858), 22-23. For an account of the early formation of the territories into statehood as for example Kentucky in 1796, Ohio in 1802, Louisiana in 1812, Indiana in 1816, Illinois in 1818, Alabama in 1819, and Missouri in 1821, see Mitchell, p. vi, also Jacob Burnet, Notes on the Early Settlement of the Northwestern Territory, (Cincinnati: Derby, Bradley and Company, 1847), 31-478.}\]
provisions as well as women and children. If the weather was good, the family could be seen trudging along either before or behind the wagon—obviously to lighten the load. There being always a possible attack from Indians, family groups traveled across the western plains in sight of each other for protection. According to Henderson this condition prevailed even in the settling of portions of Illinois in the thirties and forties:

"... readers of this sketch can form but a faint idea of the curious and awkward appearance of one of these old fashioned wagons, covered over with white sheeting, the front and rear bows set at an angle of forty-five degrees to correspond with the ends of the body, and then the enormous quantity of freight that could be stowed away in the hole would astonish even a modern omnibus driver! Women, children, beds, buckets, tubs, old fashioned chairs, including all the household furniture usually used by our log-cabin ancestors; a chicken coop, with 'two or three hens and a jolly rooster for a start,' tied on behind, while, under the wagon, trotted a full-blooded, long eared hound, fastened by a short rope to the hind axle. Without much effort on your part, you can, in imagination, see this party on the road, one of the men in the saddle on the near horse, driving; the other two, perhaps on horseback, slowly plodding along in the rear of the wagon, while the boys 'walked ahead' with rifles on their shoulders 'at half-mast,' on the lookout for squirrels, turkey, deer, or 'Injun.'"74

In the planning of a site, the new settler hoped that his location was a wise choice for economic development. Since the future was unpredictable, it was necessary to settle in the vicinity of trade routes or watercourses.75 Moving was natural and rumors of more promising


lands still further to the westward caused much anxiety and farmers would soon sell their claims and strike out again into the untamed spaces.

The road through the Black Swamp beyond Cleveland in the thirties and forties carried a continuous moving caravan of migrant wagons slowly and laboriously dragging along toward Michigan. Every steam-boat on Lake Erie was loaded with people on their way to the peninsular state, most of whom were from New England, New York, and Ohio. Through the Cumberland gap and Pittsburgh, the way was open for people from the "Middle States" of the East and New England to contribute to the population of Ohio and Indiana. Kentucky, Virginia, and Pennsylvania supplied most of the American inhabitants who moved into the settlements of early Illinois. A historical study reveals similar migrations into Wisconsin. Parker attempted to attract eastern wagon-makers to the prairie-land of Iowa by pointing to the dire need for laborers to mend wagons in that state. George P. Belden, who preceded the newly-arrived pioneers into the open spaces beyond the Missouri River, upon observing the constant stream of migrants pouring in from


79 Ford, 37-38.


81 Nathan H. Parker, *Iowa as it is in 1856*, (Chicago: Keen and Lee, 1856), 198.
the eastern states was overwhelmed with the idea of future wealth and importance. He quickly wrote his father in the East advising him to move to the West. Oliphant explains the opportunity for the acquisition of western property at modest prices in the following:

The pioneers of civilization without capital to purchase land, go to those distant parts where they are at liberty to "squat" without any payment. A short residence for a month or two on a piece of land is sufficient to give a man a pre-emptive claim to it at any future period; so that when it is surveyed and put up for sale by the government, he is entitled to buy it at the fixed price of a dollar and a quarter the acre. . . .

Advertisements for cheap land were common in Eastern newspapers and helped create interest in the settlement of the West. In The Baltimore American as late as in 1861 appeared an advertisement which offered over one million acres of Illinois land at "low prices and long credit." The Cincinnati Weekly Times in 1871 carried the information in one of its advertisements that a million and a half acres of the finest land in the world could be purchased in several parts of the West at a price of two to eight dollars per acre. Drake mentions government endowment of the railroads as an additional factor in the peopling of the West.

... the building of the Pacific railways has contributed greatly to the rise of the West. Munificently endowed by Government with moneys and lands, the sale of the latter to settlers became an instant and potent means to the building-up of the unoccupied country.

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82 George P. Belden, Belden, the White Chief, (New York: C. F. Vent, 1871), 20.
84 The Baltimore American, February 22, 1861.
85 The Cincinnati Weekly Times, August 7, 1871.
Expansion Beyond The Mississippi River. According to Wirth, the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory in 1803 "was the first step in a migration into the country across the Mississippi." Following this purchase in 1803 for thirty-nine years the immediate territory west of the Mississippi was rapidly inhabited by swarms of settlers from the East and from abroad. Weinberg states that these expansionists came to conceive that nature had destined for them far-flung boundaries.

Whitman's small band of American settlers, who endured the privations of the early forties to inhabit and introduce civilization to the Indian territory of Oregon, attracted other groups to settle in that region. Realizing the need of mutual aid because of difficulties and disease which took a heavy toll of children, these settlers held a meeting at Champoeg, Oregon, in 1843, and drew up a compact for governing themselves until the time the United States Government could extend jurisdiction over them. Their rapidly growing population reached the total of thirteen thousand by the fifties, and by 1890 Oregon had three hundred thousand inhabitants.

The annexation of Texas in 1845 through the petitioning of its people was a bid for more cheap land. Two years later war with Mexico

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87 Fremont P. Wirth, The Development of America, (Boston: American Book Company, 1936), 312.
89 Brevet Captain John C. Fremont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-1844, (Washington: Gales and Seaton, Printers, 1845), 12.
90 Ibid., 187.
flamed over this new acquisition and for a time it seemed Mexico herself would be added to the United States. "These magnificent spoils of war embraced in whole or in part the present New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and California." In consideration of the extension acquired by the boundaries, the United States paid eighteen million dollars to the Mexican republic and the claims owned by her citizens. American settlers and traders were now in a strategic position to populate the entire Southwest.

While the frontiersmen were conquering the Mid-west, Northwest and Southwest, another thrust into the Far West was impending, namely the migrating body of people under the leadership of Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon religion. According to his account, a revelation led him in 1827 to find in New York some gold tablets upon which were written curious hieroglyphics containing an account of the earliest inhabitants of America. Frederick Von Raumer, a Professor of History in Berlin who visited America in the forties, observed that Smith had assumed the character of a prophet and refused to enter upon the question how he or his friends could translate these hieroglyphics into English. Smith maintained, however, that he had been enabled to translate the hieroglyphics by means of special spectacles which had been miraculously supplied him. Oddly enough, though, Smith obtained, contrary to the expectations of intelligent and reflecting people, credence for his story and a numerous following.

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From the plates which Smith claimed to have found and translated, *The Book of Mormon* was published in 1830, and in the same year the founding of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints occurred. From New York state the religious devotees turned westward in the late twenties in search of a region free from persecution. Through Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Iowa this shifting population migrated in an effort to secure a suitable foothold. In Illinois as elsewhere, their living conditions were anything but promising, each of the fifty homes containing two or three families. The houses ranged from crude log dwellings to contemptible hovels. The people were poor and the multitude of children exceeded all proportions. Very few seemed to belong to civilization, resembling savages more than human beings. Their faces were unwashed, their hair uncombed and their bare feet were the color of huge toads.

Because of continued resistance by the Mormons to the prevailing laws, customs, and religious beliefs from which their own unusual concepts deviated considerably, numerous conflicts of a serious nature occurred between them and their neighbors. The desire for "plural wives" and their alleged designs to conquer the country as the children

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94 A. B. Carlton, *The Wonderlands of the West, with Sketches of the Mormons*, (no publishers listed, 1891), 32.

95 Anonymous, *Female Life Among the Mormons*, (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1860), 82.

96 Ford, 320-321.
of Israel conquered Canaan gave rise to widespread fear of a religious war.\textsuperscript{97} These disruptions culminated in charges of treasonable activities against Smith and his immediate following. His assassination in jail,\textsuperscript{98} in Carthage, Illinois, occurred early in the morning on June 28, 1844, at the hands of a band of Missourians.\textsuperscript{99} In 1846, under the new leadership of his successor, Brigham Young, began a final exodus of Mormons in their Conestoga wagons, some drawn by oxen,\textsuperscript{100} into the Indian territory west of the Missouri River.

The immigrants to Utah quickly but painfully turned the desert into a land of plenty; through the introduction of irrigation they converted it into a fertile and prosperous country. By gathering their followers into the wilderness far from the rest of mankind, at the same time easily subjecting them to their own government and religious principles,\textsuperscript{101} they triumphed over doubt and persecution. Their missionaries traveled all over the world bringing converts from England, Sweden, Norway and Denmark to the West to swell their population. By 1853 through the efforts of this sect, eighteen thousand inhabitants were settled in Utah. The Mormons' ability to produce their own household articles and farming implements was exceptional. According to Dana,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[98] \textit{Ibid.}, 332-337.
\item[101] \textit{Ibid.}, 284.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
... This unique and erratic people, at their large settlement on Salt Lake, have erected various manufacturing establishments, including grain and lumber mills, woolen factories, potteries &c., and are able to construct most of the farming or domestic implements, including fine cutlery, required for their own use.102

Their freedom in the Far West was, however, curtailed. In organizing the territory of Utah the government of the United States brought them under control. Their longed-for escape from persecution and American customs of life finally was "no escape at all."103

It was three years after the initial Mormon invasion into the Far West that some men working for James Marshall, an immigrant from New Jersey, discovered gold near Sutter's Fort in the vicinity of Sacramento, California. These men, in the sinking of a well, struck gold and "the news spread like wildfire."104 The rush to California was on. All inhibitions and obstacles were swept out of the minds of the people throughout the country and abroad. The question asked was, "How can I get there?" In a frenzy all plans were hastily made and on the overland trails, from the East and down the Pacific coastline, around the Horn, through the Isthmus of Panama and on other sea voyages from Hawaii and the Latin American countries particularly, came the Forty-Miners.

The displacement of population was again significant. For example, San Francisco lost three-fourths of its inhabitants. Sailors abandoned ships and desertions from the Army were numerous. The count of those to

103 Beard, 192.
crowd into California in a two-year period was one hundred thousand.105

Just as in other migrations into the expanding West, wagon trains were a common sight. Holloway presents this picture of the confusion prior to their departure on the trail:

Carriages, wagons, men, horses and mules and oxen, appear in chaotic confusion. Men are cursing, distressing mulish outcries, bovine lowing, form an all but harmonious concert, above the desonances [sic] of which the commanding tone of the wagon master’s voice only is heard. The teamsters make a merciless use of their whip, fists and feet. The horses rear, the mules kick, the oxen baulk. But gradually order is made to prevail and each of the conflicting elements to assume its proper place.106

Along the trail were pain, agony and death. Upon arrival in California there was always a serious adjustment to be made, for the settlers had to live in the midst of a diverse and agitated population. Walter Colton described the new settlers as "a mixed and motley crowd" who were ragged in appearance, restless and roving.107 He says:

The first circumstance that strikes a stranger traversing this wild country is the vagrant instincts and habits of the great majority of its denizens—perhaps I should say, of the American people generally, as exhibited here. Among any ten whom you successively meet, there will be natives of New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, or Georgia, Ohio or Indiana, Kentucky, or Missouri, France, Germany, and perhaps Ireland.108

Rives portrays the new settlers of the Pacific coast in the following:

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106 J. N. Holloway, History of Kansas, (Lafayette: James, Emmons and Company, 1868), 94.


The American settlers up and down the Sacramento Valley were a rough and ignorant set of frontiersmen, suspicious, afraid alike of the Indians and the "Spaniards," and ready to believe and act on the most absurd rumors. 109

The effect of the widespread speculation in gold and the rapid departure of thousands of citizens to California helped bring to the states in the East and Middle West in 1857 a financial depression. The word "panic" came to be applied to the widespread failure of the banks and other financial houses to respond to the demands of the departing depositors and creditors. The financial condition of California was affected decidedly for the good, however, for in the years from 1848 to 1876 precious metals valued at over one billion dollars were produced by miners. 110 According to Canfield, the discovery of gold in California meant the following to the country:

"Probably no one thing has had greater influence upon the progress and expansion of our country than the discovery of gold in California in 1849, following the material wealth that it added to the world's store." 111

The trans-Mississippi migrations were apparently wrought with more fever of excitement than those which brought the colonists to the Middle-West. These migrations were America's answer to many social, economic and religious frustrations. Over the trail westward the thousands of "prairie schooners" to Oregon, to Utah and California in the forties were a common sight. On these journeys primitive court procedures were conducted, justice administered, religious meetings held and marriages


performed. Each of the expeditions had its own severe difficulties in the adjustment to primitive living conditions.

**Living Conditions of the Settlers.** Projected against such perplexing difficulties as were encountered on the trail, it is significant to note the living conditions which the settlers everywhere were destined to endure. The staid Puritan Yankee now had to fight the primeval forces of nature to keep his family alive. Far removed from various means of communication, the Western pioneer was cut off from the world. Newspapers rarely penetrated into the wild regions in which he lived. If he wanted to visit his nearest neighbor he had to ride a number of miles across rough and often hostile country.

The habits of the people of a new region were often anarchistic in form. Brawls, fights, and mob scenes broke out in attempts to settle disputes. Combe, in his visit to Mississippi Valley region in the late thirties, made note of a lawyer who drew a Bowie knife in a quarrel.112

The rudimentary form of living in western America in the thirties was detectable in the type of homes constructed. The first dwellings were chiefly sod houses and log cabins unskillfully put together with mud.113 A heavy bar was used to lock the door. There were few if any windows; light came from the open door. Usually there was but one room, wherein the floor was natural earth or logs split in half. Since the land where the pioneer settled was being put to a test, the cabin was


113 Charles Fenno Hoffman, *A Winter in the West.* (New York: Published by Harper and Brothers, 1835), I, 292.
often constructed merely as a temporary shelter. Furniture consisted only of essential items brought from the East, together with homemade and crude accessories. Mattresses were bags filled with straw, moss or feathers. Food was very plain and cooked over a fireplace. "Johnny-cake," mush or corn pone constituted the basic diet. Meat was secured from such wild game in the forest as buffalo, deer, bear and turkey. Free hogs roaming about in southern Ohio in the forties, belonging to no one in particular, could be killed by any one desiring them. Such a cheerless atmosphere as accompanied comfortless beds and poorly cooked food was the distinguishing characteristic of even the best hotels of the small western towns of the fifties.

The absence of refinement of dress in the new region was likewise evident. According to Ford, instead of the silk and calico which adorned the wealthier women of the East, only cotton and woolen homespun materials were available for the women of the West.

Diseases. Although epidemics of yellow fever, smallpox and other various diseases and ailments constantly menaced the people, medical care was almost non-existent. Unsanitary conditions prevailed and were aggravated by the stagnant waters of overflowing rivers. Flint cites intermittent fever as a common sickness in the South. George Devol, a notorious gambler along the Mississippi River in the forties, made

114 Lyell, II, 6.
115 Hancock, 278.
note of this form of sickness when he was in New Orleans during the
fifties. In the North, Flint observed severe colds and "pneumonic
affections" as producing a serious menace to the settlers; he advised
the avoidance of exposure to night air, rains, and heat of the sun, and
counseled strict temperance in eating and drinking. Watson states
that the doctors of the period were easily manufactured, but their
talent and skill were questionable.

The desperate need of medical aid gave rise to a number of ig-
norant practices to remove pain. Among the population numbering sev­
teen million in 1840, according to the United States Census Bureau,
there was an urgent demand for a vast number of medical doctors. In
a number of states no diploma or license was required—a policy in line
with the "free trade and no monopoly" theory. A whole host of "healers"
and "quack doctors" consequently arose to meet the increasing demands
of the people. They took advantage of the masses with their ignorant
and entirely antiquated practices. Private schools arose for most
of these types of practitioners. Fees were low and diplomas could be
secured by merely taking a short course. According to The Cincinnati
Weekly Times, in 1871 a private medical college charged forty dollars
for the course it offered; while another private institution of the

118 George Devol, Forty Years a Gambler on the Mississippi, (New


Carey and A. Hart, 1830), 615-616.


122 For an excellent account see Nichols, I, 364-365. See also
Von Raumer on the inadequacies of the medical profession, op. cit.,
295-296.
same type in Philadelphia could grant a diploma for thirty dollars if one passed its course successfully.\textsuperscript{123} Ignorance and exploitation were frequently in evidence in this era when an intelligent medical profession was almost non-existent. Living conditions, as a whole, were major problems, for in reality there was more of the primitive in frontier life than there was of civilization.

\textbf{Social Relationships.} To conquer the loneliness, the backward living conditions and the unorganized state of community life in the new settlements, men and women needed social intercourse, culture and public discussion of their common problems. Although the pioneers were as a rule a busy people engaged in building their homes and producing their own food, clothing and crude implements,\textsuperscript{124} there was time for a few simple social activities.

In clearing the forests, a great amount of excess timber had to be rolled into huge piles and burned. At these "log rollings" there were friendly associations, food and whiskey. In Georgia the "log rollings" were accompanied by a "quilting," which brought together the womenfolk of the small community.\textsuperscript{125} There was also fun in the competition of the husking bees in the fall.\textsuperscript{126} At the dances or after a wedding there was hilarity. A typical scene was afforded when an individual frequently lacking in good manners and dress would give his

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{123} The Cincinnati Weekly Times, August 7, 1871.
\item \textsuperscript{124} Ford, 41-42.
\item \textsuperscript{125} W. H. Sparks, 24.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Cooley, 251.
\end{itemize}
directions for the couples "in a voice twice as loud as there is any occasion for . . . the effect may be readily imagined."

It was likewise a pleasure for frontiersmen to gamble with the "keard-slickers" in the little port towns alongside a steamboat route. These suspicious looking men traveling through the country by road or stream were a source of excitement to the local inhabitants. Although rough and uncouth, the gambler did arouse the complacent settlers of rural America and was frequently not an unwelcome sight.

**Leadership, A Fundamental Rural Need.** The minimum physical requirements of food, shelter and clothing once achieved, the needs of community life became more real and leadership more of a social necessity. To participate in community meetings was essential to man's social nature. Here was provided a stimulus to excel in some community responsibility. As a small community grew, it was also vital that harmony and mutual confidence be built up, for which no better opportunity existed than the public meetings, wherein views could be expressed and issues decided under the guidance of a leader. The people of the frontier sorely needed leadership to help overcome their community deficiencies and establish local control.

**Early Preachers.** Among the first men of some leadership ability to come to the aid of the western settlers were the religious circuit riders and missionaries. The most conspicuous of these preachers

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127 Hancock, 249.

was the Methodist Circuit Rider, who, among other field preachers, helped the nineteenth century pioneers to free themselves from loneliness and burdensome anxieties. Fearless, these men of zeal for the salvation of souls traveled year after year in their assigned districts throughout the country propagating the gospel. Even in the early days of the California Gold Rush a migrant from Missouri told Eliza Farnham regarding the Methodists that there were "a right smart sprinkle about hyur." Peter Cartwright, Samuel Parker, James Axley, Henry Bascom, James Finley and a whole host of these itinerants were the early nineteenth century reinforcements to western civilization comparable to George Whitefield, Francis Asbury, James McGready, John and William McGee, William Burke and William McKendree, the great revival leaders of the preceding century in the East and South.

In a country where the people so rapidly spread into sparsely settled regions it was impossible to provide a clergyman for every neighborhood. The thinly scattered population of America was therefore kept in contact with Christian ordinances by the ceaseless journeying about of the clergy. In the newly settled regions of the West and

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129 According to denominational statistics among the various faiths the Methodists had the largest number of ministers. See "Ecclesiastical Statistics," The American Quarterly Register and Magazine, III, (September 1849), 125-126. See also Turner, 18.


South during the early nineteenth century there were a number of these zealous, vigilant, and influential clergymen of such various faiths as Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Unitarian, Congregationalist, Mormon, Episcopalian and Baptist, each advocating his peculiar denominational views of Christianity. The tremendous emotional appeal of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist faiths, the religions most frequently represented in the nineteenth century, brought numbers of people from distant points to camp meetings designed to revive unmurtured religious zeal. The apostolic work of Father DeSmet brought additional converts to the Catholic fold in the West.

Demands Placed Upon the Clergy. The poverty of the first missionaries was extreme. Many lacked the moral courage to endure the sufferings of itinerancy. Yet many missionaries reached the frontiersmen by horse, wagon and flatboat and lived among them, enduring privations which were even more drastic than those of the settlers. In the attempt to visit scattered Catholic settlements in the early part of the century, Father DeSmet wrote of spending nights in the woods at the peril of his life, being exposed to attacks by

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132 Combe, II, 110.


135 James Porter, The True Evangelist; or an Itinerant Ministry, particularly that of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Explained, Guarded, and Defended, (New York: Sixth edition, Published by Carlton and Porter, 1860), 133.
wolves. The comforting words of such daring priests deeply moved Catholics and Protestants alike, and enthusiasm for Catholicism spread.

In addition to the large camp meetings in the early part of the century, there were smaller meetings held by the Protestants in log cabin churches, taverns, and homes, after which in the case of the latter, a meal was furnished the clerical guest. Following this repast or the preaching service, the circuit rider or missionary prepared himself to leave on another journey. This meant going to other speaking assignments and religious missions on horseback miles away into the settlements. It was necessary for preachers to be itinerants serving numerous neglected neighborhoods, for it was in vain to suppose that people from extensive distances should travel to some central point. That these rigorous platform appearances were

136 Laveille, 47-48.
137 Ibid., 49.
138 For an account of these types of churches as well as the old stone church built in Cincinnati as early as in 1831 see James B. Finley, Sketches of Western Methodism: Biographical, Historical and Miscellaneous, Edited by W. P. Strickland, (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1854), 110-111. About some of the early well-built churches of the East see Theodore C. Gambrall, Church Life in Colonial Maryland, (Baltimore: George Lycett, 1885), 231. Also Helen West Ridgely, The Old Brick Churches of Maryland, (New York: Anson D. P. Randolph and Company, 1894), 108.
140 Drake, 68.
141 Francis Hodgson, The Ecclesiastical Polity of Methodism Depended: A Refutation of certain objections to the system of Itineracy in the Methodist Episcopal Church, (New York: Lane and Scott, 1848), 86-87.
demanded by the people is evidenced by the testimony of the Reverend Christian Newcomer, who records that in the thirties he was required by his United Brethren congregation to hold meetings which had been appointed without his knowledge. Hence he was obliged, with considerable sacrifice, to leave home and travel a hundred and more miles to attend a two or three days' meeting in rural Maryland. Early Mormon "preachers" were expected to travel and preach without ever being permitted to locate and remain in one place. Their instructions from the church included bringing converts to Utah and asking for gifts to swell the funds of the religion. At the same time no church was to sustain a pastor, for every brother of the local congregation was expected to be competent enough to preach. Eggleston believed the hardships involved in serving the numerous churches in a circuit if continued for some time would cause an early death.

Social Influence Upon the Frontier. Not only were the early nineteenth century missionaries busy voicing religious truths from pulpits, but they were also influential in bringing to the rural families some of the materials of civilization. Besides copies of Bibles, hymnbooks and other religious instruments in their saddlebags, there

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142 Christian Newcomer, *The Life and Journal of Christian Newcomer*, (Hagerstown, Maryland, Printed by G. W. Kapp, 1834), 14.

143 *Female Life Among the Mormons*, 316.

were works by Shakespeare, Bunyan and Milton. Sorely needed medical supplies were also a welcome sight to the early pioneer. They was not uncommon for these ministers to spend additional time and effort helping in the fields during the illness of a family. They also made themselves available to comfort the sick and dying with their fervent prayers. In one unusual instance it was said that the increasing loudness of the prayer together with its content even inspired the patient with courage to live. There were other instances when clergymen aided pioneers by writing deeds, wills, and various types of formal papers, by singing and even by making shoes. The homeless, ill and forsaken Indian was given refuge by the Catholics. The ministers of the immature West were not always profound specialists; they were lightbearers of elemental truths who also communicated to scores of frontier youth an interest in the world of men and books. Sweet, the noted historian of the early religious movements in America, writes that it was a duty of the Methodist preachers to distribute periodicals and books in the settlements of the West in an effort to sow the seeds of education among potential clergy and people alike.

145 Addison, 2.
146 Drake, 67.
147 Newcomer, 15-17.
148 Laveille, 52.
149 Drake, 67-68.
Thus scores of preachers, missionaries and evangelists became the prized contact with the outside world and the oral newspaper of the circuit in a region without rural mail delivery. Their religious pioneering was a decided step toward the establishment of civilization. It was the church-going, psalm-singing pioneers who "planted liberty's fair tree within our borders . . . watered it with their blood."

**Social Aspects of Sermons.** In addition to messages which portrayed heaven and hell for the imagination of the sinner, sermons embodying the great principles of justice and sound morality were delivered to the rural American. Ford declared that "these first preachers were of incalculable benefit to the country," speaking at a time when it was in dire need of inspirational and patriotic themes. Nichols claimed that a great number of Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Unitarian and Universalist preachers in pioneer America had no hesitation in introducing political and social topics in the pulpit. They exercised a freedom of speech which differed from that in New England wherein the pastor of the church was given only Thanksgiving Day to

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153 It is also true that a number of preachers in America during this period were on the other hand without a recognized religious faith and practiced vices not acceptable to the church. See for example, Devol, pp. 41-2.

154 *The Cincinnati Weekly Times.* August 7, 1871.

155 Flagg, XXVI, 311.


157 Nichols, I, 375.
In the frontier camps of the Forty-Niners attempts sometimes were made to deny such freedom of speech, as occurred, for instance, when one minister announced his intention of preaching on Sunday. He was thereupon informed that he must leave town within a specified time. A sympathetic miner, however, took the other side, herded the miners into the meeting house, and with his pistols awed his fellows into respectful silence. Then he turned to the parson saying, "Parson, sail in. Give 'em hell! I'll back you." Whether this incident was typical may be open to some question, but it may be indicative of the attitude of certain groups toward the injection of religion into the life of their primitive communities.

The consciences of the American people were aroused as civilization progressed. Applications of ethical principles were evident in the rising sentiment against the current evils, as duelling, intemperance, inhumane prison conditions and slavery. Talented members of the clergy like Henry Ward Beecher, for example, in the urban centers of the East, threw the New England tradition aside and ascended the platform in the interest of political and economic reform in American life. The innumerable sermons from college presidents had likewise no little influence in moulding thought. According to an anonymous

158 Depew, 16.
159 A. P. Hill, Tales of the Colorado Pioneers, (Denver, no publisher, 1884), 212-215.
160 Addison, 329.
161 Ibid., 8.
editorialist in *The British and Foreign Review* of 1840, the social value of the American sermons of the era was thus evaluated:

Sermons are to millions what reading is to thousands. The bearing of the former is to the uneducated their chief source of information on topics unconnected with their daily occupation; it is the most frequent and powerful impulse to thought which their minds are in the way of receiving; it helps to fashion ... their mental if not their moral character. Hence the work of education is to a large extent in the hands of preachers ... 162

**Status of Pulpit Speaking in the Frontier.** The starvation of the cultural, religious and aesthetic aspects of frontier life, together with the restlessness of the shifting population heretofore described, had a pronounced effect on the manner of delivering speeches. Like their New England predecessors of the seventeenth century, the masses of the people in the early nineteenth century likewise expected and preferred the content of the speeches to be plain in wording and arrangement. 163 But there was a great premium in the West on emotional appeals and a vehement style of delivery. Throughout rural America particularly this preference, which was reflected in the content as well as in the delivery of the speeches, was due in great part to the instability of the people who faced a multitude of cultural, social, political, and religious difficulties. The general sense of isolation, loneliness and enigma dealing with the future made living perplexing, uncertain and problematical. The absence of

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education and learning in the early settlements was not conducive to well balanced mental attitudes and even weariness refused to console the troubled mind.\textsuperscript{164} The noted historian, James Truslow Adams, describes the prevalence of this restless feeling during the era in the following:

It was a period of passion and strong contagious emotions of all sorts, too little balanced by thought and individuality. The mass-emotion was to be felt in political conventions and Presidential elections, in the rapid spread and the emotional appeal of all the humanitarian movements, and in the great mass meetings of the religious revivalists.\textsuperscript{165}

Because of the privations of the frontiersman, he welcomed anyone who could satisfy his innermost anxieties. This task was largely performed by the itinerant preachers, who in addition to those men on the frontier with some inherent speaking talent, administered soul-satisfying messages. These local "frontier preachers" in the early settlements who had had no previous training\textsuperscript{166} were accepted on the basis of their zeal and natural aptitude for public speaking. In those backward times of the early nineteenth century in rural America it was not considered essential that a teacher of religion should necessarily be a scholar. However ignorant these first preachers may have been, their efforts to preach were not in vain, for their congregations on the average were even more ignorant than they and readily accepted their leadership.\textsuperscript{167} Finley goes so far as to say that even infidels could

\textsuperscript{164} Thomas Huston MacBride, \textit{In Cabins and Sod Houses}, (Iowa City, Iowa; Published by the State Historical Society of Iowa, 1928), 83.


\textsuperscript{166} Von Raumer, 338.

\textsuperscript{167} Ford, 38-39.
command the high attention of the audience. He relates how at Steubenville, Ohio, a preacher of natural talent haranguing large crowds on the subject of religion was praised for his words of good news as cold water to thirsty souls. The susceptibility of these rural audiences, although fleeting, was so pronounced it was said that even a Brahmin or a fire worshipper might have found followers.

Such itinerants as Peter Cartwright, the best known Methodist circuit rider of the Mid-west, who had started his preaching career in western Kentucky and later moved to Illinois, were crude in speech and manner and excited the large western audiences to a high pitch. Cartwright's powerful physical frame and brawny arms were attractive features to the frontiersmen. In addition, his peculiar gesticulation and manner of movement would arouse attention in a congregation of a thousand. W. H. Sparks recalled that in his early youth his "childish imagination was fired" at the sight of the huge assemblages at these meetings. What these evangelists lacked in learning and knowledge they made up for in loud shouting and violent action. The merit of the revivalist's sermon was measured somewhat by the length of it, and by the flowery language learned from a meager number of such

168 Sketches, 360-361.


books as the Bible, Young's *Night Thoughts*, Watts' Hymns, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Harvey's *Meditations*, and John Wesley's simple, solid sermons. Dickens in 1842 expressed the opinion that religion, just like strong drink, was an escape from the dull monotonous round of the people's existence; he writes that those "ministers who pepper the highest will be surest to please."175

Like the churchgoers in the eighteenth century, the frontier congregations enjoyed preachers who delivered an extemporaneous type of sermon, as exemplified by the evangelist George Whitefield in the previous century. Cartwright himself noted this desire of the settlers in the thirties:

About this time there were a great many young missionaries sent out to this country to civilize and Christianize the poor heathen of the West. They would come with a tolerable education and a smattering knowledge of the old Calvinistic system of Theology. They were generally tolerably well furnished with old manuscript sermons, that had been preached, or written, perhaps a hundred years before. Some of these sermons they had memorized, but in general they read them to the people. This way of reading sermons was out of fashion altogether in this Western world, and of course they produced no good effect among the people. The great mass of our western people wanted a preacher that could mount a stump, a block, or old log, or stand in the bed of a wagon, and, without note or manuscript, quote, expound, and apply the word of God to the hearts and consciences of the people.177

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173 Ford, 39.
174 Eggleston, 185.
176 White, 140.
Nichols observed that prayers afforded the timid clergymen an unhindered opportunity to "say things to the Almighty that he would not dare to tell his people." It was observed by Drake that ministers in addition to being compelled to speak extemporaneously often were requested for joint debates—enlightening affairs which aroused great interest in subjects pertaining to religion and politics. The identical spirit of spontaneity was witnessed by Dickens in the forties while attending a service for seamen in a chapel in Boston Harbor. Peculiarly adapting himself to the sailors, the Reverend Mr. Taylor, in a somewhat theatrical appearance, uttered an extemporaneous prayer but with the fault of frequent repetition. Spontaneous utterances were common among the revivalists although there was the temptation of degenerating into rant. Among the Episcopalians and Congregationalists, while there was more method and clarity through the use of written sermons, there was as a rule no life or animation.

As the individual communities grew into organized towns, townships and counties, numerous changes took place in the manners, dress and habits of the people. During the thirties, Frederick Gerhard, who was employed as a guide for the stream of immigrants coming into

181 Von Raumer, 339.
Illinois from the East, noted that the establishment of schools by
the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 was of particular importance in this
growth and improvement of the Mid-west. 182 It was during this time
in rural communities that many preachers with a superficial knowledge
of the gospel, powerful lungs, rapid gestures and skill in spinning
out a few barren ideas into a sermon of astonishing length overloaded
with florid bombast could sway the minds of the unlearned people. 183

With the construction of every new road, canal, bridge, railroad and steamboat, travel conditions in the thirties and forties were
greatly facilitated. Educated people, among whom were well instructed
ministers, began arriving in numbers throughout the late thirties from
the Eastern states. Consequently no little uneasiness was caused the
frontier preachers. Knowing that their rivals would be accepted into
the favor of the more discerning people and that their own services
would no longer be adequate, the local preachers attempted to imitate
the dress and manners of their newly arrived young colleagues who were
busy organizing churches. 184 The practice of plagiarizing Wesley's
sermons and the frequent repetition of a small number of other sermons
was now more than ever a fruitless practice, since people would no
longer be satisfied with unqualified and untrained preachers. 185

182 Frederick Gerhard, Illinois as It Is: (Chicago; Keen &
Lee, 1857), 60-65.
183 W. H. Sparks, 414.
184 Gerhard, 65-6.
185 Hodgson, 100.
Because general speaking ability was now a prime requisite to success, some attention came to be given to the more effective delivery of sermons. A Methodist itinerant by the name of Braddock, however, believed that itinerancy itself gave sufficient opportunity to acquire a thorough knowledge of human nature and ample skill in speaking. According to Eggleston, elementary training was often offered by the older preachers, who could advise the younger ones from their experiences on the frontier stump or platform. The Reverend John Vincent, who in his travels on the circuit in the West in the early part of the century studied the Bible and Wesley's sermons, prepared outlines of his sermons and practiced delivering these while riding horseback. The Reverend William Beauchamp, who went from Delaware to the Indiana circuits in the twenties, found new audiences stimulating in developing oratory. On the other hand, a stable congregation, which was well known by the preacher, usually "settled him." This form of training was too ineffective and lacked proper directive, however, adequately to prepare the ministry to lead a population steadily growing in education, culture and literary attainments. Men in the late thirties began to

186 Nottingham, 98-99.
190 William Beauchamp, Letters on the Call and Qualifications of Ministers of the Gospel and on the Apostolic Character and Advantages of the Itinerant Ministry, (Charleston, South Carolina: Published by John Early, 1849), 113.
expect the pulpit to reflect the improving conditions of intelligence in the growing West. Lyell, who observed these signs of cultural advance declared that no educated people would tolerate an idle, illiterate or stationary priesthood.191 The demand for an educated and eloquent ministry could not be met quickly enough for the masses of people. Various complaints regarding the ignorance and poor delivery of the numerous pioneer preachers came from editorialists and leaders in the pulpit themselves. In 1843 one of these editorial writers expressed this viewpoint relative to the need of better pulpit speakers for the people:

... we must not overlook the need of great attention to the manner of addressing them. It is a most unhappy prejudice which associates with addresses to the multitude the idea of inferiority in point of style and elocution ... . Coarseness, we hardly need to say, is not less disrespectful to the hearers of any class, than it is unworthy of religion and beneath the sacredness of the pulpit. The purest language, the chastest figures, the strongest reasoning, and the noblest elocution, will ever prove the most popular with the many as they already command the approbation of the few.192

Three years later a contributor to The Christian Examiner and Religious Miscellany likewise strongly maintained that elocution was needed for the acceptable delivery of sermons:

... it would seem incredible that the study of elocution should be so much neglected, and especially by those who are preparing for the ministry ... . The great business of life with him is to communicate what is in him to others, and yet he almost doubts whether it is right to cultivate the power of communication ... the elocutionist would give him that instruction in management of the organs of expression, which will enable him to utter truly and forcibly


the thoughts and emotions which are already in his own soul. . . . Until the preacher has this power of expressing through voice and manner what is within him, no matter how wise and good he may be, he will be unfitted for his office. 193

Henry Ward Beecher, who as a young preacher had laid the foundation for his future work by holding religious services in the wilderness of Ohio in approximately the late thirties, 194 was also a strong advocate of a more thorough study of the art of speaking "for every reason of humanity, of patriotism, and of religion. . . ." 195 In an oration delivered before the student body and faculty at the National School of Elocution and Oratory in Philadelphia at its third annual commencement in 1876, he looked back over his forty years of service to voice the distressing need for training in delivery:

May I speak of my own profession, from a life-long acquaintance—from now forty years of public life and knowledge and observations? . . . I bear them witness that they mean well; I bear them witness that in multitudes of cases they are awkward; and that in multitudes still greater they are dull. 196

Summary. In the settling of America the roving pioneers of the early nineteenth century found themselves in isolated settlements in the wilderness, which, without a civilization, was destitute of educational and cultural pursuits. It was the circuit rider and other missionaries from the various religious faiths who brought to the emotionally and esthetically starved woodsmen, news, inspiration, and


194 See Addison, 305-307.


196 Ibid., 15-16.
something in the nature of literature in a period when such necessities were sorely absent. Through the weary efforts of the pioneer preachers, who attempted to adapt themselves and their speaking to the tastes of the people, comfort and social satisfaction were afforded in the log cabin meetings and the revivals. But ignorance, awkwardness and emotional outbursts in speech and manner could not long be tolerated by a people who refused to be dormant in thought and deed. Replacing the desperate desire for any preacher who could merely afford entertainment and excite passion, there arose in the culturally-minded citizenry and among the preachers who saw the accomplishments of able and skillful ministers from the East, a demand for more ministers well-trained in the art of speaking.

The Frontier Lawyer. Following closely upon the heels of the preachers was the pioneer lawyer, whose efforts were comparable to theirs in bringing assistance to the isolated pioneer. Around the early courthouses or temporary meeting places western society congregated. In the history of the West, the administration of justice was constantly a problem, as a result of the operations of numerous horse-thieves, counterfeiters and other offenders. In the absence of organized courts in the early part of the century, the people themselves were often obliged to take action in quaint proceedings presided over by local farmers, who set themselves up as judges. Too often private opinion was regarded above the law and the accused was

197 Ford, 232.
lynched without a trial. Titles to real estate were in an unsettled condition and controversies involving valuable property were arising. Steamboat disputes, unpaid debts and slander were other common legal difficulties of the pioneer. According to Johnson, however, there were few cases in the early western courts which demanded from a lawyer much more than common-sense, ready speech and some acquaintance with legal procedure. The lawyers of the East who were pinching pennies there received word that litigation was plentiful in the frontier. Consequently, there was an exodus of numerous barristers into that region. They too had to endure hardship, and like the circuit-riding preachers, were forced to travel by horse from court to court. In the thirties, for example, Charles Allen of Missouri had a two-hundred-mile circuit. The remoteness of the courts of justice in the scattered populated areas, the widespread ignorance of the inhabitants, the thousand ways for the criminal to escape from the consequences of his crime, and the inducements to fraud of every description became perplexing problems to the frontier lawyer, who in many instances had left the East as a failure only to find himself again in desperate straits. Joining

198 Von Raumer, 230.
199 Burnett, 448-9
201 William V. N. Bay, Reminiscences of the Bench and Bar of Missouri, (St. Louis: F. H. Thomas and Company, 1878), 211.
203 Nichols, I, 408.
him in the profession were many farmers of the West who, like Joseph D. Cook of Missouri, imagined they could be lawyers and upon the completion of a few months' reading were granted a license to practice law. Upon these poorly trained legal practitioners depended the "harmony and peaceful relations of the people of their coterminous states, and perhaps the existence of our Union. . . ."205

Role of the Courthouse in the Community. The towns of the West located frequently near the watercourses were speedily becoming the centers of life for the surrounding district. These villages consisted of a few stores, the jail and courthouse combined, and perhaps a crude meeting house for each of the various religious faiths.206 Frame houses were in some instances replacing primitive log cabins, giving somewhat an air of prosperity. It was in this setting that people congregated to gossip, trade, worship and to settle their legal arguments.

The early courthouses were in keeping with the meager legal attainments of those who frequented them. Frame or log houses served the purpose of the early day bench and bar. The judge sat upon a simple platform with a plain table for a desk. A larger table below accommodated the attorneys, who would follow the judge in his circuit from county to county.207

During the trial a general lack of dignity and decorum in speech and manner resulted in the whole procedure on occasion becoming

204 Bay, 47.
206 Hancock, 245.
207 Johnson, 63.
something of a farce. On court days people in large numbers congregated at the small courthouse where much disorderly conduct resulted from gambling and drinking. Traveling in the fifties in Wisconsin, Hancock reports a trial for assault at which he witnessed in a little wooden courthouse the amusing spectacle of the judge, counsel, prisoner and a majority of the jury "whittling" away with wonderful energy at fragments from the same abundant supply of firewood.208 Drake also reports amusing spectacles on the circuit during the formation of the great West and states that the spectators traveled as high as a hundred miles to attend court and hear the lawyers "plead."209 Sporadic instances were described by one traveling correspondent who reported that some of the "low practitioners" would even induce the ill-advised settlers to enter rashly into these legal contests.210

**Status of Legal Training.** With the increasing demands for legal settlement of problems, such as it was, lawyers would be accepted for courtroom duty even though they lacked proper training in law and in the delivery of forensic arguments. Stephen A. Douglas, for example, reluctant to finish his academic training and spend four additional years to complete his law course, traveled like many others by canal boat and stage coach in 1833 from New York to Illinois.211 John Quincy

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210 *Notions of Americans*, II, 211.
211 Johnson, 11-13.
Adams, who claimed that the western orators were entirely too emotional and raved or foamed at the mouth, records this early impression of Douglas as a speaker:

... His face was convulsed, his gesticulation frantic, and he lashed himself into such a heat that if his body had been made of combustible matter, it would have burnt out. In the midst of his roaring, to save himself from choking, he stripped off and cast away his cravat, and unbuttoned his waistcoat, and had the air and aspect of a half-naked pugilist. And this man comes from a judicial bench, and passes for an eloquent orator.212

The style of speaking for even the profound and able lawyers of the East, such as John McMahon of Maryland, was described by Semmes as both vehement and eloquent.213

Although the scattered populace found humor and social intercourse in the majority of these proceedings, there were those lawyers who had come from the East and having had more experience, as in the case of Peyton R. Hayden, "seldom failed to make a favorable impression on the minds of the jury" in Missouri.214 A number of lawyers in the West, however, had only a rudimentary apprenticeship training such as was true of the local preachers. This apprenticeship together with practice by the young attorney in the justice court was the cheapest way to buy experience.215 W. H. Sparks mentions the specific case of

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214 Bay, 59.

Thomas Cobb of Georgia, who by reading law in William H. Crawford's office in Lexington, Kentucky, passed his bar examination and was later described as "all-powerful" before juries.216

**The Early Day Politician.** Like the lawyer and the preacher, the early nineteenth century politician had to adjust himself to the rugged conditions of travel and the trying circumstances of frequent public appearances. His bid for public office in the various settlements of the country furnished a topic for arguments and an opportunity for the most interesting of popular gatherings.217 Particularly in the West almost anyone could run for office. It was practically impossible for the country lawyer to abstain from political endeavors.218 Nichols maintained that a great number of preachers, among Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Unitarians and Universalists, were also often candidates for office.219

Shooting matches, or other similar gatherings provided opportunity for the politician to find an audience among the busy pioneers to propose his views. Occasionally an evening meeting was arranged in a suitable place lighted by candles.220 In order to secure a large hearing some candidates would provide free groceries and liquor.

217 Depew, 18.
218 Partridge, 165.
This custom took place on Saturdays in particular when the settlers from various parts of the wilderness visited the county seat. They came by dozens on every road, some riding on their ponies, which they tied to the hitching posts in the village. The candidates then addressed the people from wagons, benches, old logs or stumps newly cut, whence comes the phrase "stump speeches." The word signifies a popular harangue to the settlers by a candidate for office. Another opportunity for candidates to appear frequently before the early audiences was presented in the itinerant courts. Here the attorneys profited most. To sit in the state legislature, to reach the bench, to hold a state office or be a member of the United States Senate were some of the political ambitions cherished by lawyers. Some of the ignorant and illiterate pioneers of the day were, unfortunately, successful in winning an office over the better informed and civilised portion in a campaign where the latter faction was divided among itself. The personal appeal to their more backward cronies won for the less able candidates a substantial margin of votes. It was advantageous therefore that the political candidate obtain a common ground with his voters in speech and manner.

**Campaign Oratory.** To speak effectively on "the stump" in the early part of the century was esteemed the first attribute of

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221 Ford, 104.
222 Drake, 24.
superior minds and was assiduously practiced. There were few newspa-
papers and the press had not attained the controlling power over the
public mind that it had in later periods. Political information,
like other types, was therefore disseminated chiefly by public speak-
ing, "and every one aspiring to lead in the land was expected to be
a fine speaker." 224

Almost every stump in the frontier had its bellowing, indignant
orator on one side or the other of the political fence. To win favor
with the great majority of his voters, who were described by Combe
as being young, ardent, impulsive, active and practically deficient
in profound and comprehensive views, 225 the candidate resorted to
various practices and vices. In some instances, such as in the cam-
paign of Ninian Edwards for the governorship in 1826 in Illinois, there
was no condescending "to the common low arts of electioneering."
Yet Edwards' manner was characterized by a style of diffuse and
florid eloquence. 226 On the other hand the habits, tastes and opinions
of the candidates were often not at all at variance with the vulgar
errors, customs, prejudices, ignorances, popular jealousies and in-
justices of the public mind. 227 In the urban centers of the East
wherein schools and colleges had been established, conditions were

224 W. H. Sparks, 22.
226 Ford, 64.
227 James Fenimore Cooper, The American Democrat, or Hints
on the Social and Civic Relations of the United States of America,
(Cooperstown, H. and E. Phinney, 1838), 94.
somewhat different. Here political speakers more often appealed to
the intelligence with somewhat more restraint.\textsuperscript{228} Even so political
campaigns of this area became intense.\textsuperscript{229}

Emotional appeal was by no means a method employed only by the
untrained politician in America. Depew, who had the occasion to wit-
ness every speaker of national reputation in the country from 1856
to well into the twentieth century, gave to Tom Corwin of the House
of Representatives the distinction of being "probably the most bril-
liant speaker of the period immediately preceding the Civil War . . . ."
Corwin, who had remarkable influence in Congressional debates, was so
successful in his stump speeches as to draw audiences away from the
distinguished Henry Clay.\textsuperscript{230} Regarding the manner of speaking in
these days, however, Depew wondered if the more educated audiences of
later periods would be swayed by Corwin's method of putting audiences
to tears or his practice of inducing hilarious laughter "in what is
called his Fourth of July exaggeration."\textsuperscript{231} According to Auer, his
traits of speaking "were products of the times, even his declamatory
delivery, his flamboyant style, and his special weapons of spontaneous
humor, florid imagery, and bitter invective."\textsuperscript{232} The man who could

\textsuperscript{228} Depew, 37.
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid., 25.
\textsuperscript{230} Ibid., 321.
\textsuperscript{231} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{232} J. Jeffery Auer, "Tom Corwin: 'King of the Stump'," The
Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXX, (February, 1944), 47-55.
approach his particular audience with a friendly manner of speech fitting to the setting, as did Tom Corwin, John Reynolds in his campaign for governorship in Illinois in 1830\textsuperscript{233} and James Blaine for the presidency in 1884 in New York State,\textsuperscript{234} was potent indeed.

The early nineteenth century candidate in the frontier, however, was for the most part dependent upon his native cleverness and personal industry. To prevail upon the emotions rather than upon the intellect was the satisfactory and successful technique. Since the early nineteenth century was distinctly and increasingly a religious era and a period apparently when the Constitution was uppermost in the minds of the people, every political spokesman had to prove that his position was endorsed by the Bible and the Constitution.\textsuperscript{235} Political contests became very personal affairs and the fitness or unfitness, the good or bad qualities of the candidates, were scrutinized by the voters. The politician who had come from the ranks, or who, as had John Reynolds of Illinois in the thirties despite his classical education in the East, learned all the by-words, catch-words, old sayings and figures of speech of the backwoods, was certain of popular favor.\textsuperscript{236} It was this adaptation by numerous political speakers to the uncultured rural American masses which kept them in good graces with the voters.

\textsuperscript{233}Ford, 103-106.
\textsuperscript{234}Depew, 141-142.
\textsuperscript{235}Fish, 179.
\textsuperscript{236}Ford, 106.
There was a peculiar desire on the part of politicians to speak even at the mere presence of a small crowd. Much extemporaneous speaking occurred, although politicians of national reputation seldom trusted themselves to this form of address. Even so, any political speaker might find himself at any time or place prevailed upon to speak and consequently willingly or unwillingly complied. During the campaigns the countryside was a mecca for visiting politicians and spellbinders. The campaigners were accompanied by "a large staff of orators" and excitement was provoked by torchlight parades. It is small wonder, therefore, that from all this fanfare the manner of delivery tended toward the declamatory style. These long, loud, and violent declamations of many of the early politicians seemed well adapted to the tastes of the inhabitants, for public reaction was favorable to them. No one was accounted an orator unless he could somewhat imitate thunder in his style of speaking. Edmund Flagg, who himself was mistaken for a candidate several times as he rode through the country in the thirties, tarried a few days in Jacksonville, Illinois, to witness an electioneering campaign so typical of early American life. On the stump, which was in the shape of a huge meat-block, was William Weatherford, who later served in the state senate.

237 Depew, 141.
238 Ibid., 32.
239 Ibid., 162.
240 Partridge, 168-169.
241 Ford, 40.
(1834-1838) from Morgan county. He was a farmer-like personage, "with features imbrowned by exposure, and hands hardened by honourable toil; with a huge rent, moreover, athward his left shoulder-blade—a badge of democracy, I presume . . . ." Either through neglect or produced there for effect, Mr. Weatherford had adapted himself perfectly to his western audience. His "harangue" and those of the other six or seven political candidates were "powerful productions" of speaking. Each candidate denounced the others in no uncertain terms. Mr. Flagg could hardly restrain a smile when one of these worthy figures "likened himself to 'the morning sun, mounting a stump to scatter the mists which had been gathering around his fair fame'."242

To speak from an improvised platform or "the stump" to a boisterous throng of people was no light ordeal. In unfavorable weather, speaking for long periods after difficult travel, and facing an audience often spread over wide spaces required endurance and patience. Yet from several of such experiences these itinerant strategists received a self-education in oratory and could like Russell Hicks of Missouri, who was a fine stump speaker, draw applause from any promiscuous assembly.243 "These meetings were the nurseries for public speaking"244 and the school of elocution in which the politicians were trained.245

243 Bay, 43-44.
244 Combe, I, 239.
245 Ford, 103-105.
Legislatures in the Early Nineteenth Century. An obvious distinction may often be made between the politician and the legislator, although the one may frequently coincide with the other. In America in performing the functions involved in writing the innumerable measures introduced in state and national legislative bodies, legislators had an unusual opportunity to regulate by government action. Stirring eloquence was essential to win affirmation by the majority of legislators for the laws protecting the rights of all. In a comprehensive view of the history of the Union these resolutions are of lasting importance. The Congressmen who attended the sessions of the state legislatures of the West in many instances were lawyers who had made their way from the East. 246 Men with their knowledge of law had been in numerous instances responsible for the writing of the original constitutions of the states. 247

Tremendous excitement was in the air during legislative sessions in which violent speeches and discussions occurred over weighty problems. Some of the subjects introduced for legislative action were the establishment of public schools, the formation of criminal laws, collection of taxes, fair distribution of land, protection of the public welfare, establishment of banking laws, regulation of commerce, the construction of roads and canals and other topics of immediate concern to the people. Popular opinion was extreme over certain measures,

246 Combe, II, 365.

causing legislators to fear the disapproval of their constituents. Legislative acts of the public officers therefore reflected the desires of the political party of which they were the appointed leaders. This custom made for fiery contests between such old organized parties as the Federalists and the Republicans and later on among the Whigs, Democrats, and all the others.

**Legislative Speaking.** Both American and foreign observers have noted the persuasive speaking performances of congressmen in the chambers of the Senate and House of Representatives. Since the membership of these bodies reflected the ideas, the culture, and general level of the voting population it was to be expected that a host of varied types of rugged individualists formed an imposing proportion of the state and national legislatures. Schlesinger, the historian, reports his views concerning the new role of the common man in the early nineteenth century:

> The growing importance of the common man was accompanied by a declining importance of Congress. The function of the legislature was now rather to elicit, register and influence public opinion than to assert its independent will. The great party leader was no longer the eloquent parliamentary orator, whose fine periods could sweep his colleagues into supporting his measures, but the popular hero, capable of bidding directly for the confidence of the masses.248

With the exception of Webster, Calhoun and Clay, all of whom brought dignity to the national Congress,249 and other such "men of high breeding" who were in a minority, congressmen especially from

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the pioneer states were often guilty of rude behavior. Trollope in the early thirties at the time of Jackson was "extremely amused" by the crude speaking performance of a "thorough horse and alligator orator from Kentucky, who entreated the house repeatedly to 'go the whole hog'." These legislators, she writes, consistently spoke on the subject of the entire independence of each individual state with regard to the federal government. An anonymous traveler in the United States in the early thirties appraised the members of Congress thus:

A member of the Congress of the United States is, in fact, what the office professes to be, a representative of the people... he is very commonly a plain, though always a respectable yeoman, and not unfrequently a mechanic. According to Johnson the offensive remarks and ill manners of some of the Congressional speakers caused disgraceful scenes in Congress. Dickens, who visited Congress in the forties, reports having seen only a small number of men of high character and ability among the great number of unmannerly members, whose faces were swelled by a quantity of tobacco stowed within the hollow of their cheeks, while in the meantime they shaped a convenient "plug" with their penknives. The feature of oratory much practiced was the constant repetition of

250 Dickens, 101.
252 Notes of Americans, II, 23.
the same idea or shadow of this idea in fresh words. The inquiry about such speeches, as most everywhere in the country, was, "How long did he speak?" E. E. Sparks claimed that too many of the legislative speakers in Washington were declamatory rather than enlightening, and that the practice of many Congressmen was in the arousal of passion rather than the application of a definite line of reasoning. According to Ford the various members of the state legislature in Illinois in the thirties were even more inclined to be lacking in dignity and manner of speaking. The backwardness of Mr. John Grammar, a legislator in Illinois for twenty years, was noted particularly inasmuch as upon entering the legislature in 1816, he lacked the necessary apparel of such an office holder. Grammar changed his tattered garments for clothes made specially for the occasion. His speaking ability was limited and he could neither read nor write. George Wallace Jones, a delegate of the newly established territory of Wisconsin in 1837 was among others who were deficient in speaking, rhetoric, and oratory. Clarke reports on the qualifications of some of those who reached the state legislative halls in the following:

State general assemblies were the favorite "stomping" grounds for all eloquent sons who had more wind than brains. Some of the queerest specimens the backwoods could rake up were loaded onto flatboats, stagecoaches or sent away on horseback to the state capitals to "make" laws.

255 Ibid.
Only a comparatively small number of legislators were fortunate enough to have availed themselves of a legal education which provided training in speech through the rhetorical societies or the required declamation exercises.

Need for Training in Elocution. According to an estimate in the North American Review in 1829, there were in the vicinity of twenty thousand public speakers in America, most of whom were lawyers and clergymen. For this important part of their professional duties little if any preparation or speech training had been received. Distinguished lawyers noting this defect in their preparation cited the need for better training in speaking. William Gardiner, a Counsellor at Law, in an address delivered before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard University in 1834 complained that the spirit of the age was adverse to the growth and cultivation of the finer species of literature. Because of the great mental excitement of the age, poetry, drama and oratory merely existed rather than flourished. In the majority of schools the young American lawyer received little if any instruction or practice either in writing, extemporizing or declaiming. Under such circumstances he entered the law courts to argue cases. Thus Mr. Gardiner asked, "Is it not truly astonishing, that eloquence is not a study among us, and that liberal education is not mainly directed to that end?" In the same year, Thomas Smith Grimke, a state senator from South Carolina, in an oration in Cincinnati, the rapidly growing

260 C. Colton, 25.
urban center between the East and the Middle West, voiced the opinion that the prominent duty of American eloquence was to strengthen and improve the social influences of the country. He called for eloquently trained speakers who could "discountenance . . . the arts of intrigue and corruption. . . . to speak, write, and act, in the cause of Christianity, patriotism, and literature. . . . in the cause of the people." Two years later, Robert Henry Goldsborough, a noted eastern lawyer, in an address before the alumni of St. John's college noted the importance of public discussions in the settling of issues. Thus he declared that speech training is invaluable in the presentation of ideas in public meetings:

As public discussions are more frequent and more necessary under popular institutions, it will become you to apply yourselves particularly to Oratory, to perfect yourselves, as far as possible, in that sublime art.

Samuel H. Gardner, a member of the bar in St. Louis in the forties, regarded this skill in legal practice a very desirable acquisition in the profession.

The Lyceum Platform. A favorite pastime of the Americans, particularly during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, was to attend the innumerable lectures and readings of the day. The most important agency in which these speaking events occurred was the lyceum,


264 Robert Henry Goldsborough, Address Delivered Before the Alumni of St. John's College at the Annual Commencement on the twenty-second of February, 1836, (Annapolis: Jonas Green, 1836), 20.

265 Bay, 124.
a movement originated in Millbury, Massachusetts in 1826 by Josiah Holbrook. This organization was, without doubt, one of the most popular educational and cultural influences of the period. On the platform appeared clergymen, lawyers, physicians, farmers, mechanics, women suffragists, and readers to "throw contributions into the common stock of entertainment." Most interesting dissertations on many subjects as diverse as mechanics, railroading and canals were heard. The list of lyceum lecturers and readers bore many representative names. Men and women like Abraham Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, Mark Twain, Henry Ward Beecher, Charles Dickens, Wendell Phillips, Fanny Kemble, Park Benjamin, Jesse Clement, John Saxe, Mortimer Thomas and Ralph Waldo Emerson spoke on interesting subjects and read poetry for the entertainment of audiences. Exercises in reading and speaking by pupils from the schools gave life and added interest to the lyceum meetings. One of its chief purposes was to raise the standards of thousands of poorly trained teachers in the schools as well as to secure better school-books and equipment. Of particular significance in this study are the first two objectives of the lyceum which read:

1. To improve conversation by introducing worthwhile topics into the daily intercourse of families, neighbors and friends.

2. To elevate the amusement of the community by making the weekly exercises of the Lyceum both instructive and enjoyable.


268 Old South Leaflets, Number 139, (1829), 3-7.
Instruction and entertainment reached the public through the sponsorship of various organizations. Churches, halls, and chapels were placed at the disposal of the lecturers and readers, who were often men and women of high rank in education, science, religion, statesmanship, reform and in the entertainment field. Wherever the lyceum existed the whole tone and character of society was elevated. The rapid spread of the lyceum inland is observed in the establishment of lyceums in Kentucky as early as in 1830.269 In 1841 Combe pointed out the social and educational advantages derived from these lyceums:

Lectures are delivered almost every night in the week in one institution or another, which are attended by audiences numbering from five to fifteen hundred persons of both sexes; but entertainment and excitement, as much as instruction, are the objects of these discourses . . . . The instruction conveyed by this method, is comparatively small, but it cultivates intellectual tastes among the people; and it binds the higher and lower minds together by reciprocation of sentiment. . . . this effect of democratic institutions is highly pleasing.270

The same year saw the old-fashioned lyceum flourishing in Iowa.271 Together with the innumerable literary and debating societies, it was considered to be one of the best means for developing culture.272

The establishment of these lyceums and debating societies was eminently calculated to excite a desire for education. They were the schools wherein the common people assembled to improve and practice what they learned from one another.273

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271 The Davenport Weekly Gazette, December 23, 1841.
273 The Liberator, March 19, 1847.
difficult for the performers, as was the case of other itinerant
speakers heretofore mentioned. Emerson while conducting his lecture
tour in Iowa in the sixties had a hazardous experience when he was
ferried over the Mississippi river through partially frozen waters.\textsuperscript{274}

So necessary was the people's rostrum whereby both visitors and laymen
alike could exchange views that it was considered a reproach to any
progressive town of the West to be without this influence.\textsuperscript{275} According
to Farquhar of Sandy Spring, Maryland, the lyceum was accomplishing
a great deal more than a cultivation of taste. His enthusiasm is ex­
pressed in these words:

When we recall the different purposes to which it has been
applied during the past six years since its initiation—
lectures, than which none could have been more instructive;
public discussions of momentous national questions; meet­
ings of literary and benevolent societies; school exhibi­
tions; draft clubs; defence meetings, &c., &c., may we
not all unite in the sentiment lately expressed by a
friend: "No building in this neighborhood has ever paid
so well."\textsuperscript{276}

According to McKay the lyceum lectures served as the people's college
in the frontier.\textsuperscript{277} From all indications the numerous meetings rivaled
the pulpit and stump in popularity. J. B. Pond summarizes their ac­
complishments when he says:

The lyceum platform stands for ability, genius, education,
reform, and entertainment. On it the greatest readers,
orators, and thinkers have stood. On it reform has found
her noblest advocates, literature her first expression,
progress her bravest pleaders, and humor its happiest
translation.\textsuperscript{278}

\textsuperscript{274} \textit{Daily State Register}, December 20, 1867.

\textsuperscript{275} \textit{Buchanan County Bulletin}, May 17, 1867.

\textsuperscript{276} William H. Farquhar, \textit{Annals of Sandy Spring}, (Baltimore:
Cushings and Bailey, 1884), 12.

\textsuperscript{277} Martha Nicholson McKay, \textit{Literary Clubs of Indiana},

\textsuperscript{278} J. B. Pond, \textit{Eccentricities of Genius}, (New York: G. W.
Dillingham and Company, Publishers, 1900), 539.
The Need For Training in Reading and Speaking. While almost everyone in the country was engaged in speaking his views on sundry subjects or participating in entertainment by means of reading from a written page or book, it was becoming increasingly evident by the more discriminating individuals that training for oral expression was important. In 1849 an item on this subject appeared in the Boston Daily Evening Transcript. According to this news report the habit of speaking and reading might become a "nuisance" if it were not cultivated through proper instruction in elocution. In the performances of laymen on the lecture platform there is specific evidence of a need for speech training. During the summer of 1856 MacBride records vividly one of the numerous debates held in the lyceums of the Mid-west. In this instance it was Squire Ezra Marks and Henry Clay Dennis, both members of a Friday evening lyceum society in Iowa. The debate was on the question, "Resolved: That the policy of the Compromise is essential in the progress of free government."

... There was no elocution, no oratory, ... It must be recorded that Mr. Dennis's speech at no time lacked evidence of sincerity; his manner was sometimes energetic in the extreme. Especially notable in delivery was this indictment. The tone of the voice became defiant, louder and more loud; his face took on unwonted pallor; his eyes flashed, his every movement proclaimed his excitement, until the closing sentence was fairly shouted, and for gesture he brought down both his fists with a vehemence that startled his audience.

Even among the well known itinerant lecturers is this situation similarly apparent. When Oscar Wilde, the famed poet from England visited

279 Boston Daily Evening Transcript, February 6, 1849.
280 MacBride, 251-269.
Iowa in 1882, he did not create a favorable impression because of his deficiency in delivery. The Iowa City Daily Republican reported that it was obvious that Wilde was ignorant of the art of elocution. It continued that the speaker talked an hour in a monotonous tone and his indistinctness made it difficult to follow his thoughts.281

Women Upon the Platform. Not only was it necessary for men to study and discuss community and world affairs in public meetings, but it was an expedient duty for women to consider these matters which affected all the people regardless of sex. Convinced that they had suffered from continual political, educational and professional discrimination, women were determined to unite in a campaign for their own rights. According to Waterman, the initial appearance of a woman on the American platform was on July 4, 1828, when the well-known Frances Wright, an outspoken campaigner on the slavery issue, made her first public speech at New Harmony, Indiana,282 a great cultural center which fostered an extensive lyceum program. Following Frances Wright were other women who spoke out vigorously on numerous other social problems confronting the country.

After sufficient interest had been awakened on leading questions, national conventions were held. Topics like increased rights for married women, anti-capital punishment, anti-slavery, temperance283

281 Iowa City Daily Republican, April 28, 1882.


and women's suffrage were discussed vigorously. In the thirty years following Frances Wright's speech the wall of prejudice which had kept women unemancipated and silent was being torn down. This liberty of speech stimulated the redress of human wrongs in the many conventions held throughout the land. Was it strange that the morality of unpaid and forced labor began to be questioned—that the chivalry of whipping women began to be scrutinized? Questions like these were the sharp issues which women as well as men discussed with great energy before large audiences in town halls and churches.

A number of women also became noted lecturers on the nineteenth century lyceum platform. The extensive traveling of Mary Ashton Livermore, author, lecturer and reformer following the middle portion of the century, is noted by Krefting who states that she lectured on the average of one hundred times a year in the lyceum. Over two thousand speeches were delivered by Miss Livermore on temperance and women's suffrage. She spoke in every state in the union and she covered twenty-five thousand miles annually.

For the responsible task of attempting to persuade nineteenth century audiences, women speakers were forced to learn to speak by sheer experience. As in the case of the male performers, much of

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This skill came from appearing before literary societies. Such was the case of Mrs. Matilda Joslyn Gage, a woman suffragist, who in 1833 received this kind of practice in the literary society of Cicero, New York.287 Lucretia Mott, another reformer, practiced her speeches in 1840 by reading over the material several times aloud.288 However, at Oberlin College, the first institution of higher learning to open its doors to women in 1837, there was no opportunity whatsoever for Lucy Stone, Ernestine Rose and other female students to obtain practice and training in speaking. Here women were only to form a part of the audience while men students held their debates.289

As a result of this neglect in the training of women in speaking Lydia Howard Sigourney advised in her Letters to Young Ladies that elocution be taught females to satisfy their desire for accomplishment in conveying sentiments.290 Edward D. Mansfield in his work on early American education stressed that the first and greatest acquisition for a lady was speech. Much of this skill in speaking, he says, "is to be learned from . . . the instruction of an experienced teacher, . . . "291 In his proposed program for female education he advocated courses in "reading" and "conversation" for "correct thinking, reflection and

287 Krefting, Part I, 400.
288 The Boston Post, cited in The Liberator, June 4, 1847.
289 Yoakum, 325.
criticism" and to enable one to better express "social feelings and social ideas." 292

There is no question of the need for training the nineteenth century American in speech. According to Partridge, the times demanded adept speakers who could expound the current issues intelligently and clearly to their countrymen. 293 It was also a duty of the people to be prepared to speak when religious, political, moral or social obligations dictated. Leaders particularly needed ability to speak according to the occasion. As Mark Sullivan so clearly writes, "To be able to expound... was a duty that might come to almost anybody." 294

Summary. Social conditions in the early nineteenth century were for the majority of Americans backward. Frontier aspects were evident throughout the nation even up to the end of the century; transportation facilities, however, were hastening the spread of culture over the land. America for the most part had been bred in a cabin and although civilization was rapidly changing the physical aspects of the country, awkward and deficient speech prevailed. Early frontier speakers were the first to bring culture, religion and justice to the settlers. Without the advantages of education and other means of culture and literacy, the great majority of people were prone to be more susceptible to emotional display on the platform. A declamatory or passionate type of speaking generally prevailed in the pulpit, in the legislative hall,

292 Ibid., 326.
in the courtroom, on the "stump" and on the improvised platform but with the advance of culture into the West, competition among the members of the professions, the extensive influence of the lyceum and the beginning of female oratory, the people realized that the training of speakers was necessary. Out of this demand grew the elocutionary movement.
CHAPTER II

The Background of American Elocution

Before entering upon a discussion of the widespread development of elocution throughout America, it is helpful to glance briefly at its derivation. This background consists chiefly of the initial signs of elocution in classical Greece and Rome, extending into the medieval period; the rise of elocution as a distinct discipline in the British Isles; and the early development of elocution particularly along the Eastern seaboard in America prior to the time of Rush in 1827. Moore states in The Saturday Review of Literature that "a period is like a disease: it does not begin when it begins, but before." The development of American elocution likewise, may best be studied by analyzing conditions before its existence.

Delivery in Ancient Times. Great eloquence has existed only in times of popular freedom. This was true of ancient Athens, where the democratic form of government was exceptionally favorable for the cultivation of legislative, judicial and political oratory. Here the senate was composed of five hundred men and the legislature constituted the entire population of freemen. Skill in public speaking was highly prized and was a necessary requirement. Its popularity led the senators and legislators to encourage a pedagogy in the subject of persuasive speaking. Teachers in the art of elocution and

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1 Virginia Moore, "Letters to the Editor," The Saturday Review of Literature, XXIX, (July 20, 1946), 17.
rhetoric therefore came to be in demand in the training of the youth of Greece. To present an intelligent, logical discourse and deliver the message with force, variety and effect was the purpose of their program.

It was in the city of Athens that the pioneer, Thrasymachus (457 B.C.) gave a pedagogy to rhetoric by publishing the first text having to do with elocution. In it he discussed the delivery of speech together with its composition and gave instructions on how to heighten the effect of words with the use of suitable gestures, tones, dress, drama and action.

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), the Greek Philosopher who reduced his vast knowledge to written form, devoting one or more formal treatises to each branch of learning, was chiefly concerned in his exposition on speechmaking with the character of the orator and persuasive rhetorical principles. Yet in his system of rhetorical training some attention was given to the speaker's important function of winning favorable impressions through the variation of such vocal elements as volume, pitch and rhythm. However, he formulated no system of training toward this end.

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3 The word elocution is used here in its modern sense to denote training in the delivery of speeches.


6 Ar. 134a. 3-4.
Demosthenes (c. 383-322), the greatest of Greek orators, was so strongly convinced of the importance of delivery in speechmaking that he gave it the first, second and third qualifications in attaining eloquence. He was probably never equalled in his own delivery of passionate language except by Cicero.7 Aeschines, Demosthenes' great rival in the Greek assembly, was trained in the theatre by actors, and became one himself. After the Macedonian conquest he settled in the Island of Rhodes (320 B.C.) where he set up a school of declamation.8 The effect of his own training in delivery could be easily detected. It was said, "he has a magnificent voice, under perfect musical control." With "his splendid voice, his trained elocution, and his practice in statuesque manner," he "must have had an advantage over his opponent (Demosthenes) in many accessories of effect."9 His study had given him a "thorough discipline in elocution and gesture."10

The matter of delivery also attracted the attention of the Romans, who copied the Greek models. As in Greece, skill in speaking was a basic preparation necessary for public life. Because there were no professional law schools, the prospective Roman lawyer trained in rhetorical schools and learned law by listening to the public legal

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7 Barnes, 177.
9 Ibid., 395-401
The great Roman orator Cicero (103-43 B.C.), whose views on justice in political life are so highly acclaimed, divided the business and art of speaking into five parts—*inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria* and *pronuntiatio*. It was his early interpretation of word meanings, (*elocutio* as style) and *pronuntiatio* as delivery), that in eighteenth century England was a source of confusion, which ended finally in the general acceptance of the term *elocution* as relating to vocal delivery and bodily action. No system of training in delivery itself was prescribed by Cicero, only explanatory remarks regarding the effectiveness of natural expression in voice and bodily action were given. His recommendation that nature should provide the correct effect in voice and bodily action gives evidence of Cicero's being a forerunner of the "follow nature" school.

Quintilian (A.D. 40 - C. 100), the Latin professor of rhetoric who gives a persuasive defense of rhetorical training and prescribes its use in the early childhood years in his *Institutio Oratoria* (Education of the Orator), wrote the most exhaustive treatment of oratorical training yet to be found. Although his profound observations again deal in a majority of instances with rhetorical principles,

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11 Barnes, 223.


13 Reference to Mason, footnote 40.

14 Ibid., Book III, LVII-LXI. The followers of the "natural school" may be said to have held the belief that good delivery resulted from natural impulses. They deplored the practice of teaching modulation, gesture, etc., by rule.

15 The *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian With an English Translation, by H. E. Butler (New York: G. P. Putman's Sons, 1933), Four Volumes.
he devotes chapter three of Book XI entirely to the explanation of
delivery as a means of persuasion. In addition, there are numerous
suggestions offered relative to the training methods desired in such
elocutionary precepts as declamation and grace of delivery. Of
these teaching techniques Ryan considers declamation his important
contribution. Brace believes Quintilian was the nearest approach
by the ancients to elocution.

Both Pflaum and Gasparovich, who studied carefully the works
of the ancients in connection with their concept of vocal and general
delivery, found that while these aspects of public speaking were re­
garded as important attributes in the orator's education, there was a
tendency to consider reading a natural skill. No attempt to offer any
specific solution or system for its development can be found.

About 792 the Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne appeared,
based on Cicero's De Inventione. As early as 349 the rhetoric of
Quintilian was known in England, where the classical principles of
this study came into use in the Latin grammar schools. However,

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16 Ibid., Book II, i.
17 Ibid., Book XI, 11-111.
18 J. P. Ryan, "Quintilian's Message," The Quarterly Journal
of Speech, XV, (April, 1929), 171-180.
19 Maria Porter Brace, A Text-Book of Elocution. (New York,
Leach, Shewell and Sanborn, 1892), 11.
20 See George R. R. Pflaum, The Voice Training of the Orator
in Antiquity Up To The Time of Quintilian, (M.A. Thesis, Cornell
University, 1924).
21 See Eleanor Gasparovich, A Study of the Treatment of Pronun-
tiation by the Ancients, (M.A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1945).
22 H. F. Harding, "Quintilian's Witnesses," Speech Monographs,
I, (September, 1934), 1-20.
23 Foster Watson, English Grammar Schools to 1660, (Cambridge:
University Press, 1909), 344.
English rhetorical methods largely pertained to exornation, or embellishment. This was largely due to the influence of the Progymnasmata of Aphthonius, a textbook written in the fourth century and still being reprinted in the late sixteenth century. Richard Rainolde's *Foundation of Rhetorike* (1562) which followed the principles of Aphthonius, was used in British schools, where delivery was given much attention in respect to articulation, expression, meaning and emphasis. Pupils studied Ramus' *Logic* (1574) and in addition were required to memorize the figures and tropes from Talaeus' *Rhetoric* (1577), 24 a treatise which also contained principles pertaining to voice, vocal inflection, and action. 25 In an investigation by Guthrie both of these works were found to be widely popular in the American colonies. Rhetorical textbooks by Voss, Caussius, Silvayne, Butler, Cox, Farnaby and Peacham were also favorites used prior to the widespread use of Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian. 26

It is in the *Arts of Rhetorique*, by Thomas Wilson in 1553, that the reversion from the rhetoric of exornation to that of the classicists actually began, although it did not come to full fruition until the beginning of the seventeenth century. This book written in English,

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followed somewhat the rhetorical philosophies of Cicero, Quintilian, Aristotle and Erasmus. However, it was "well salted with his own critical judgments and opinions," and did contain some references to the fifth of Cicero's canons of rhetoric. Wilson, believing that gestures were the speech of the body, concluded that they should agree with the state of mind and recommended that if the student had no voice by nature he "must seek ... help elsewhere." Meanwhile, the rhetorical principles of Quintilian and Cicero were being taught by John Reynolds in Oxford in 1572. At Cambridge, Gabriel Harvey lectured on Cicero before 1576. Thus, Sandford points out that the great classical rhetoricians were an influence upon Wilson and the other lecturers in the universities. On the other hand, the predominant interest in "ornamental" rhetoric had been nurtured chiefly in the grammar schools.

An increasing amount of attention to delivery came a few years later in 1598, when Charles Butler of Oxford wrote in Latin an extensive study of rhetoric entitled Rhetoricae Libri Duo. In this study, of which ten chapters were devoted to pronuntiatio, references are made to the gestures of the whole body including the head, the brow, the

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29 Thomas Wilson, The Arte of Rhetorike, For the Use of all Suche as are Studious of Eloquence Sette Forthe in English, (London, Ihon Kingston, 1553), 112-113.
eyes, the arms, the hands, the fingers, the chest, legs and feet.\textsuperscript{31}

In the seventeenth century more progress was achieved in the development of methods of delivery. Probably the first English work dealing in part with this subject was Robert Robinson's \textit{The Art of Pronunciation} written in 1617.\textsuperscript{32} No copies of this early work are known to exist in America. Outstanding in the consideration of delivery was John Bulwer, whose work \textit{Chirologia} and \textit{Chironomia} in 1644 was limited to the \textit{actio}, or the Roman term for \textit{pronuntiatio}. In his system Bulwer used pictures of definite positions of the hand to illustrate gestures. In the belief of McGrew Bulwer's \textit{Chironomia} was the earliest work in English devoted entirely to gesture.\textsuperscript{33} While these books follow the classical doctrines closely, being according to Harding a recast of the Quintilian views on delivery,\textsuperscript{34} they were essentially elocutionary in aspect. For example, it is observed that Bulwer calls the attention of his "candid and ingenious reader" to the failure of the ancients in not teaching gestures. These Bulwer feels to be of particular use and advantage in the expression of meaning. His viewpoint is observable in the following:

\begin{quote}
... as the Tongue speaketh to the Eare, so Gesture speaketh to the Eye, and therefore a number of such
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[31] Sandford, "English Theories of Public Address, 1530-1828," 62.
\item[33] \textit{Ibid.}
\item[34] \textit{Op. cit.}
\end{footnotes}
An Index to the following Alphabet of natural gestures of the Fingers.

Which gestures, besides their typical signs, are so ordered to serve for privy cyphers for any secret intimation.

A B C D Figures out the I Gesture. II Gesture. III Gesture. IV Gesture.
W X Y Z XXII Gesture. XXIII Gesture. XXIV Gesture. XXV Gesture.

From Bulwer's Chirologia and Chironomia, see p. 91.
persons whose Eyes doe dwell upon the Faces and fashions of men, do well know the advantage of this observation...35

Undoubtedly, Bulwer's pictures and rules relative to gesture form an initial introduction to the mechanical system of elocution later so widely employed in training speakers in delivery both in England and America. His following descriptive rule on gesturing should leave no doubt in this matter: "To Lay the Hand open to our Heart, using a kind of bowing gesture, is a garb wherein we affirm a thing, swear or call God to witness a truth, ... "36

The appearance of Bulwer's mechanical system of training speakers was in direct conflict to the previous works of the "natural school," whose adherents made no suggestions for the actual training of gestures. However, there were rhetoricians like Thomas Hobbes, who in his The Art of Rhetoric in 1618 tended to follow the natural school of Aristotle in the delivery of speeches.37 Hobbes neglected to formulate any systematic training whatsoever in elocution. Dismissing the subject he advocated that one "speak feelingly; that is with such Passion as is fit for the matter he is in; as angerly in matter of Injury."38

35 John Bulwer, Chirologia; or the Naturall Language of the Hand. Composed of the Speaking Notions, and Discoursing Gestures There­of, wharesunto is added Chironomia; or the Art of Manuall Rhetorike. Consisting of the Naturall Expressions, digested by Art in the Hand, as the Chiefe Instrument of Eloquence, By Historical Manifestos Exemplified out of the Authentic Registers of Common Life, and Civill Conversation. (London: Printed by Thomas Harper, 1644), Introductory Section, no page.

36 Ibid., 88.


In Bulwer and Hobbes there are therefore unmistakable signs of an early complete disagreement in the theory of teaching gestures.

In the middle of the eighteenth century an active interest among speakers, educators, and authors alike was displayed in the correct utterances of the spoken word. For example, Lord Chesterfield, the famous speaker in the House of Lords, in a letter to his son dated June 21, 1748, was much perturbed over a report of his bad enunciation and its eventual consequences and warns:

Good God! If this ungraceful and disagreeable manner of speaking had either by your negligence or mind, become more habitual to you, as in a couple of years more it would have been, what a figure you would have made in company or in public assembly.

In the same year of 1748, John Mason, who was teaching ministerial students in London, wrote a treatise called *An Essay on Elocution*. He seems to attach a new meaning to the term *elocution*, which in classical rhetoric had been used as the third Ciceronian canon referring to style. Mason says, "I use the term elocution here in its common or vulgar sense, to signify Utterance, Delivery, or pronunciation."

Accordingly, Guthrie credits Mason with applying the term *elocution* to that phase of speech training known as delivery. In 1753 this elocutionary impulse was given added support when Mason declared in his *An

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40 John Mason, *An Essay on Elocution or Pronunciation*, (London: No Publisher 1748) 1. Apparently the term was being used in that sense prior to 1748.

**Essay on Action Proper For the Pulpit** that one must practice elocution by choosing compositions and sermons to read and recite both in the house and in the open air. He writes that by speaking frequently in the open air the voice would be improved and the lungs strengthened.

In discussing gestures, Mason prescribes teaching how to make them but offers no pictured illustrations. He advises that they be natural, but warns that if one merely thinks the impulse will take care of them "he will have no Gestures at all . . . ."42 Thus it came about that elocution in its newer sense had finally gained a small foothold. As early as 1762 Mason's *Essay on Elocution* was to be found in the Harvard Library, but apparently he was of little influence in later periods.

In the same decade John Ward in London prepared his *A System of Oratory* in two volumes for publication. Besides being "a tremendous synthesis of Greek and Roman rhetorical theory,"43 the work includes over a hundred pages on voice and gesture, but *elocution* is interpreted in the early classical tradition as pertaining to choice and variety of words and propriety of expression.44 Ward upheld the thesis that speaking is more than "motionless expression" and cautioned against this

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practice. He did not indulge in detailed suggestions but recommended many elocutionary doctrines, a few of which are illustrated below:

The hands should generally be open; but in expressions of compunction and anger they may be closed. Fear occasion a tremor and hesitation of the voice; and assurance gives it strength and firmness. All exclamations should be violent. When we address to inanimate things, the voice should be higher, than when to animated beings.

Ward was more inclusive than most rhetoricians in his directions concerning delivery. In his lectures he emphasizes the importance of distinctness and pausing, and cautions against a "high pitch" and a "harsh and rough" voice. Furthermore, he was convinced that "nature may be assisted and improved by art and exercise." In addition, Ward explains that,

... it is requisite to observe ... the management of ... voice and gestures. As to the former, how it rises, sinks, or varies, as the nature of each sentence, and the several parts of it require; and how its different changes and inflections are suited to answer his particular intention, through the whole discourse.

The early influence of Ward is significant both from the standpoint of rhetoric and that of simple elocutionary principles. The work was used in Harvard, Yale and Brown before 1780. Thomas Jefferson also

46 Ibid., 337-342.
47 Ibid., 376.
48 Ibid., 426-427.
had a copy of Ward in his own collection which he sold to the Library of Congress in 1814.50

The strongest realization that the rhetorical school could not supply the proper training in delivery for public speakers but that an established system of symbols was needed for determining the correct inflection, emphasis and gesture, came from Thomas Sheridan, the English actor, author and lecturer. As early as in 1756 Sheridan had made a strong plea for a more efficient system of British education. Convinced that the education of England, wherein the Greek and Latin languages were highly cultivated, was defective because of its impracticality for "life's work," he proposed the "full use of the study of oratory." Moreover, he cited the urgent need for skill in speaking among the clergy, the bar, and the bulk of the people, whom he classified as illiterate.51

It was on July 10, 1762, that he published his Course of Lectures on Elocution. Elocution, defined by Sheridan, is "the just and graceful management of the voice, countenance, and gestures.52 The prevailing lack of clarity and forcefulness in utterance among the English speaking peoples and its social significance are reported in his first Lecture as follows:

50 Catalog of the Library of Congress to which is annexed a Copious Index, (Washington: Printed by Jonathan Eliot, 1815), 155.


That a general inability to read, or speak, with propriety and grace in public, runs through the natives of the British dominions, is acknowledged; it shows itself in our senates and churches, on the bench and at the bar.

In short, that good public reading, or speaking, is one of the rarest qualities to be found, in a country where reading and speaking in public are more generally used, than in any other in the world; where the doing them well is a matter of the utmost importance to the state, and to society; and where promotion, or honour to individuals, is sure to attend even a moderate share of merit in those points, is a truth which cannot be denied.

Sheridan complained further that when students were sent to Latin schools no attention was given to articulation, but the time of the master was entirely consumed in teaching Latin and Greek. The lack of speech training therefore allowed a "vicious articulation" which would infect a man's discourse through his lifetime. He therefore pointed to the need of masters to teach "a comprehensive system of rules in elocution" in order to correct faults of articulation and awkwardness in manner.

Since Sheridan did not himself establish a system of symbols to indicate the vocal utterance and physical expressions, his methods were apparently of the "impulsive" school. Nevertheless he has been declared "mechanistic" by Winans, who offers as evidence the point that Sheridan not only lamented the fact that there were no symbols, but went so far as to suggest that a passage should be marked with signs intelligible to one's self, although he himself devised no such

53 Ibid., 27-28.
54 Ibid., 38-39.
55 Ibid., 143.
system. In addition to his desire for a definite system of instruction, Sheridan proposed that a school of oratory be established as a first requisite in English education. To this requirement he added in order of importance, schools of history and politics, agriculture and military art.  

The interest in an ideal college was also apparent in a conversation which took place in 1772 between James Boswell and Dr. Samuel Johnson while they were riding together enjoying the scenery of northern Scotland. In passing the time it occurred to Boswell that a list of teachers for a college might be selected from their own friends. Johnson became immediately interested and suggested Boswell as the ideal teacher for law, himself to teach literature and theology, Edmund Burke to teach politics and rhetoric, and David Garrick to instruct courses in public speaking.  

In America Thomas Jefferson prescribed the use of Sheridan together with Blair and Mason for the study of elocution in a course on rhetoric. Likewise another American, Chauncey A. Goodrich, a son-in-law of Noah Webster and a teacher of rhetoric at Yale from 1817 to 1839, is thought to have been influenced by Sheridan.  

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anonymous writer in *The North American Review* in 1829 believed the "Lectures" had value but declared that they were too speculative "for the purpose now in view." In 1834 Dr. J. P. K. Henshaw, a Rector of St. Peter's Church in Baltimore, wrote a book using Sheridan's ideas but altering them and accompanying those with instructions and criticisms on the reading of the church service. There is no doubt that Sheridan wielded a strong influence in numerous other instances in the development of American elocution.

A critic of Sheridan by the name of John Rice wrote in 1765 *An Introduction to the Art of Reading With Energy and Propriety*. Rice warned against a peculiarity of tone and manner in reading and was disturbed chiefly by the fact that notation had not been advanced sufficiently as a method of specifying the differences in "general tone." With a simple musical scale which seems to anticipate Steele he then illustrates very briefly how modulation depends on a "long and short, loud and soft manner of pronouncing words." This was one of the first evidences of the use of a musical scale in connection with modulation — a practice adhered to by Sir Joshua Steele in 1775 and later by nineteenth century elocution teachers.

The influence of Sheridan is again noticeable in the work of William Enfield, a lecturer on Belles Lettres in an academy at

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64 Ibid., 40.

65 Ibid., 38.
Warrington, who published The Speaker in London, in 1775. The author conformed to Sheridan's views and offered a few generalized suggestions for the training of the speaker. He advocated memorizing the selections, whereby a student could concentrate more freely upon the ideas which he is to express and thus more ably discern their particular meaning and force. In addition Enfield believed that the "memoriter method" insured the previous knowledge of the inflections, emphasis, and tone which the words require. The treatise, a small book featuring a number of selections for memorization, was considerably imitated by later writers and used as a textbook in the colonies. It was reprinted in New York, Boston and Philadelphia early in the nineteenth century.

In 1767, in London, James Burgh published his Art of Speaking, which became so widely known and used in the American colonies that ten reprints were necessary to fill the demand. According to Thomas it was used in the library at Harvard as early as 1767 and later by the student literary societies at both Yale and Harvard. Of special interest is Burgh's method of notation—a system formulated to achieve a natural delivery. For emphasis, he suggests the writing of the word concerned in italics; for emotional value to be portrayed, he recommends designating the particular feeling such as grief, joy,

66 William Enfield, the Speaker; or Miscellaneous Pieces Selected From the Best English Writers, Disposed Under Proper Heads for the Improvement of Youth, in Reading and Speaking, (Boston: S. C. Beals Printer, 1808).


anger and other emotional states in the margin at the side of the sentence involved. In addition, the students are instructed to memorize the selections "so as to be able, without having too often recourse to their papers, to speak them with ease and gracefulness. ..." 69

Far superior to Rice in observation was Sir Joshua Steele, who in 1775 published his Prosodia Rationalis. The book was written chiefly to refute a Lord Monboddo, who had complained that English speech lacked the inflections, the melody and rhythm of the Greek tongue. Steele was also concerned over the fact that although some speakers had good logic and choice of words, their delivery in respect to accent, rhythmus, pause and force, though just in quantity and emphasis, lacked beauty and effect. In addition he pointed out their need for proper enunciation. 70 As a result Steele devised a musical staff with note-like indications for rests and pauses by which the "measure" could be indicated. In this fashion he "articulated" the language into syllables, changing the tone in order to secure rhythm. 71 The work itself was by far the most specific attempt in notation up to that time, and was an influence in this respect upon later English and American writers. Dr. Jonathon Barber, at Yale,


71 Ibid., 66.
And here it may be proper to recapitulate and bring the several marks, which we have adopted for the expression of these five orders of accidents, into one view.

1st, accent. Acute \, or grave \, or both combined \, in a variety of circumflexes.

2dly, quantity. Longest \, long \, short \, shortest .

3dly, pause or silence. Semibrief rest \, minim rest \, crotchet rest \, quaver rest .

4thly, emphasis or cadence. Heavy \, light \, lightest .

5thly, force or quality of sound. Loud, \, louder \, soft \, softer .

Also the sub-division of bars or cadences may be, at the pleasure of the composer, in any fractional parts, the sum of which will make the whole quantity of the bar or cadence, provided that the denominators of the said fractional parts are always, either sub-duples or sub-triples, of the whole number of the bar or cadence.

And also all measured rests or pauses are as significant in computation of time and in value of place, respecting cadence or the .

* Hereafter called Poize. See p. 77.
called Steele's work "original, and somewhat abstruse; but of greater practical importance than perhaps he himself perceived." H. O. Apthorp of the Vocal Institute in Philadelphia, whose theory of inflections is almost entirely that of Rush, in 1858 said:

The perfect correctness of Mr. Steele's theory [of the measure of speech] is admitted by the most distinguished philologists alive; and the value of objections raised against its application, or rather of the prejudices existing, has been sufficiently tested by my own experience, to warrant me in continuing to teach it, and to recommend it to others.

I have therefore made the subject so plain, as to enable almost any student to put it in practice without much aid from a teacher; or so simple, that any person at all familiar with music, may master the art of reading scored language, in less than an hour.

According to Hultzen, Steele's observations from his "well-trained and discriminating ear," anticipated a number of very recent conclusions in the study of phonetics.

A year after Steele's publication, George Campbell, a principal in Marischal College in Aberdeen, Scotland, published The Philosophy of Rhetoric. The material for this work he had delivered in his lecture courses before theological students. The system Campbell

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72 Jonathon Barber, A Grammar of Elocution; containing The Principles of the Arts of Reading and Speaking; Illustrated by Appropriate Exercise and Examples, Adapted to Colleges, Schools, and Private Instruction; The Whole Arranged in the Order in Which It is Taught in Yale College. (New Haven: Published by A. H. Maltby, 1830), 7.


followed is largely rhetorical in aspect and relies quite heavily upon the classical rhetoricians. There is no attempt by Campbell to offer students a system of rules to follow, but attention is called to several faults of delivery in his Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence. The faults mentioned are straining the voice, rapidity of utterance, a theatrical and too violent manner, insipid monotony and a singsong tone, but no instructions are given for overcoming these errors. Although Campbell's writings never had extensive popularity, his leadership in homiletics has been followed by several modern writers, including Porter, Newman and Day. His text was used in the Newton Theological School in Massachusetts in the early nineteenth century. Henry Ward Beecher also employed it in his training at Amherst, and according to Guthrie it was in use in several other institutions in America up to 1850. In the western universities of DePauw and Indiana, Rahe notes its use at this same time.


76 George Campbell, Lectures on Systematic Theology and Pulpit Eloquence, Edited by Henry J. Ripley, (Boston: Lincoln and Edwards, 1832), 121-122.


John Walker, a well known actor, philologist and lexicographer, greatly advanced the method of teaching delivery by writing his *Elements of Elocution* in 1781, a two-volume work. He regarded delivery as "new, curious and important," and admits, perhaps thinking about Steele's musical staffs, "that the manner of treating it has too many faults and imperfections." Yet Walker laments the fact that his lack of musical knowledge prevents him from finding out what Steele really was attempting to accomplish. Considered as a rival of Sheridan in those days, Walker placed much emphasis upon the theory that pauses, like the inflections, should be based on sentence structure. He also discusses accent, emphasis and gesture and describes how over seventy different emotions may be expressed.

It is pertinent to note that the educators of the period expected the elocutionists to provide rules or something of a definite system for speaking. Walker's reaction to this attitude prompted him to set down his theories and in the preface of his *Elements* he writes:

Having had the honor, a few years ago, to give public lectures on English Pronunciation at the University of Oxford, I was some time afterwards invited by several of the Heads of Houses to give private lectures on the Art Of Reading, in their respective Colleges. So flattering an invitation made me extremely anxious to preserve the favourable impression I had made, and this put me upon

81 John Walker, *Elements of Elocution: In Which the Principles of Reading and Speaking are Investigated; and Such Pause, Emphasis and Inflection of Voice, as Are Suitable to Every Variety of Sentence, are Distinctly Pointed Out and Explained: With Directions for Strengthening and Modulating the Voice, so as to Render it Varied, Forceful, and Harmonious. To Which is Added a Complete System of the Passions: Showing How They Affect the Countenance, Tone of Voice, and Gesture of the Body.* (Boston: D. Mallory and Company, 1810), ix-x.
throwing the instruction I had to convey into something that had the appearance of a system. Those only, who are thoroughly acquainted with the subject, can conceive the labour and perplexity in which this task engaged me: it was not a florid harangue on the advantages of good Reading that was expected from me, but some plain practical rules in a scholastic and methodical form, that would convey real and useful instruction.82

Walker was a tremendous influence upon succeeding British and American elocutionists, even more so than Sheridan, because of his numerous specific rules for pauses and inflections, which form the basis of his mechanical system. His book ran through several reprintings and numerous references were made to his work by later elocutionists. According to Hoshor,83 Goodrich at Yale seems to have relied on Walker as well as Sheridan for his lecture notes. However, Walker's mechanical methods drew severe criticism from many who opposed his theories. Among these, for example, was Archbishop Richard Whately84 who published his Elements of Rhetoric in 1828. An anonymous writer in The North American Review labeled Walker as being too detailed.85 James A. Winans of Dartmouth College in a recent article in The Quarterly Journal of Speech claims to have used Walker in his college days and found that his mechanical methods tended to take the speaker's mind off

82 Ibid., vii.
the meaning and the audience. From the foregoing evidence, despite the criticisms, it can be estimated that John Walker was an important figure in the controversial history of the "natural" and "mechanical" schools of training speakers.

In 1781, the Reverend Hugh Blair, a Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the University of Edinburgh, wrote his Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, a work holding quite closely to the "natural school" of delivery. In chapter XXXIII, which is devoted to Pronunciation or Delivery, he maintains that in order to project the correct meaning of written material one must accurately determine the sense of the passage87 rather than the form of the sentence, as Walker had insisted. He further writes that to eliminate an artificial manner or any other form of "unpersuasive" delivery, the speaker should observe closely and use "the tones of sensible and animated conversation."88 Even studied orations to be delivered in the "exalted style of the declaiming manner" must, according to Blair, be given in "the natural tones of grave and dignified conversation."89 This seems to have been one of the early references to conversation as the basis for good speech.

Blair followed the precepts of the ancients in his treatise; he also used Sheridan and Campbell. Although Blair is partial to the

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88 Ibid., 373.
89 Ibid., 373-374.
"natural school" he does admit that a need exists for "some study and art" in speaking. He is convinced that this "study" or training is essential, for he explains that "many persons are naturally ungraceful in the motions which they make; and this ungracefulness might, in part at least, be reformed by application and care."

Admissions like these from Blair caused Winans to declare that he was essentially as mechanical as both Sheridan and Walker.

The scope of Blair's influence was noted by Guthrie, who claims that he was one of the rhetorical names with which almost every college student in the nineteenth century was acquainted. Men like Chauncey A. Goodrich and Henry Ward Beecher claimed to have studied Blair with profit. Rehe found that in what was then called the West Blair was used in the thirties at Hanover College in Indiana, in the forties at Wabash College and at Indiana University, and in the sixties at Evansville College.

Lessons in Elocution, a work written in 1795 by William Scott, a teacher of elocution in Edinburgh, was almost entirely a copy of Enfield's Speaker. This book had a large number of selections to be memorized by the student. In addition, a small number of pictures on

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90 Ibid., 375.
92 Thesis, 84.
posture and gesture, together with simple rules for their correct use, were included in the first few pages. Basically Scott is of the opinion that prose should be practiced before poetry; he recommended that the teacher instruct his pupils in the correct positions to assume. Regarding the benefits of his rules, Scott says:

The great use, therefore, of a system of action like the present, is, that a boy will never be embarrassed for want of knowing what to do with his legs and arms; nor will he bestow that attention on his action, which ought to be directed to the pronunciation: he will always be in a position which will not disgrace his figure, and when this gesture is easy to him, it may serve as a groundwork to something more perfect: he may, either by his own genius or his master's instructions, build some other action upon it, which may, in time, give it additional force and variety.

The book obviously was well received in America, for it was reprinted six times in Philadelphia alone. "Abraham Lincoln learned to speak and write the English language through an intense and repeated study of Scott's Lessons." According to Beveridge, it was one of the six books that most profoundly influenced Lincoln in his early years in Indiana.

In 1797, there was entered at Stationer's Hall a compilation of notes by the Reverend J. W. Anderson of London. These notes had been taken by Anderson while he was a student of David Garrick, the

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97 Ibid., 17-18.


famous English actor who discovered Sarah Siddons. According to the notes,
Garrick was instructing clergymen how to read the book of Common Prayer.
Stress was placed on using a "dignified" tone of voice instead of the
"sing-song" tone so frequently heard from the clergy. Garrick's
instructions were generally vague and based on the assumption that one
ought to know how a tone of "solemn dignity," as well as an obnoxious
one, would sound. His directions are somewhat similar to those of
Walker in portraying the "passions." Concerning the clergymen's
problems of pausing, posture, force and animation, Garrick's advice was
of a somewhat mechanical nature; but for the most part he advocated action
to suit the "sacredness of the occasion" and is therefore classified
in the "natural school." His American influence was slight as compared
with Blair and Campbell, his contemporaries.

Another author who adhered to the rhetorical concept of naturalness
was William Milns of Oxford, who in 1797 wrote The Well-Bred Scholar,
a work designed to help young English students in writing and speaking.
Although this book is chiefly of the "natural school" in its approach
to speech training, Milns was nevertheless aware of the need for a "just
and graceful delivery" and laments the serious omission

100 See Walker, 306-379.
101 Garrick's Mode of Reading the Liturgy of the Church of England,
A New Edition with Notes, and a Preliminary Discourse on Public Reading,
Edited by Richard Cull, (London: John W. Parker, 1840), 80.
of this form of educational training in the schools of the times. He offers no specific system, but does include a collection of essays for declamation purposes. The fact that he recognized the need for a system of elocution is noticeable in his following words:

What can be more absurd than to see young people put for whole years under the care of masters, to learn to come and go out of a room or to make and return a compliment in a becoming manner; though at the same time it is left wholly to nature, or to common instinct, to give that propriety and address so necessary to make a person heard without ridicule or contempt, not only in public assemblies, but even in the narrower circles of private intercourse?102

Milns offered nothing new to the field of delivery, but his text, reprinted in New York, may have been used somewhat in the colonies.

The Pulpit Orator, written anonymously in England and published in America in 1804, was mostly classical in substance. Much of the book consisted of orations from Parliament and the House of Commons, as well as funeral orations. The "natural school" of thought was conspicuous, although a few simple rules on the matter of gesturing were added:

The movement of your hands must always answer the nature of the thing you speak of; which Shakespeare alludes to, when he says, Suit the action to the word, the word to the action.

You must raise your hand in swearing, and in exclamations, so that the action may suit the expression, and both of them agree to the nature of the thing.103


103 The Pulpit Orator, (Boston: David Carlisle, 1804), 47.
Somewhat like Sheridan, the author of this treatise cited some pertinent examples of crude behavior in contemporary public speaking:

Several people have a custom of spitting and hemming in their speech, which are not only disgusting to the eyes and ears of their hearers, but considerably interrupt their delivery. The latter habit is common even among the first speakers in both the House of Lords and Commons. The late Lord Ashburton had it to very great excess, which rendered him, with other causes, a most disagreeable and ungracious deliverer, although what he said was always to the purpose, and logically correct... Both these vices should be carefully avoided.

Following Burgh, Sheridan and Walker was the Reverend Gilbert Austin, whose Chironomia in 1806 was a decidedly mechanical treatment of delivery. This work exerted an enormous influence upon subsequent writers of American nineteenth century elocution. In this remarkable book Austin relied for much of his theory on medieval rhetoricians as well as on the classicists. Actually all but his material on gestures seems to be mere repetition of what had already been written. Even in this connection he drew some ideas from Quintilian. His elaborate treatment of both notations and rules for all types of positions and gestures is significant. Twelve pages of small figures represented various dramatic poses, two of which were devoted to diverse positions interpreted by Sarah Siddons. Austin's purpose in the use of these figures and notations was to produce a language of symbols to represent the action of the orator in a speech. His approach is easily observed in the following extremely mechanistic prescription of a certain position of the feet:

104 Ibid., 16.

105 Gilbert Austin, Chironomia: or a Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery, (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, in the Strand, 1806), see Plate 5 and 6 in Appendix.
The wind was high.

He wrings his hands.

He beats his breast.

Cold canting honour

Cold round the world with every ill.
In this position the right foot (advanced before the left about the breadth of the narrowest part of the foot) forms with the left an angle of about 75 degrees as may be seen in the plan. The lines which form this angle passing through the length of each foot, meeting its vertex under the heel of the left. The principal weight of the body is sustained by the left foot, the plan of which is deeply shadowed, the right foot rests lightly but in its whole extent upon the ground and is faintly shadowed.106

The effect of this book on the elocution teachers of the nineteenth century was unique. Any treatise which was written solely on gesture or to any extent featuring it, depended in most instances upon Austin. The North American Review carried an article in 1829, however, which criticized the work for being too elaborate and expensive for common use, also for being "too artificial, perhaps, to be safe as a manual."107

In 1808, The British Cicero, a small rhetorical work containing selections for declamation, was published in three volumes by Thomas Browne. This work was printed and probably used to some extent in the colonies, but to what degree is a matter of conjecture. Although Browne followed closely the doctrines of the classical authorities, he is careful to point out that the word elocution as now currently used conveyed a different meaning from that held by the ancients. His argument was that the term according to the classical theories had meant the language which the orator used, or the words in which he expressed an idea. Browne defines the prevalent meaning of elocution thus:

106 Ibid., 298.
But Elocution is now commonly taken in a more confined sense, as implying only the tones of voice, the utterance, the enunciation of the speaker, with the proper accompaniments of countenance and gesture, all which were included by the ancients in what they called Pronunciation.\textsuperscript{108}

Impressed with Joshua Steele's method of scoring poetry, John Thelwall, a celebrated teacher of elocution in London, imitating Steele's system, scored prose and poetry with his students. It was in 1810 that Thelwall, who had already established his own private school of oratory and elocution in a land that was "an exhaustless mine of oratorical capability,"\textsuperscript{109} wrote his \textit{A Letter to Henry Cline}. According to Haberman, Thelwall thought of elocution as a science of physiology which

\[ \ldots \text{demonstrates the anatomy of the vocal organs and the laws of physical necessity in speech, on the science of music which explains the rhythm and harmony of speech, and on the science of philology which settles disputed questions of accent, pronunciation, and quantity.} \textsuperscript{110} \]

In his \textit{A Letter to Henry Cline} Thelwall discloses an interest in speech re-education by stating that most speech impediments seem to be attributed to mental causes. It actually appears however that...

\textsuperscript{108} Thomas Browne, \textit{The British Cicero: Or a Selection of the Most Admired Speeches in the English Language; Arranged Under Three Distinct Heads of Popular, Parliamentary, and Judicial Oratory; With Historical Illustrations; to Which Is Prefixed An Introduction to the Study and Practice of Eloquence}, (Philadelphia: Birch and Small, 1810), I, 40.

\textsuperscript{109} John Thelwall, \textit{A Letter to Henry Cline, Esq., on Imperfect Developments of the Faculties, Mental and Moral, as Well as Constitutional and Organic; and on the Treatment of Impediments of Speech}, (London: Printed by Richard Taylor and Company, 1810), 256.

the treatise is an advertisement of his method. Hugh Miller, a
Scottish writer of verse, recalled a cousin by the name of William
in England who had attended Thelwall's private elocution school.
He discloses that his cousin was impressed with Thelwall's particular
emphasis upon the correct pronunciation of words. William is re­
ported to have been corrected on "three out of every four words at
least." Not much is known of Thelwall's influence in America,
although Dr. Jonathan Barber, who was his student, wrote one of his
books in America on the application of the theories of Thelwall and
Steele.

**Reaction To The Emphasis Upon Elocution.** Elocution undoubtedly
had developed a secure foothold in the training of speech in the
British Isles. Poor articulation and pronunciation, monotone and
other defects in vocal expression as well as awkwardness of gesture
and position among the other attributes of bodily action now would
be taken care of in the study and practice of elocution. The mechanical
methods of notation, whether in the form of inflectional patterns, de­
tailed markings for gesture, or in the system of the musical scale
whereby note-like symbols determined the correct vocal effect in tone,
stress and measure, received favorable response. Dr. David K. Guthrie,
an eminent Scottish clergyman, discloses that in his college life at

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the University of Edinburgh in 1815 he had received great benefit from such elocutionary instruction:

I had, when a student in divinity, paid more than ordinary attention to the art of elocution, knowing how much of the effect produced on the audience depended on the manner as well as the matter; that, in point of fact, the manner is to the matter as the powder is to the ball. I had attended elocution classes winter after winter, walking across half the city and more, after eight o'clock at night, fair night and foul, and not getting back to my lodgings till about half past ten. There I learned to find out and correct many acquired and more or less awkward defects in gesture—to be, in fact, natural; to acquire a command over my voice so as to suit its force and emphasis to the sense, and to modulate it so as to express the feelings, whether of surprise, or grief, or indignation, or pity. I had heard very indifferent discourses made forcible by a vigorous, and an able one reduced to feebleness by a poor, pithless delivery. 113

It is significant to note at this point that both the elocutionists and the naturalists had as their objective a natural delivery. However, a sharp controversy existed as to the method of attaining this end. Differing from David Guthrie's favorable reaction to elocution was Hugh Miller's opposite impression. Miller makes known his observations of a Mr. Walsh, an itinerant lecturer, who appeared in the early eighteen hundreds in the villages in Scotland to explain and illustrate the subject of elocution. Walsh advertised that he would deliver an elaborate criticism of poetry. "A good house of people" appeared only to hear "a wearisome dissertation" on harmonic inflections, double emphasis and monotone. Miller reported that Walsh's language was bad and that his deficiency in regard to "composition" showed ignorance. His inflections were carefully maintained "and went

rising and falling over the nonsense beneath, like the waves of some
shallow bay over a bottom of mud and comminuted sea-weed." Miller
adds, however, that the audience was gratified by a few recitations after
the speech, which were followed by additional remarks in which Walsh
claimed that no man could be a "proper" poet without being an elocu-
tionist. He reasoned that if a poet were not an elocutionist, how could
he make his verses emphatic in the correct places, or how could he
manage the "harmonic inflexes," or deal with pauses?

The controversy relating to elocution was sharply intensified in
Britain in 1828 when Archbishop Richard Whately, who stood out as a
bulwark for the "natural school," severely criticized all elocutionary
systems in his Elements of Rhetoric. Like Sheridan, Blair, Campbell
and Garrick, Whately was very much interested in the improvement of
the reading and speaking in church services, but violently disagreed
on the point that elocution should be taught. First of all, he ob-
jected to the methods of marking, which he held were ineffective be-
because of the impossibility to indicate the numerous variations of tones.
Secondly, he believed that marking was a circuitous road and declared
that nature itself suggested the different tones. Thirdly, Whately
was of the opinion that even if one could read or speak by note, the
reader's attention would become inevitably fixed upon his own voice

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114 On cit., 423.
115 Ibid.
and the unavoidable result would be an artificial delivery.¹¹⁶

Like Blair, Whately admits that there are some instances of
habitually ungraceful habits of the speaker in voice and action, but
offers merely the solution that the suggestions of an intelligent
friend would be a sufficient corrective measure. Regarding all systems
for training the voice, Whately professes that they are "useless, even
harmful." Instead, his recommendation is "to impress the mind with
the sentiments and the proper tones will result."¹¹⁷ Yet Whately
himself admitted in a footnote that in the reading of the Liturgy so
many gross faults existed that there might be an advantage in studying
Sheridan's observations. Nevertheless he cautioned against thinking
about the sound of the voice while reading or speaking.¹¹⁸ The in­
fluence of Whately was so widespread in America that several editions
of his Elements were printed in this country during the early part of
the nineteenth century. Moreover his ideas influenced subsequent
writers in speech. His text was used by Henry Ward Beecher at Amherst
together with those of Campbell and Blair.¹¹⁹ Another great American
orator, Chauncey Mitchell Depew, used Whately's rhetoric while a
student at Yale,¹²⁰ where he studied elocution under E. D. North.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Op. cit., 266-269
¹¹⁷ Ibid., 263
¹¹⁸ Ibid., 269.
¹²⁰ Willard Hayes Yeager, Chauncey Mitchell Depew The Orator,
¹²¹ Chauncey M. Depew, My Memories of Eighty Years, (New York:
Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924, 32.
Whately was also used between the forties and sixties at Indiana University, DePauw University, Wabash College, Evansville College, Hanover College, and Louisiana State University, then a seminary near Alexandria, Louisiana.

Summary. Since ancient times public spirited men have observed that it is necessary to have training both in the delivery of speeches before public assemblies, and in the conversation of individuals as well. In England to meet the requirement for skill in public speaking, it had been thought helpful to devise a specific system of instruction to correct the abuses in the spoken word and bodily expressions. The rhetorical school seemingly was not able to cope with the complex problems of delivery, for its only advice was to understand the words properly. The elocutionist school, however, devised a system of notation whereby a more definite solution of problems was possible. The early methods of elocutionary instruction in the United States up to the time of James Rush were practically all based on the English writers. Among the students and faculties of schools and universities in England were those who were pleased with the results of elocutionary training and claimed that it succeeded in teaching natural speech with appropriate bodily action. These mechanical methods however, were not entirely accepted and met their sharpest attack from Whately.

122 Rahe, 95-371.

123 See Official Register of the Officers and Cadets of the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy, (New Orleans: Crescent Job Print, 1866).
Early American Training in Delivery. Prior to the inauguration of American elocution in 1827 by Rush, there had been a steady growth in speech training since the time of its inception in the Harvard College curriculum in 1642. As has been shown earlier in this chapter, the English, continental and classical influences were evident in rhetoric. In addition it has been pointed out that English elocution and rhetoric textbooks were popular in American colleges and academies.

The early seeds of elocution in America had been planted in the first laws of Harvard College, wherein each Friday was to be set aside for rhetorical studies and "every scholar . . . declaims once a month." These assignments, which were to be memorized and delivered in Latin, marked the partial separation of the study of rhetoric from that of declamation. In time these two aspects of speech matured into the nineteenth century studies of rhetoric and elocution. That American elocution developed partly from declamation is evidenced by the numerous selections for declamation which filled the nineteenth century elocution books. As a rule declamation exercises are not to be found in the rhetoric texts.

To meet the requirements laid down by the religious founders at Harvard, the grammar schools, in preparing their scholars for Harvard's theological curriculum, devoted their attention to classical

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Latin. The Boston Latin School therefore, in 1642, phrased the requirement that "admission into the colledge" depended upon the scholar's ability among other things to "speake true Latina in Verse and Prose. . . ."125

In approximately 1686 The New England Primer made its appearance in the colonial schools and homes. According to Meriwether this small, thin reader was reprinted time after time for nearly two centuries. It reached an average annual sale of twenty thousand copies and a total of over three million, even being published as late as 1886. The bulk of the book was chiefly extracted from the Bible, hymns and moral teachings.126 Heartman declared that the Primers were "next to the Bible, the 'stock books' in the bookshops and the general stores of the villages."127

In 1701 New England's second college for religious training was founded and in 1720 finally located at New Haven. As at Harvard, a cultured class attempted to perpetuate Latin at Yale by ruling in 1726 that declamations every sixth week should be delivered in that tongue.128 The same method of practice in speechmaking is noted in the following year at William and Mary. According to Thomas:

In 1727 the statutes of William and Mary, which did not call for the study of rhetoric, required of all students both declamations and disputations. The declamation, which

127 The New England Primer Issued Prior to 1830, Compiled by Charles F. Heartman, (Published privately by the author, 1916), xvii.
128 F. B. Dexter, A Selection from Miscellaneous Historical Papers of Fifty Years, (New Haven: The Tuttle, Morehouse, and Taylor Company, 1918), 347.
originally had meant a short composition in one of the ancient languages, written and delivered memoriter, has been one of the most popular of these weekly exercises.\footnote{129}

Perrin's study reveals that this use of declamation was one of the most persistent forms of speech training used in the period.\footnote{130} However, the use of the Latin tongue was soon felt to be an inhibiting factor to thought and expression. In addition, the new political consciousness of the people produced an attitude of independence that caused the Colonial Americans to regard the use of Latin with skepticism.

In Boston, meanwhile, Latin was being petitioned out of the curriculum so as to offer a more practical system of education. At the same time large numbers of students were becoming barristers and like the ministers also needed training in the English tongue.\footnote{131} Declamations therefore came to be given in English. This inevitable change from Latin to the vernacular, a course of action which proved favorable for the development of elocution, made for more effective participation in the affairs of the community and colony.

A Presbyterian minister by the name of James Finley recalled studying Latin and Greek in his youth and did not fully regret his


classical training, but he was convinced that emphasis in this direction produced insufficient preparation for speaking in the vernacular.\textsuperscript{132}

The \textit{Literary and Debating Societies} as a means of Training in Delivery. With the formal removal of the Latin language from declamations a similar change took place in the syllogistic disputations. Debating, a distinct and popular practice in speech training in America, had been inherited from the disputations of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.\textsuperscript{133} The introduction of debating societies in the early Colonial chartered colleges met with the approval and strong support of the college faculties.\textsuperscript{134} According to Rahe these debates were held before the meetings of the literary societies which had been in existence since the establishment of colleges.\textsuperscript{135} Cowperthwaite emphasizes that literary societies were the most popular and powerful of all the early college organizations. In addition to debate there were recitations, one-act plays and various modifications of the declamation. Senior members of the societies at the University of Iowa would assist the various inexperienced performers by offering suggestions in the matter of delivery. Like Rahe, Cowperthwaite agrees that such was the training in elocution up to the time when

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{132} James B. Finley, \textit{Autobiography of Reverend James B. Finley}, Edited by W. P. Strickland, (Cincinnati: Cranston and Curts, 1853), 113-114.
\item \textsuperscript{133} Angelo M. Pellegrini, "Renaissance and Medieval Antecedents of Debate," \textit{The Quarterly Journal of Speech}, XXVIII, (February, 1942), 14-19.
\item \textsuperscript{134} David Potter, \textit{Debating in the Colonial Chartered Colleges, An Historical Survey}, 1642 to 1900, (New York: Columbia University Bureau of Publications, 1944), 67.
\item \textsuperscript{135} \textit{Op. cit.}, 140.
\end{itemize}
an elocution teacher would be privately hired for this instruction. Abbott discloses that the literary societies formed the predominating interest in college life:

The afternoon is spent like the forenoon, and the last recitation of the winter's day, is just before the sun goes down. An hour is allotted to it, and then follow evening prayers, at the close of which the students issue from the chapel, and walk in long procession to supper.

It is in the evening, however, that the most striking peculiarities of college life exhibit themselves. Sometimes literary societies assemble, organized and managed by the students, where they hold debates, or entertain each other with declamations, essays, and dialogues. These were events which the whole college attended. Depew asserted that an outstanding feature of Yale was the literary societies where in weekly meetings topics of current interest were discussed with vigor. From this practical training in speaking an unusual number of men became eloquent preachers, distinguished physicians, and famous lawyers.

For the most part it is generally evident that schools and colleges were backward. Members of the boards of regents were often neither men of "science or leisure." Dissension among students and faculty members was a common occurrence. One of the points of contention arose from the fact that the board meetings held at unstated intervals were


characterized by slow and indecisive action. Any appeals for additional courses, faculty members or equipment were usually delayed in acceptance or completely denied.\textsuperscript{140} It was therefore necessary to rely to a great extent on the literary societies for training in speaking. This was precisely the case at the University of Georgia, for example, where in 1803 the woodsmen's ax was busy clearing out a campus. In February of that year the juniors met to organize a literary society for the specific purpose of promoting "the cause of science and truth by the cultivation of oratory and the art of debate at weekly meetings."\textsuperscript{141} They "turned on a flow of oratory that was to resound and reverberate for a century..." Until 1820 this society, called Demosthenian, flourished, but when it appeared that the society was growing lax and listless another society was instituted by Joseph Lumpkin. He saw that only rivalry could put the spark of life back into extemporizing and orating. The new society was called Phi Kappa and the competition between the two societies waxed strong. In a personal visit to the campus it was observed that both societies meet in halls especially constructed for their use. The Demosthenian Hall has carved mantles, mouldings, deep paneled wainscoting and a ceiling of plaster work. The Phi Kappa Hall is designed in Greek

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\item \textsuperscript{140} Nathaniel Potter, Some Account of the Rise and Progress of the University of Maryland, (Baltimore: Printed by Joseph Robinson, 1838), 13-28.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Constitution of the Demosthenian Literary Society, The University of Georgia, 1945, 1.
\end{itemize}
architecture. Through the entire century up to the present term of
1948 these two societies held weekly debates and "swept the heavens
and earth for something on which to whet their wits, and out of their
endeavors grew a great multiplicity of teasing problems." Whole days
would be given over to "Junior Exhibitions" when the members of each
society paid their highest honor to the three selected to represent
them "before the great multitudes who assembled to be regaled." Truly,
the literary societies wherein public speaking was highly prized and
matured by the students, "were mighty in the effect they had in the
making" of the young American student. 

It was not unusual for some speakers who participated in "recita-
tions" and debating before community literary societies to develop of
their own initiative variety in tone and a pleasing manner. Such was
the case of Henry Clay, whose early self-training in speaking in the
latter part of the eighteenth century had been participation in declama-
tion as well as in debating in the Virginia and Kentucky Literary
Societies. In regard to his vocal ability, Colton says, "... Mr.
Clay has escaped the vices of tune or song. His elocution ... has
consequently been effective." Hallman in his study maintains that
deating before the school and community literary societies has been
a strong influence in the development of many other statesmen in

142 E. Merton Coulter, College Life in The Old South, (New York:
143 Bernard Mayo, Henry Clay Spokesman of the West, (Boston:
144 Calvin Colton, The Life and Times of Henry Clay, (New
York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1846), I, 63-64.
145 Hugo E. Hellman, "The Influence of the Literary Society
in the Making of American Orators," The Quarterly Journal of Speech,
XXVIII, (February, 1942), 12-14.
"platform training." In addition to Clay he cites Daniel Webster, Abraham Lincoln, Rufus Choate, Wendell Phillips, Patrick Henry and John Randolph as outstanding examples. Declamation exercises and debating did offer early American speakers practice in voice and bodily action.

**Early American Textbooks Dealing With Elocution.** Nurturing the early drift toward the study of delivery was Noah Webster, who was accredited by Guthrie to have both written and printed the first book in America pertaining to speech training. The work was first published in 1784 and entitled *Grammatical Institute Of the English Language*. It was a combination of spelling, grammar and declamation. Part III of the Institute, later called *An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking* (1787), is particularly significant because it is usually conceded as the first reader with elocutionary principles to be compiled in America. For this Webster acknowledges Burgh’s *Art of Speaking* as his source material. A number of passions are listed in the treatise following the precepts of Walker and the means of expressing them are explained. His directions indicate that he was elocutionary in his thinking; for example, in his description of expressing pity he explains that one


149 See Walker, 308-379.
should draw down the eyebrows, open the mouth, and draw together the features. The effect of Webster's An *American Selection* was remarkable. According to Warfel, this book together with his dictionaries, readers and grammars, was carried from the hills of New England across the Alleghenies; his were among the first books printed in every new settlement as an insurance against ignorance. They tended to obliterate the primitive nature of the thinly spread and localized culture of America. Shoemaker stated that *An American Selection* was Webster's answer to the demand for a reader and speaker containing a number of American patriotic selections together with simple elocutionary rules for their delivery.

In 1768, John Witherspoon, a Presbyterian minister, came to America to become the president of the College of New Jersey, later named Princeton. He was the only member of the clergy to sign the Declaration of Independence. At Princeton Witherspoon delivered sixteen lectures on moral philosophy and sixteen on various aspects of eloquence, but did not publish them. After his death in 1794 they were collected and printed in the year 1810. R. H. Wagner in a review of Witherspoon's works refers to them as "an inspiration" in the following passage:

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150 Ibid.
These lectures, delivered about the time of the Revolution and perhaps the earliest of their kind in America of which we have the full printed text, are interesting not alone for their antique flavor, but for their ideas and their significance. Indeed they are an inspiration, for they remind us that the busy president of this struggling college thought it worth his while regularly, year after year, to give instruction in the art of public address.154

According to Paul's investigation,155 Witherspoon was the "first American to teach a systematic rhetorical theory as a part of the college curriculum." Following the classical tradition in the main, he believed the general aim of public speaking to be persuasion and advocated keeping to the tone and key of dialogue or conversation as much as possible. His recognition of the desirability of the conversational style in public speaking at this early date is of particular interest. Witherspoon's interest in voice and bodily action is evident in his criticism of public speakers who engage in "unnatural rants or ridiculous gestures."156 It is relevant to note that upon the subject of articulation the influence of Sheridan upon Witherspoon is observable.157 In the delivery of sermons he desired restraint, propriety and solidity and denounced all turgid declamation.158


158 Ibid., 268.
America's first writer of the "natural school" may best be understood by reading his own words:

Supposing the reality of everything . . . serves particularly to deliver a speaker from affected ornaments, and everything in language or carriage that is improper. If you were pleading the cause of one accused of a capital crime, it would be best to suppose that you yourself were the accused person, and that you were speaking for your own life. This would give an earnestness of spirit, and a justness and correctness to the manner, infinitely distant from that theatrical pomp, which is so properly said to be a departure from the simplicity of nature.  

The influence of Witherspoon upon his pupils is revealed in the example of James Madison, fourth President of the United States, who has been called "the Father of the Constitution." From his studies and associations in college with Witherspoon, Madison developed character and mental habits of a profound and philosophical cast.

A book without much popularity among the colonists was published in Boston in 1792 by Joseph Dana bearing the name, New American Selections in Reading and Speaking. Besides the selections for declamation purposes there were a few principles of gesture taken largely from twelve pages of material on gesture in Walker and some plates from Scott's Lessons. This text is important chiefly because it seems to follow the "mechanistic" school among the early American authors.

159 Ibid., 714.

The demand for declamation exercises after the Revolution was also met by an intellectual pioneer by the name of Caleb Bingham. In 1794, he published *The American Preceptor*, a book of religious, educational and patriotic selections which became an immense favorite. By 1832, nearly a million copies were sold.  

Bingham's *The Columbian Orator*, which appeared in 1797, contained selections of a type similar to those in his previous work. This collection found its way into a number of academies of early nineteenth century America and was the guide book for public speaking in the Washington and Stonewall Literary Society in Charlotte Hall Military Academy in Maryland for at least a half century. About twenty pages were devoted to the theory of reading and speaking, of which many principles were extracted from Cicero and Quintilian. No detailed analysis was given as to how one must emphasize words; hence it is obvious that Bingham was of the "natural" school:

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 mimic and harmony of voice lies between these extremes.  

Of gesture Bingham says:

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

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agreed among the learned, whether voice or gesture has the greater 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.163

In this book the eighty-one selections which, in most cases, are three to four pages in length, were meant to be memorized and recited before the teacher and the students. A few of the selections chosen at random indicate the generally religious, moral and political influence of declamations in those times:

Christ's Crucifixion ..................Cumberland
Speech in Congress, 1789..................Washington
On the Creation of the World............Blair
Scene from the Fars of Lethe.............Garrick
Eulogy on Dr. Franklin..................Fauchet
On the Day of Judgment..................Davies
Self-Conceit, an Address by a Small Boy........
The Dissipated Oxford Student............Burney
Oration on Independence, July 4, 1796.....Blake
Speech in the British Parliament, 1770.....Pitt
Exhortation on Temperance in Pleasure.....Blair

In 1797, there appeared in Worcester, Massachusetts, another book which took its place in the development of nineteenth century speech training. This was The Orator's Assistant, written by Alexander Thomas. The book, of which little is known as to its use, is devoted chiefly to selections of ancient and modern dialogues for declamatory work. It is quite definitely of the "natural school," as is observed in these lines in which the author takes a different viewpoint from that of the mechanists:

163 Ibid., 19.
A complete understanding of the subject of which the scholar is declaiming, is the first desideratum of Oratory. He then enters into the spirit of the writer, and is able to give it its due emphasis and cadence.\textsuperscript{164}

It was in 1803 that James Abercrombie, another of the numerous clergymen who assisted in the development of rhetorical and elocutionary instruction, wrote \textit{Two Compends for the Use of the Philadelphia Academy}. Abercrombie, who was both the Assistant Minister of Christ's Church in Philadelphia and Director of the Philadelphia Academy, divided his book into two parts, the first being called, \textit{Of Elocution}, the second, \textit{Of Natural History}. Although Abercrombie followed primarily the rhetorical school, he advises careful attention to articulation and to the pronunciation of words with a proper degree of slowness.\textsuperscript{165} The study of bodily action, according to his work, "consists chiefly in guarding against awkward and disagreeable motions, and in learning to perform such as are graceful and impressive."\textsuperscript{166}

Private educational and cultural institutions developing along the seaboard became ideal training centers for speakers and, as Adams points out, favored the speedy development of elocution:

Elocution as an organized force in higher education had its beginning in Boston. Boston long has claimed the distinction of being the great literary centre of the new world. Its educational facilities have helped to give it that prestige. With the Boston University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the very heart of the city, while just across the Charles River stand historic Harvard and promising Tufts, and in the immediate vicinity...
vicinity, Wellesley and Lasell; with the celebrated art
schools, the largest conservatory of music in the world,
the various schools of oratory, and the hundreds of less
pretentious institutions of learning, Boston may well
call itself the great seat of learning, ... The Athens
of America. ... Here elocution received its first
great impetus in this country, ... 167

In 1806 rhetoric was given a secure footing at Harvard with the
appointment of John Quincy Adams to the Boylston Chair of Rhetoric and
Oratory. From his lectures were published Lectures on Rhetoric and
Oratory, a significant contribution to the theories of rhetoric. So
extraordinary was his instruction that Edward Everett, his student,
said:

It was ... as a member of one of the younger classes
at college, that I first saw Mr. Adams, and listened to
his well-remembered voice from the chair of instruction ... .
Some who now hear me will recollect the deep interest with
which these lectures were listened to, not merely by the
youthful audience for which they were prepared, but by
numerous voluntary hearers from the neighborhood. They
formed an era in the University, and were, I believe, the
first successful attempt, in any department of litera-
ture. 168

The professorship which Adams held was made possible by a gift from
Nicholas Boylston. An explanation of this philanthropy and the duties
of Adams in both rhetoric and declamation is contained in an advertise-
ment of Adams' Lectures and is of interest:

The literary institutions of our country are under many
obligations to the mercantile profession. The enlarged and
liberal views of opulent individuals, in this class of the
community, have frequently prompted them to laudable and
munificent appropriations for the promotion of science and

167 Fred Winslow Adams, "Boston as an Elocutionary Centre,"
Werner's Magazine, XVI, (April, 1894), 115-126.

168 Edward Everett, Eulogy on the Life and Character of John
Quincy Adams, (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1848), 33-34.
the means of education. Among men of this description the benevolent founder of the professorship, under which the following lectures were delivered, is highly distinguished. Nicholas Boylston, esq., was an eminent merchant of Boston. He died August 18, 1771, aged fifty-six. . . . By his last will, . . . he bequeathed fifteen hundred pounds lawful money, as a foundation for a professorship of rhetoric and oratory in Harvard College. This sum was paid to the college treasurer in February 1772, by his executors, and was placed at interest, for the purpose expressed by the donor.

The progressive accumulation of the fund was in a degree impeded, in the course of the revolutionary war; and it was not until the year of 1804, that the amount was considered adequate to the object. In the summer of that year, the "rules, directions and statutes of the Boylston Professorship of Rhetoric and Oratory in Harvard College," which had previously been prepared and adopted by the corporation, were approved by the board of overseers.

In June, 1805, the honorable John Quincy Adams was chosen, by the corporation, the first professor on this foundation. This choice was confirmed by the overseers on the twenty-fifth of July. Mr. Adams accepted the appointment with a reservation, which should leave him at liberty to attend on his public duties in congress; he being at that time a Senator of the United States from Massachusetts. At subsequent meetings of the corporation and overseers, a dispensation was assented to in this particular, and some alterations were made in the statutes.

He was installed June 12, 1806; and on that occasion pronounced the inaugural discourse, which was soon after published at the unanimous request of the students; and which is now prefixed to his lectures.

The professor immediately after his induction entered on the duties of his office; but, in consequence of his public engagements, and as permitted by the terms of his acceptance, confined his attention to a course of public lectures to the resident graduates, and to the two senior classes of undergraduates, and to presiding at the declamations of the two senior classes. His public lectures were continued weekly, in term time, as required by the statutes, excepting such intermissions, as were occasioned by his attendance on congress.

On the twelfth of August, 1808, he completed his course, comprising thirty-six lectures, and had advanced nearly through a repetition of it, when, early in July last, he announced, by a letter to the corporation, the resignation of his office, "on account of a call in the foreign service of the country. . . ."
The corporation lost no time in supplying the vacancy by Mr. Adams' resignation. On the twenty-fifth of August last, they made choice of the Rev. Joseph McKean for that office. His election was confirmed by the overseers, Mr. McKean, having accepted the appointment, was installed, in the usual academical form, on the thirty-first of October; and on that occasion delivered an appropriate Latin address. He entered immediately on the duties of his office.169

Adams adhered to the "natural" school and would not even admit the change of meaning which the term "elocution" had undergone.170 Instead he followed the precepts of Quintilian recommending merely certain principles pertaining to delivery.171 Two "follow nature" concepts he adhered to are:

To the arms and hands some movement is indispensably necessary. This should be varied accordingly to the position in which the speaker stands. . . . Finally, let it be remembered, that the movements of the hands should generally accompany the tones of the voice, for the expression of passion; but very rarely for the imitation of action.172

His interest in elocution seems to have grown, however, for in 1819, ten years after his resignation, he highly endorsed declamation exercises in school competitions and the institution of prizes for the

169 John Quincy Adams, Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory, Delivered to the Classes of Senior and Junior Sophisters in Harvard University, (Cambridge: Printed by Hilliard and Metcalf, 1810), I, See advertisement, iii-viii.

170 Ibid., I, 170.


172 Lectures, II, 390–391.
best delivery. Rousseau declares that Adams' works were in a number of respects not unlike Cicero, for whom he had much respect. Rousseau also claims that Adams was convinced of the necessity of mastering the art of oratory and used Cicero's five canons to develop his theory. Rahekopf maintains that in rhetoric Adams' work was largely that of a summary of the classical school.

Adams' contribution to rhetoric was an organized summary of ancient classical doctrine. . . . He began with Quintilian's definition of rhetoric but interpreted it in terms of his own intellectual, moral, religious, and social ideals. He recognized that most of the ancient doctrine on style was inapplicable to English, repudiated Campbell's standard for choice of words, criticized Blair's neglect of demonstrative oratory, . . . overlooked Bacon's development of inductive logic and . . . developed independent ideas about purity in style, figurative language, and court room and pulpit speaking.

There is no evidence to indicate that the work of Adams met with any great amount of popularity in America. Of interest is the fact that Adams' father (John Adams) gave the two volume work to Thomas Jefferson in 1812.

Of significance is the rise of the private elocution school, which received one of its first impulses in America near the opening


176 The Works may be seen in the Rare Book Room of the Library of Congress.
of the century. This initial effort was made by a wayward young English actor, by the name of James Fennel. In addition to his teaching of private students in the vicinity of Philadelphia, Fennel gave readings from the works of Shakespeare in both Boston and Philadelphia. According to Clapp, his was the first of this kind of reading there.177 No record of the exact date of his teaching is to be found, but the date of his death in Philadelphia is given as 1815.178 His methods, which were later employed by his students who themselves became private school teachers, such as Lemuel White, are a distinct departure from the teaching of Walker who based his theory on sentence structure rather than sense:

... the production of tone on correct physiological principles, correct positions of the organs of speech, and knowledge of the open and closed vowels; the importance of diaphragmatic or abdominal respiration, thus avoiding all strain on the delicate structure of the vocal cords. Naturalness is obtained by paraphrasing or analyzing the language. The imitative faculty is not cultivated at the expense of the analytical. Speakers with inefficient and strained voices acquire, under this method, volume and flexibility of tone, graceful to the ear, while at the same time a marked diminution of the fatigue of speaking has resulted. The proper production of tone will render it possible to read or speak aloud for almost any length of time without fatigue or hoarseness, and preserve the beauty and richness of voice to old age. By the abdominal breathing the strain is removed from the muscles of the throat, and by producing the vowel tones of the word with full lungs, the quality of the voice is improved, and as a direct result there will be an expansion of the chest and a proportional increase of health and vigor.

177 William W. Clapp, Jr., A Record of the Boston Stage (Boston: James Munro and Company, 1853), 89.

The rules are few, and these so simple they can be taught to children. Pause before and after emphatic words; suit the sound to the sense; dwell on the emphatic words a longer or shorter time as the sense requires, giving the open vowel organ sound, closed vowel piano sound. The vowels are open and closed—\not long and short, as commonly used. 179

At about the same time another elocutionist by the name of James Ogilvie, who had arrived in America from Scotland approximately in 1794, began to educate the promising youth of Virginia in two small academies under the patronage of Thomas Jefferson near his home at Monticello. Unable to resist the temptation of city life, this peripatetic ventured to Richmond and other southern towns, giving lessons in elocution. Finally, he settled in Columbia, South Carolina, where he became accepted as an entertainer, lecturer and teacher. Although he did not leave for posterity his system of instruction, his protégés showed remarkable ability and industry. Ogilvie exercised, as well, a broad and serious influence on the development of the new national life. According to Davis' study, Ogilvie met the need of his students for elocutionary training. The effect of his labors "was far-reaching, perhaps enormous." Of the two dozen young gentlemen who delivered their oral exhibitions in his class in 1815 at South Carolina, some became lawyers and physicians while among the others were a governor, a member of Congress, a clergyman, and distinguished jurists. 180

179 Ibid.

In 1807 appeared an anonymous work which by its title was
directed toward the very people whose voices were being raised in
the new America, namely *The American Orator*. It was intended for such
students as are advanced in their education, and whose views are
directed to some of the great theatres of public speaking—the Pulpit,
the Bar, or the Legislative Assembly.181 The treatise was one of
the first to be printed west of the Alleghany Mountains and no doubt
was used to train the professional men of the early West. A very small
number of rules were listed for pronunciation and reading in this
book, which also contained numerous selections for declamation. The
"natural school" is plainly evident for the anonymous author believed
that the end of pronunciation is to "make the ideas seem to come from
the heart." An explanation of elocution was given as "a Branch of
Oratory, the power and importance of which is greater than is generally
thought; insomuch that Eloquence takes its name from it."182

The religious influence in education continued in the early
nineteenth century as it had in previous periods. Schools and
teachers were as yet supported by religious denominations. In June,
1809, Edward D. Griffin, upon his induction into the office of
Bartlet Professor of Pulpit Eloquence in Divinity College at Andover,
delivered an oration which was later published, wherein the natural

181 By a teacher, *The American Orator: Containing Rules and
Directions Calculated to Improve Youth and Others in the Ornamental
and Useful Art of Eloquence*, (Lexington: Joseph Charles, 1807), 3.

182 Ibid., 13.
The approach was firmly defended in the study of pulpit eloquence:

The affections must indeed be reached through the understanding and conscience; but not by a cold dissertation on abstract proposition,—they must be touched by objects placed in their most affecting attitudes, and by truth tenderly applied to the heart. No attempt to excite the affections ought to be made, except for some useful end. Addresses to the passions merely to melt the mass, without seizing the occasion to fix the stamp of truth, is an artifice infinitely beneath a preacher of the everlasting gospel. . . . The basis of pulpit eloquence, then, is good sense and real feeling:—good sense instructed by the Word of God, and the real feeling excited by His Spirit.183

The contention between the mechanical and natural methods is distinctly observed in another American orator book written early in the century. Unlike the work by the anonymous author in Lexington, Kentucky, who adhered to the "natural school," Increase Cooke's The American Orator published in New Haven in 1811 is somewhat mechanistic in approach. The book is chiefly that of moral and patriotic selections as was customary, but a number of rules on gestures are worthy of note. Cooke in his emphasis upon the importance of gestures offers the following reason for his belief:

Gesture has one great advantage over the voice, viz., that it affects the eye, which is the quickest of all our senses, and consequently must convey the impressions more speedily to the mind, than that of the voice, which affects the ear only.184

Of particular interest is the fact that the "Orator" was being used in the training of speech students in American universities. Cooke's


work, for example, found its way into Salem College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, an early day Moravian school, and Transylvania University, the early cultural center of the western frontier, in Lexington, Kentucky. Here, according to the fifth By-Law of the school in 1818, the president was obliged to supervise work in declamation for public performance. Thus the rule reads:

5. The Seniors and Juniors, until the second Monday in February, and after that, the Juniors and Sophomores, in Alphabetical order, not less than ten each week, shall perform public exercises in speaking, under the superintendence of the president.

A Provost at the University of Pennsylvania, by name of John Andrews, who also saw the need of speech improvement in America, first published a book for school use in 1813 called Elements of Rhetorick and Belles Lettres. His 1818 edition appears in part to be a reversion to the medieval rhetoric of exornation, for much material contained therein dealt with explanations of style, types, and figures of speech. Departing from the strictly customary rhetorical concepts, Andrews admitted as had Blair that delivery might have cause for study and application:

A publick speaker must take that manner which is most natural to himself. His gestures and motions ought all to carry that kind of expression which nature has dictated to him; and, unless this be the case, it is impossible by means of any study, to avoid their appearing stiff and forced.—However, although nature must be the ground work,

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185 A personal copy once belonging to L. W. Andrews who attended Transylvania University in 1821 is to be found in the University of Missouri Library.

186 By-Laws of the Transylvania University, (Lexington: Worsley and Smith, 1818), 13.
it must be admitted that there is room in this matter for some study and art. . . . gracefulness might, in part at least, be formed by application and care.187

Joshua P. Slack, an English teacher who evidently taught under Provost Andrews at Pennsylvania, published a couple of years later (1815) his first edition of The American Orator. The fact that his is the third book bearing this title is an indication of the popularity for declaiming the speeches of the American patriots and the stress Americans placed upon "pieces" which were moral and religious in character. The American demand for these declamations may be comprehended in the increasing desire to be better equipped for speaking on community and national topics. In this book were the usual selections for practice, which were well adapted for public recitations in schools. In the preface to the 1817 edition are found these words concerning the success of the first edition in American schools and the care taken in including the best selections for public delivery:

Little more than two years ago the first volume of The American Orator was published and now nearly or quite the whole of a large edition is sold. The publisher was encouraged by this success to require of me a second volume. . . . Much care has been exercised to exclude everything of immoral or licentious tendency—to take the principal extracts from philosophical and religious writings of acknowledged worth. . . . it must be recollected, that it is the design of the compiler, to make the Book as suitable for classes to read in school, as for the supply of speeches for public exhibitions. . . . In other cases, as in most of the exhibitions and commencements in the University of Pennsylvania, they are required of sufficient length to afford the speaker ten or fifteen minutes to deliver them.188


In addition to these declamatory features, Slack offered in the early part of the book four pages of simple mechanical rules on delivery which deal with such topics as loudness, slowness, bellowing, mumbling, the varying of the voice and monotony.

At Yale beginning in 1817, Chauncey Allen Goodrich, a speaker, teacher and writer, lectured on both public speaking and elocution for slightly over a period of twenty years. In his lectures, which even yet have not been printed, Goodrich prefers the term Public Speaking to Oratory. In his fourth lecture which is occupied with voice and delivery, numerous principles in delivery are considered. According to Hoshor, Goodrich follows the "natural school" in the matter of voice quality which he believes "is not susceptible to any appreciable modification." Goodrich, however, is of the opinion that good articulation can be cultivated and offers several general principles for this attainment. Herein he follows the views of the English elocutionists, especially Sheridan and Walker.

There is no question that Goodrich was a success in teaching Yale students public speaking and elocution in his twenty years in New Haven. Graduates from fairly-well established Eastern schools like Yale were instrumental in the advancement of the newly founded churches and schools. From Yale in 1818 for example, went the Reverend Hector Humphreys, D.D., to teach philosophy, rhetoric, elocution, geology and religion in St. John's College at Annapolis, Maryland.

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189 For a detailed account see Hoshor, Op. cit.

190 Ibid.
where his teaching made a profound impression. No doubt Goodrich’s influence was responsible for Humphreys’ effectiveness as a speaker and teacher, for he was said to be impressive in both voice and platform presence.\footnote{191}

The awareness of the need for instruction and practice in delivery was becoming more evident in the early American private academies as well as in the colleges. In Phillips Exeter Academy in 1813 both rhetoric and declamation "of the forensic kind" were required in the second and third years of work.\footnote{192} The famous Boston English Classical School, which germinated from these academies, and which emphasized English rather than Classical Latin,\footnote{193} offered in 1821 declamation and forensic discussions in both the second and third year classes.

In the American colleges a striking tendency toward the recognition of speech training as a requisite subject, by which men could better win acclaim and public support, was observed. Following in the footsteps of a number of eminent American statesmen, educators and preachers like Noah Webster, Witherspoon, Adams, Goodrich, Griffin, Humphreys and Andrews who devoted their extra time to the teaching of speech to American youth, the future leaders in the American Republic,

\footnote{191} Commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of St. John’s College. (Baltimore: Printed by William K. Boyle, 1890), 93–99.


\footnote{193} Noble, 187.
was Edward T. Channing. This distinguished scholar went to Harvard College on December 8, 1819, as the new Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory succeeding McKean. Upon his induction into office, he addressed an interested faculty and student body in the college chapel on the subject, "The Orator and His Times." In this speech he lamented the fact that the art of speaking was not cultivated more assiduously in more American schools.  

Channing remained Boylston Professor for thirty-two years, during which time he won the respect of the faculty and students alike for his accurate judgments in forensic and declamatory training. Concerning the problem of delivery and particularly the term, elocution, and its mechanistic concepts, Channing seems to be in a state of indecision. From one of his lectures entitled "Elocution, a Study," are taken these views:

Here, then, is a subject in pressing need of help of some kind. It will never do to say to him,—you will speak well enough if you are but let alone or will let yourself alone. Our untaught speakers, in the enjoyment of boundless liberty in this respect, are an ever present answer to such a doctrine. What, then, shall be done? The point, unfortunately, is still in dispute.

Channing, however, does not classify himself as belonging to the "naturists," for he repudiates Whately. While he regards it necessary to allow nature "free room" for making her spontaneous suggestions,

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195 Ibid., 53-54.

196 Ibid., 54-57.
in doing "our own part of the work" he mentions the need for necessary experimentation upon nature's "power." 197

In a "Biographical Notice" written by Richard H. Dana, Jr., which is enclosed in the published edition of the "Lectures," there is a fine tribute paid to Channing regarding the benefits of his excellent criticisms in composition and elocution at Harvard. Dana comments further that, "for the last quarter of a century Cambridge has been distinguished for the purity and elegance of its style in composition and elocution." 198

In 1822, The Orator's Guide; or Rules for Speaking and Composing; from the Best Authorities was published by E. G. Welles, a book of a definite classical flavor. Its selections, mostly for practice in the schoolroom, were chosen from poets, clergymen and Shakespeare. Welles seems to belong to no one school of thought. Even the "naturists," including Whately, would not go to the extreme of Welles, who allowed personal defects or idiosyncrasies to enter into speech. The following indicates Welles' extraordinary viewpoint:

Whatever is natural, though it may be somewhat defective, will generally please; because it exhibits only the person before us, and appears to come unadulterated, from the heart. It is true, that to attain the art of an extremely correct, and graceful pronunciation, is what but few comparatively speaking, can accomplish; as it requires a concurrence, or combination of talents, which every one does not possess. 199

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197 Ibid., 55.
In 1824 John Dwyer published *An Essay on Elocution* in which he offers a few general suggestions on delivery together with material of a rhetorical nature. He discusses accent, emphasis, irony, apostrophe, pronunciation, articulation, monotonous, and modulation. Many early books included such topics as irony and apostrophe. Apparently these were a holdover from the times when rhetoric was essentially elocution, and elocution a matter of embellishment. Orations are included in his treatise for declamation practice. Even though Dwyer did little to advance elocutionary training his recognition of the value of that training is significant. He writes in his preface,

... although elocutive knowledge will not make us orators, yet it will cause us to be fearless and correct speakers in a land like ours, where the humblest of her sons has continuously occasion to address his fellow citizens.²⁰⁰

Ebenezer Porter, the president of Andover Theological Seminary, who followed Edward D. Griffin in teaching pulpit elocution, was one of the last of this period to rely upon Walker. In his years of teaching (1813-1831) at Andover Porter had occasion to train many ministers in elocution. His schedule for "Exercises in Elocution" is explained in his published letter in answer to an anonymous request:

On Monday and Thursday, in each week, the whole Seminary meet in the Chapel, for exercise in Public Speaking. At each time, six speakers, in the order of the catalogue,

Porter observed that elocutionary training was needed to repair the bad habits in the speech of professional people. In The Rhetorical Reader first published in 1831, which went through two hundred twenty editions by 1835, he says:

The bad habits in elocution acquired by many educated young men, and confirmed, with little regard to consequences, as they passed from one stage of education to another, it was easy to see must become at once equally conspicuous and injurious, so soon as they should pass from academical life into a public profession in which good speaking is a prime instrument of usefulness. . . . The only remedy for habits thus firmly established, obviously must lie in a patient, elementary process, adapted to form new habits.202

Porter's own account of the demand for his principles and how his Analysis of Rhetorical Delivery came to be written is relevant:

After a sufficient experiment to satisfy me that Walker's elements, as a text book, could not answer this purpose, I prepared a course of Lectures on the subject. One of


202 Ebenezer Porter, D.D., The Rhetorical Reader, Consisting of Instructions for regulating the voice, with a Rhetorical Notation, Illustrating Inflection, Emphasis, and Modulation; and a Course of Rhetorical Exercises, (New York: Two hundred and twentieth edition, Published by Mark H. Newman, 1835), 111.
these, "On Vocal Inflections," I consented to print, at the request and for the use of the Theological Students, to whom it had been read; but without any intention that it should be published. The pamphlet, however, went abroad, and led to applications from respectable gentlemen, connected with colleges and other literary institutions, that I would prepare a book of the same description, to be used in this department of a liberal education. Accordingly I did prepare the Analysis of Rhetorical Delivery.

Two additional books on the subject of elocution were written by Porter for students in colleges and seminaries. These were Lectures on the Analysis of Vocal Inflections (1824) and Lectures on Eloquence (1836). Not overlooking the youth of the period, he wrote a text especially for high school and academy usage. In the "Remarks to Teachers" in The Rhetorical Reader, Porter gives a conception of his method and also his reasons for the training of delivery derived from Sheridan and Walker:

In a large number of those who are to be taught reading and speaking, the first difficulty to be encountered, arises from bad habits previously contracted. The most ready way to overcome these, is to go directly into the analysis of vocal sounds, as they occur in conversation. But to change a settled habit, even in trifles, often requires perseverance for a long time; of course it is not the work of a moment, to transform a heavy, uniform movement of voice, into one that is easy, discriminating, and forcible.

The pupil should learn the distinction of inflections, by reading the familiar examples under one rule, occasionally turning to the Exercises, when more examples are necessary; and the Teacher's voice should set him right whenever he makes a mistake.

Before any example or exercise is read to the Teacher, it should be studied by the pupil. At the time of reading, he should generally go through, without interruption; and then the teacher should explain any fault, and correct it by example of his own voice, requiring the parts to be repeated. It would be useful often to inquire why such a modification

203 Ibid.
of voice occurs, in such a place, how a change of structure would vary the inflection, stress, etc.: in other words to accustom the pupil; ... When any portion of the Exercise is about to be committed to memory for declamation, the pupil should first study the sentiment carefully, entering as far as possible, into the spirit of the author; then transcribe it in a fair hand; then mark with pencil, the inflections, emphasis, etc., required on different words; then read it rhetorically to his teacher, changing his pencil marks as the case may require; and then commit it to memory perfectly, before it is spoken; as any labor of recollection is certainly fatal to freedom, and variety, and force in speaking. 204

Concerning inflections, his system embraces the concept of Walker in that:

The absolute modifications of the voice in speaking are four: Namely, monotone, rising inflection, falling inflection, and circumflex. The first may be marked to the eye by a horizontal line, thus (—), the second thus, (‘), the third thus, (‘‘), the fourth thus, (‘‘). 205

Porter illustrated this method by marking his selections as follows:

By honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. 206

Unlike his contemporaries in the early nineteenth century, Porter had much to say about elocutionary training in his books. He is a follower of the "natural school" yet at the same time adheres to Walker's mechanical principles, a combined practice which is somewhat prevalent even today. His influence was exceptional in pulpit elocu-

204 Ibid., vi-vii.
205 Ibid., 27.
206 Ibid., 82.
tion and he was without doubt a foremost leader in this field in his time. An article in The North American Review in 1829 praised Porter's work in elocution for supplying "a most material deficiency," and in addition claims that his book "will do more to raise the tone of speaking in our academies and colleges than anything that has issued from our press." 207

During the early nineteenth century a few other writers of lesser prominence wrote textbooks containing selections, together with a small number of simple rules taken from the classicists and the English elocutionists, such as Burgh, Sheridan, Walker, Scott, Enfield, and Austin. Among these were Staniford's Art of Reading, published earlier in 1794; Forum Orator, by an unknown author written in 1804; and Lindley Murray's English Reader composed of many selections in 1805. Daniel Coolidge's The Pious Instructor, particularly for use in the Friend's schools, appeared in 1806. Abner Alden wrote The Speaker in 1810 following the pattern of Burgh. In 1818 there was written The Christian Orator by an anonymous author who followed the precepts of Walker. Thomas E. Birch, who wrote The Virginian Orator in 1823 copied Scott's Lessons, which in turn was a reproduction of Enfield's The Speaker. These books together with other Speakers, although largely imitative of English and classical models, signify the increased attention paid to American oratory and elocution by the American clergy and schoolmen. However, no workable system had arisen from this group of writers which was strictly American.

Summary. American elocution had its early origin in the literature of the English and European schools of thought followed by a reversion to the classical doctrines of the Greek and Roman rhetoricians. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when several Englishmen became concerned over the poor speaking habits of their countrymen, there arose a difference of opinion as to the method to employ for the best results. Some writers, Walker, for example, became mechanistic by insisting that definite rules be given to help guide students who were awkward and deficient in speech. Systems of notation were therefore finally developed to make certain that the speaker would be able to declaim or speak with a variety of tone and expression. Elocution came to be the generally accepted term for this specific training in the delivery of speeches. Rhetoricians like Whately strongly condemned this manner of teaching speech and were determined to teach the doctrine that the sense of the passage would give the student the needed effect in voice and action.

In the early training of student speakers in America the medieval tradition of delivering disputations and declamations in a foreign language was employed. From vigorous protests of the students came the change to the vernacular. Rhetoric as a whole tended more to disintegrate, so that delivery (the ancient pronuntiatio) became less and less attached to the first three classical canons, invention, disposition and style.

At the outset American elocutionary manuals provided little more than an imitation copy work of English and ancient models. These
books were largely filled with a few simple rules and numerous moral, patriotic and religious selections to be declaimed in schools and for public exhibitions. As a rule, either the "natural" method or the "mechanical" method or a combination of the two was used in training speakers. Since the early American elocution books offered but a few simple rules, there was a marked demand for a more scientific approach to the problem of elocution and the availability of such professional training for the people.
Influence Of The Spirited Times On Declamation. Americans have been as a rule prolific writers and speakers in a variety of discourses on moral, religious, educational and political topics. Oration, essays and poetic works traditionally commemorated the innumerable exploits and noteworthy achievements over the land. Spokesman for American ideals, whether addressing their countrymen in poetic or prosaic form, captured the spirit and feelings of their fellow citizens. Ordinarily the reader or listener responded to these eloquent and literary tributes to American life with spontaneous enthusiasm. The immortal phrases of Burke, Otis, Washington, the Adamses, Henry, Jefferson, Jackson, Webster, Hayne, Lincoln, Clay, Calhoun, Crittendon, Davis, Everett, Fillmore, Douglass, Mann, Gough, Phillips, Beecher, Grady, Blaine, Emerson, Longfellow, Bryant, Poe, Whittier, Holmes, Tennyson, Shakespeare, Howe and of thousands of other American and British speakers and writers in addition to those of the Bible and of the other ancients, came to be looked upon as a part of the national inheritance.

Among the most popular examples of American literature were the innumerable patriotic addresses. According to Matthews:

In the night of tyranny the eloquence of the country first blazed up, like the lighted signal-fires of a distracted border, to startle and enlighten the community. Everywhere, as the news of some fresh invasion of liberty and right was borne on the wings of the wind, men ran together and called upon some earnest citizen to address them. . . . When . . . (Patrick Henry) concluded his well-known speech
in March, 1775, in behalf of American Independence, "no
murmur of applause followed," says his biographer: "the
effect was too deep. . . . " The accounts given of the
effects wrought by some of Daniel Webster's speeches,
seem almost incredible to those who never have listened
to his clarion-like voice and weighty words. Yet even
now, as we read some of the stirring passages in his early
discourses, we can hardly realize that we are not standing
by as he strangles the reluctant dracones of an ad­
versary, or actually looking upon the scenes in American
history which he so vividly describes.1

A British observer who visited America during the mid-century, noted
that the Fourth of July orations were particularly suited to the
event they were intended to commemorate. The nature of these historic,
patriotic, eulogistic, and defiant speeches generally were ex­
travagantly hyperbolical2 in character. Larson in his study found
that since the days of the American Revolution the patriotic fervor
of these Independence Day speeches have been pitched on a high plane.3
Wildly appreciative throngs listened eagerly to these and numerous
other speakers. Henry Ward Beecher, for example, whose oratorical
fame was well known through the reading of his published works and
the excerpts from his famous addresses which were clipped from eastern
journals and reprinted by the American press everywhere, was one of
the most sought-after of the many great professional lecturers who
toured the west.4

1 William Matthews, Oratory and Orators, (Chicago: S. C. Griggs
and Company, 1887), 17-19.

2 William Hancock, An Emigrant's Five Years in the Free States

3 Cedric Larson, "Patriotism in Carnine: 162 years of July 4th
Oratory," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXVI, (February, 1940),
12-25.

4 Carl David Mead, Eastern Lectures in Ohio, 1850-1870, (Un­
published Ph.D. Thesis, The Ohio State University, 1947), 143-144.
The age was one when the reading of great masterpieces of literature from both Britain and America was also met with indescribable appreciation by the pioneers. On the lyceum platform and in the drawing room these works were frequently interpreted by professional readers, who followed the main railroad lines and stagecoach routes throughout the country to give recitals. The response to the many carefully memorized recitations of Charles Dickens was outstanding. American audiences were almost hypnotized by his readings, and dozens of women were known to have fainted as a result of his effective characterizations. In Boston he was paid three thousand dollars for each performance. Chauncey M. Depew relates his impressions of these interpretations in the following:

Dickens's lectures in New York, which consisted of readings from his novels, were an event which has rarely been duplicated for interest. With high dramatic ability he brought before the audience the characters from his novels with whom all are familiar.

Pond says that readings enjoyed such popularity that he had been frequently offered one thousand dollars if he could secure Ellen Terry for an afternoon's recital in the drawing rooms of wealthy people in New York, Philadelphia and Boston. Fanny Kemble, another famous

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5 For an account see Theresa Murphy and Richard Murphy, "Charles Dickens as a Professional Reader," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXIII, (October, 1947), 299-307.


reader, traveled over a large part of the United States during a period of twenty years in the middle part of the century giving numerous readings from Shakespeare. Her receipts were estimated at one thousand dollars per week.

The general tenor of American literary works revealed a deep interest in the thrilling adventures and deeds of the times. For instance, following Sheridan's victory in the Shenandoah Valley in 1862, the popular imagination in the North was tremendously excited in the reading of the poem, "Sheridan's Ride." According to Depew this poem was recited before countless audiences from platforms and from the stage in many theatres, creating "wild enthusiasm." During the war the soldiers of the Union Army were entertained by James E. Murdoch who recited "The American Flag" and other favorite patriotic selections. At Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Chattanooga, Chicamauga, and at a number of other battlefields, hospitals and halls Murdoch engendered patriotism and raised the morale among the weary and wounded troops. This tribute to his outstanding service was made by the publishers of his book, **Patriotism in Poetry and Prose**:

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9 Margaret Cecilia Hymel, *Fanny Kemble: Dramatic Reader*, (M.A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, August, 1942), 87-94.

10 *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, February 8, 1849.

11 Depew, 30-31.

12 Hymel, 24.

In the lecture-room, the hospital, the camp, and under the falling shells of the enemy, he has raised his eloquent voice, since the beginning of our great national contest, with an effect that will not soon be forgotten by his numerous auditors. He has stimulated the patriotism of our citizens, he has comforted the sufferings of our wounded, and he has inflamed the courage of our soldiers.14

Immediately following the war years he continued these readings throughout the Mid-west. According to Hoeltje, Murdoch gave a variety of readings at his appearance in Cedar Falls, Iowa at this time.15 Mead states that for more than twenty years his dramatic readings were much in demand by western lyceums.16

During the post war years a swarm of writers captured the spirit of the southern soldier in their poems. A representative compilation of war poetry is observed in Mason's The Southern Poems of the War. Miss Mason discloses that these poems were collected from newspapers which were then "inundated" with poetry born of the excited state of the public mind. Such works were declaimed by expert and probably other readers at numerous memorial celebrations throughout the South.17 In the Middle West and Far West Bayard Taylor and Charles F. Browne, or Artemus Ward as he was customarily called, rose to fame as outstanding readers and lecturers. Some of the largest

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17 The Southern Poems of the War, Collected and arranged by Miss Emily V. Mason, (Baltimore: John Murphy and Company, Publishers, 1867), 446-451.
audiences ever to crowd into the western "halls" turned out to hear their programs.18

The favorable response of the people to the ecclesiastical, patriotic and educational orators and similarly their reaction to the popular professional readers indicated two approaches to possible fame and admiration. Indeed there was no more certain way for a man or woman to win the respect of his fellow citizens than by being able to stand on a platform or stage and express himself clearly and forcefully. It was an age of declamation as well as of oratory and a multitude of Americans strove to win for themselves some degree of accomplishment in reading and speaking.

Although America was thrilled with the masterpieces of eloquence from the mouths and pens of the illustrious patriots, there was a dire need for self expression among the masses who everywhere were finding themselves to be an important voice in American public affairs. The communicative abilities of the people in rural America, as described in Chapter I, however, were undeveloped and uninstructed.

Schools were rare in the west and children carried to their teachers whatever book they chanced to have, which in numerous instances was only the Bible. In Missouri in 1830 a competent observer by the name of the Reverend John M. Peck commented that the training in the early schools was of such a low level of efficiency that it was merely a public nuisance. A number of settlers were estimated to

18 Mead, 274-282.
be incapable of speaking, reading, pronouncing, spelling or writing the English language. Across the Mississippi river in Illinois, Governor Thomas Ford, seeing this identical defect in educational standards in his own state, determined that the situation be improved. He insisted that knowledge be made more "abundant" and that more people of the West learn to think. In the words of Ford, "An elevated, numerous democracy must be created, which shall destroy the power of the few who monopolize intellect." To help alleviate this condition a number of educational treatises were needed to educate the West. Among the principal contributions to the education of the student were the large number of readers permeating the country throughout the century, which inculcated the young with the American institutions of life and government.

To prepare men and women for public speaking and reading performances, as well as for good conversational speech, innumerable elocution teachers made use of the approved examples of famous orations and other literary works which reflected the spirit of truth, heroism and patriotism. It was the prevailing belief that the utterances of the brilliant speakers and authors of the past and present would cultivate the taste and intellect of the students and were therefore more desirable than original speeches which would be lacking in valuable historical information, beauty of language and


moral precepts. As the century progressed there was a marked tendency to retain the declamation for instruction in speech, although there were noteworthy changes in the types of selections. The numerous religious and moral selections were in time supplanted by orations on American social problems, namely, temperance, sectionalism, slavery, women's rights, immigration and science. Patriotic selections continued however to permeate the text books.\textsuperscript{21}

The declamation was one of the great basic mediums of speech instruction. The process involved chiefly memorizing a famous oration such as heretofore described, a dialogue or a poem and transmitting its meaning to others. In so doing habits of speech and manner were factors to be considered in the attempt to accomplish a convincing interpretation. To develop this declamatory skill required technique and perseverance. Not only was there a problem in memorizing wordy themes, but also in the correct interpretation of the exuberant messages. Supervision by one who perhaps knew little or nothing concerning the correct elocutionary procedures was in some instances almost a handicap.

Like their predecessors Enfield, Scott and others, a number of nineteenth century teachers compiled numerous books containing selections from a variety of celebrated authors. Elocution in its formative stage consisted primarily of the use of these rudimentary

\textsuperscript{21} R. R. Robinson, \textit{Two Centuries of Change in the Content of School Readers}, (Nashville, Printed privately by George Peabody College for Teachers, 1930), 38-39.
text books in the home, the Sunday School, the school and the literary society. In a large number of instances no rules of elocution were evident.

In the early thirties there were as yet no elocution teachers in the West. Daniel F. Miller, Sr., a lawyer in Keokuk, Iowa, from 1839 to 1880, recalled the absence of formal training in elocution in his boyhood in Ohio, prior to 1839. He states that little or no attention was given to either elocution or rhetoric and that he had no recollection of ever having received a lesson. Neither had he heard a lecture in reference to tones and modulations of the voice, or the arrangement of words and sentences into a discourse or argument.

The early authors of elocution books in the West were predominantly a large number of educators who first saw the need for practice in reading and speaking in their own schools. In observing the crude performances of their fellow countrymen of the frontier, as has been heretofore illustrated in Chapter I, many teachers compiled textbooks for the use of those who wanted to overcome their backward speech habits. In a multitude of instances teachers who were interested in elocution wrote nothing on the subject, for their knowledge of elocution and their writing ability were deficient. In a few instances a small number of rules on voice culture were added.

It is with these elementary textbooks in the frontier that the problem

of voice training for declamation purposes in this study is begun. The method has been to choose representative authors in different periods from various parts of the country and to illustrate their contributions and views on teaching elocutionary principles to nineteenth-century America. So much was written on the subject of elocution during the century that it is impossible to even list the complete number of teachers, private schools and textbooks.

In western Kentucky in the town of Louisville in 1830, Thomas Hughes took it upon himself to compile a reader. No rules were inserted in the book, which was filled with pieces both in prose and in verse on a variety of subjects. These selections had as their prime object the cultivation of taste and refinement of every potential reader or speaker. Books like these were sorely needed for early settlers like Reverend Snow, a self-appointed minister of the gospel in Wisconsin in the second quarter of the century. According to Cole, this itinerant minister in his sermons even boasted of his ignorance in not being able to read. The task of reading the scriptures at home and in the pulpit was left to his wife and with her help he was able to expound the Word.

It was in 1833 that an educator, Dr. William B. Lacey, Principal of Western Female Collegiate Institute near Pittsburgh, wrote his

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23 Thomas Hughes, The Universal Class-Book: Being a Selection of Pieces, in Prose and Verse, Designed For the Use of Schools, (Louisville: Morton and Company, 1830), iii.

Principles of Elocution in response to a number of requests for a manual on the subject. Only a few pages were devoted to the fundamentals of pronunciation, pausing, emphasis and modulation, while the remainder of the book contained moral, religious and patriotic selections. Those pieces which best illustrated his rules had been selected. By application of his simple instructions he felt that progress in the study of elocution could be attained.

Another compilation of selections was Bridge's The New American Reader, published in 1835 in Cincinnati. Like Hughs' work it had no rules but included pieces for memorization which were designed to interest the young reader and contribute to his mental and moral growth.

In the same year the memoriter method of training readers and speakers, however, met with the disapproval of John N. Maffitt of Tennessee, who adopted the extemporaneous method. In discussing some general observations on elocution in The Oratorical Dictionary he recommended this form of speech training:

Instead of studying and committing words and phrases to memory, as the manner of many rhetoricians is, the pulpit orator or the popular speaker would do better only to fix in his mind the great outlines of his subject, and trust principally to the impulses of the moment for his phraseology.

In New Haven in 1839, John Lovell in his Rhetorical Dialogues argued that the use of dialogues was the best medium for the teaching

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25 William B. Lacey, Principles of Elocution: Designed For the Use of Schools, Academies, and Colleges, (Pittsburgh: D. M. Hogan, 1833), v.

26 See B. Bridge, The New American Reader No. 3, Comprising Selections in Prose and Verse, For the Use of Schools, (Cincinnati: Published by S. Morgan and Company, 1835).

of elocution. His attitude is confirmed in his own mind from the following:

My experience satisfies me, that there is no better medium of cultivating a beautiful and captivating style of elocution, or a more graceful, just, and impressive action, than the employment of dialogues. Nor is there any species of recitation, that young folks so much delight in. The ardor and enthusiasm it inspires in their youthful breasts, is absolutely astonishing.28

Tremendous educational, patriotic and moral influence over millions of American students of the West was exerted from 1837 to the end of the century by the McGuffey Readers. These readers, which appeared in graded form, went through a large number of editions, probably attaining the largest sale and widest distribution of any elocutionary or perhaps any other text ever known. It is pertinent to note that the attention of the student was called to the meaning of the selections, articulation, pronunciation of words, definitions of terms, inflections, emphasis, modulation and pausing.29 The selections based on English and American life were of inestimable value in the promotion of the heritage of the new country. McGuffey's educational and moral attitude is quite evident in this quotation:

It has been the object to obtain as wide a range of leading authors as possible, to present the best specimens of style, to insure interest in the subjects, to impart valuable information, and to exert a decided and healthful moral influence.30


29 See William H. McGuffey, The Eclectic Third Reader: Containing Selections in Prose and Poetry, From the Best American and English Writers with Plain Rules for Reading and Directions For Avoiding Common Errors, (Cincinnati: Published by Trueman and Smith, 1837).

According to Vail, no other textbooks used in the schoolroom contributed so directly and positively to the formation of character in the pupils as the McGuffey Readers. Mark Sullivan affirms their importance in American social life:

The backbone of education in the common schools of America—so far as it aimed to impart ideas, standards of individual and social conduct, and the like—was the "Readers." They were to the last two-thirds of the nineteenth century what the New England Primer had been to the eighteenth. Minnick asserted that by the study of these selections "Young America was led into courts of justice, temples of worship, halls of legislatures, churchyards of illustrious dead, and was filled with emotions of heroism, of sacrifice, of sorrow, of patriotism, and of noble living." Fullerton likens the arrival of McGuffey in the "wilderness beyond the Ohio" to a "torch of education." The readers were particularly welcomed by the poorly equipped teachers and ministers, who alone could combat the "unsatisfied hunger for learning in some of their children and the lapse toward ignorance and savagery in others." In a study by Tousey it is found that McGuffey not only supplied the Middle Western states with valuable literary material, but equally important he included the explanation of certain valuable elocutionary principles relative to interpreting this literature.


33 *Old Favorites from the McGuffey Readers*, Edited by Harvey C. Minnick, (Chicago: Published by the American Book Company, 1936), Introduction, vii.

34 Ibid., Preface v.

McGuffey upheld the thesis that "oral reading should be for the purpose of communicating either the reader's or the author's thought, utilizing only those properties of voice and gesture as required for common speech."36

In response to the popular demand for readers, Henry Houseworth of Indiana published one in 1839 particularly for those who preferred literature of a patriotic or national flavor to that upholding the spirit of royalty. In addition he strove to eliminate material promoting sectarian philosophies or creeds. Houseworth claimed to have furnished those selections most suitable for the training of the youth in this country.37

A number of elocution books contained selections which reflected the sectional philosophies of their respective authors. In Macon, Georgia, M. M. Mason published in 1839 The Southern First Class Book, a rare volume of exercises in reading and declamation, designed for schools in southern and western states. The purpose of his selections was "to supercede either foreign or northern books—ill-adapted to our wants—opposed to our peculiar views and institutions." Mr. Mason states further that "all that could reasonably offend has been care-


37 Henry Houseworth, Federurban, or U.S. Lessons; Intended to Promote Learning, and a Knowledge of Republican Principles in the Minds of Our Youth, (Philomath, Indiana: Printed by W. E. Johnston, 1839), iii-iv.
fully avoided... The selections, he writes, should fit the present generation for the "honorable discharge of those duties which await them." Here in the South Coulter observed that "the art of oratory was much with the students and they generally liked it." Moreover he adds in his study of the University of Georgia at that time,

The climate, the social system, the college training made Southerners excel in oratory—florid and exaggerated as it was. Customs and rules changed, but at one time or another, two students from the three lower classes were required every evening to "pronounce pieces previously committed to memory" and receive instruction in elocution;... Throughout it all, they were supposed to learn what gestures were required to build Rome, destroy Carthage, how Regulus should address the Senate or Spartacus the gladiators, how Napoleon lost the battle of Waterloo—or, indeed, how Patrick Henry chose liberty or death.

In addition to serving as an exercise for the training of the American student to read and speak, the declamation afforded nineteenth century America entertainment and information. For example, Von Raumer, who attended an annual exhibition of students in "a college" at Columbia, South Carolina, in the forties, gives the following account of the nature of the memorized selections and the manner in which they were received:

The exercises were conducted in a sort of chapel; the galleries being occupied chiefly by women and young girls, and the space below by men and students. The speakers stood on an open stage; on the sides of it sat spectators

38 M. M. Mason, The Southern First Class Book, (Macon, Georgia: B. F. Griffin and John M. Cooper, 1839), iii.

of rank and distinction, and among these we were placed, in spite of our politest remonstrances. The speakers had committed their written speeches well to memory, and but seldom needed a hint from the prompter. The subjects were well chosen, and, unexpectedly to me, for the most part related to history; a department of study which seems but little cultivated in this country, many regarding it as superfluous for a practical life.40

He continues with an enumeration of the topics rendered, a critique of some of the declaimers and an account of the audience reaction:

1. What circumstances in the history of nations have led to distant settlements?
2. Repeal of the Edict of Nantes.
3. Advantages of travel in foreign countries.
4. Aztec Civilization.
6. Causes that led to the decline of the power of the United Netherlands.

The speeches were in general good, and equal to those one would hear from our best gymnasiasts. The first speaker declaimed in the Asiatic, or American style—with extravagant action and changes of the voice. The others were more moderate. H. Porcher, the fourth, spoke in a remarkably clever and natural manner. The performance of the sixth, Mr. Carlisle, was very judicious, and admitted of useful application to the United States of America. Every speaker was greeted with more or less clapping, or rather stamping of canes and feet. Between the speeches a band of black musicians played continually the same piece, as they do with us in the circuses.... I did not by any means understand all the speakers said; but that was not altogether my fault, for of what was spoken distinctly and naturally I did not lose a word.41

In 1845 Anna and William Russell collaborated in writing a book entitled The Young Ladies' Elocutionary Reader, which like the previous works of a similar nature, was designed particularly to meet the

41 Ibid.
tastes and needs of young ladies and to aid them in the art of
memorized readings. In this book selections were carefully chosen
for their "fitness" in being read aloud. For private entertain­
ments the lady, or gentleman for that matter, who could deliver
memorized recitations satisfactorily before others was socially a
prominent figure. Frequently these social affairs in the home were
called parlor entertainments, where various types of selections were
declared alternately with singing, debating, and instrumental solos.
Early in the forties Lydia Howard Sigourney put into these words the
feminine desire for learning to read the selection well:

Reading aloud, with propriety and grace, is an accom­
plishment, worthy the acquisition of females. To enter
into the spirit of an author, and convey his sentiments
with a happy adaptation of tone, emphasis, and manner, is
no common attainment. It is peculiarly valuable, in our
sex, because it so often gives them an opportunity of im­
parting pleasure and improvement to an assembled family,
during the winter evening, or the protracted storm. In
the zeal for feminine accomplishments, it would seem that
the graces of elocution had been too little regarded.

The favorable results of instruction in declamation for women
can be verified by their public performances. For example, at the
western Female High School in Baltimore in 1861 the annual exhibition
of recitations, which was a great social affair, was received with
admiration and delight by a large and attentive assembly. Noteworthy

42 Anna Russell and William Russell, The Young Ladies' Elocu­
tionary Reader, (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1845), 3.

43 Lydia Howard Sigourney, Letters to Young Ladies, (New
is the fact that original compositions were spoken, these being
interspersed with musical selections. After the exercises, addresses
were delivered by civic and religious leaders. Women were given
an excellent opportunity to prove their capability at such functions.
McKay comments that women frequently experienced an "intellectual
awakening" through their efforts in such speech activities in Indiana.

The cycle of events involved is described below:

Perhaps the first regular meetings for literary culture
among women were the early reading circles where the com­
pany listened to one reader, until a later accumulation of
confidence made them all able to take part in discussions
or in turn become readers and directors.

William Sherwood of New York held the classical belief that
one can learn from various models and recommended using the best princi­
pies observed in the imitative method. Thus in 1855 he wrote:

As the sculptor and painter study nature and the best
specimens of their art; so the speaker studies nature,—
as it exists in the manner of the living age; and gathers
his models from the best society, and the best orators;
and aims so to appropriate and improve them to his own
benefit, as to embody in his style the perfections of all,
without becoming himself the servile imitator of any.

Another southern contributor, D. Barton Ross, who was associate
principal and professor of elocution and natural science in Rapides

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44 The Baltimore American, February 22, 1861.


46 William Sherwood, Self-Culture in Reading, Speaking and
Institute near Alexandria, Louisiana, in the mid-century published The Southern Speaker, a book welcomed because of its shorter and more "spirited" selections. This was a welcomed change for the lengthy declamations very often degenerated into a mechanical exercise of the memory. According to a testimonial from the New Orleans Courier inserted as an advertisement in this book, Mr. Ross "had done justice to Southern authors, and Southern orators and statesmen." The effect of this and many other patriotic and religious compilations was strikingly noticeable in the schools. In the vicinity of Alexandria at Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy, which was founded in 1860, commencements were celebrated with appropriate selections delivered by the foremost cadets of the literary societies. Nichols in recalling his early schooling, reports the spectacular effect of the patriotic emphasis of these selections in education:

Our education was adapted to intensify our self-esteem, and to make us believe that we were the most intelligent, the most enlightened, the freest, most Christian, and greatest people the sun ever shone upon. Ours was the model Government of the world; our institutions were the model institutions, our country the model Republic. I do not in the least exaggerate. We read it in our books and newspapers, heard it in sermons, speeches, and orations, thanked God for it in our prayers, and devoutly believed it always.

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Clifton Johnson records that it was customary in the schools to spend an afternoon once a week in a "spelling match" after which came recitations, dialogues and oratory. The dialogues, he states, were inclined toward the comic while the oratory reflected the serious patriotic themes of the country.50

Another educator, Richard Sterling, a principal of the Edgeworth Female Seminary in Greensboro, North Carolina, became sufficiently interested in declamation and the recitation of pieces for students in schools and colleges to write The Southern Orator, a book containing mostly patriotic selections for memorization. The "grand" aim of a public speaker as he saw it was to give utterance to the sentiments so as to be understood, and at the same time impart all the force, beauty and variety of which the passage is susceptible.51

Joseph E. Frobisher, who had studied declamation under a Mr. Cornelius Walker in the Boston English High School, taught elocution in the East in several institutes, academies and private schools including his own, during the mid-century. After several years of experience traveling through the Mid-west giving a series of reading recitals,52 this itinerant elocution teacher submitted the following helpful rules for the memorization and delivery of declamation pieces:

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Do not begin by memorizing the first sentence and then the second. That begets the depraved habit of only knowing the words. Study the entire oration in meaning first; next separate the ideas; then take the phraseology, and lastly the words.

It is only in some such manner that you will ever get the spirit of the language; and learn to listen to yourself, with the assurance of having others listen to you with gratification and pleasure.

Even after the oration is well committed, review and reflect upon it sentence by sentence, until you get all you can out of each, especially just before using it in public, or it will only sound like a mere declamation.

The night before is an excellent time to make it fresh for the next day, no matter how often you may have previously looked at it. Search it through and through in a variety of ways. Study the words as so many links, and have their tone and full grammatical and expressional meaning. Keep it together as a whole in your mind.  

Declamatory training became more essential for men and women of the Pacific Coast as civilization gradually engulfed that area.

Eliza Farnham relates how she was called upon to speak in one of numerous temperance meetings in California in the fifties, whereupon she became "so alarmed" that she left the meeting not ever venturing back to acquaint herself personally with the proceedings.  

The experience of giving recitations was of particular value in such cases of incompetence.

A book absolutely devoid of rules but with a number of "fresh," "spicy" and "moral" selections appeared in 1881 in San Jose, California.


54 Eliza Farnham, California, In-Doors and Out; Or, Now We Farm, Mine, and Live Generally in the Golden State, (New York: Dix, Edwards and Company, 1856), 143-144.
Compiled by the Misses Settle and Estabrook, the work entitled The Young Elocutionist was favorably received. Moreover these women organized in San Jose the California School of Elocution and Oratory, which commanded the respect of many outstanding citizens. On the Board of Directors were many distinguished personalities, among whom were members of Congress, the pulpit, the medical profession and the educational field, in addition to the mayor of the city and the Governor of California. The school was well equipped for declamation exhibitions, having large class rooms and a stage with "beautiful scenery" for public entertainments. The claim was made that it was the first chartered school of elocution on the coast.

The Need for Scholarly Training in Vocal Expression. The declamatory method of training speakers, which was basically a mental discipline, was employed as early as classical times and flourished as late as the twentieth century. The method was usually supervised by incompetent trainers, until it was realized that professional direction was necessary if satisfactory results were to be achieved. As is observed in Chapter II there were a number of rhetoric and elocution books in Britain and American having undeveloped principles in the field of vocal culture and bodily action. For the most part, these elementary principles were ineffectively taught in the academies


56 Ibid., 3.
and colleges. Moreover, elocutionary principles were unheard of among the majority of American settlers, for public high schools, one of the agencies for such training, did not come into existence before 1827.57

It was at this time that Dr. James Rush, son of Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, wrote his much needed scientific treatise on the voice, namely, The Philosophy of the Human Voice. Although this physician was primarily concerned with the study of the mind, his subsequent interest in the study of voice led directly to a profound enthusiasm for the practical training of the vocal expression of ideas. In his book, which related directly to elocutionary principles, Rush observed that no satisfactory treatment of the subject had been made by the classicists and also that the present state of knowledge on the subject was imperfect.58

Rush, a keen observer, discerned the relevancy of his study to the needs of the people. He detected the lack of scholarly instruction in vocal expression in the declamatory work in the schools and made it unmistakably clear that the mere recitation of selections did not constitute a satisfactory method. No opportunity whatsoever existed for the development of articulation, quality, tone, emphasis, and the other vocal attributes. In defense of his stand in the matter he says:


Go to some, may I say all, of our colleges and universities, and observe how the art of speaking is not taught there. See a boy of but fifteen years, sent upon the stage, pale and choking with apprehension, in an attempt to do that, without instruction, which he came purposely to learn, and to furnish amusement to his classmates, by a pardonable awkwardness, which should be punished in the person of his pretending and neglectful preceptors, with little less than scourging. Then visit a Conservatorium of music, see the orderly tasks, the masterly discipline, the unwearied superintendence, and the incessant toil to produce accomplishment of voice; and afterwards do not be surprised that the pulpit, the senate, the bar, and the chair of medical professorship are filled with such abominable drawlers, mouthers, mumblers, clutterers, squeakers, chanters and mongers in monotony; nor that the schools of singing are constantly sending abroad those great instances of vocal wonder, who sound along the high places of the world; who are bidden to the halls of fashion and wealth; who sometimes quell the pride of rank, by its momentary sensation of envy; and who draw forth the intelligent curiosity, and produce the crowning delight and approbation of the Prince and the Sage.\textsuperscript{59}

Although not an elocution teacher, Rush's interest as a physician in the voice and subsequently in elocution placed his name conspicuously in this field. His scientific study and minute observations unquestionably gave him the distinction of being the pioneer of an indigenous American elocution. The Philosophy of the Human Voice had as many as six editions during his lifetime and the resolved analyses contained therein were of tremendous influence on the teachers of elocution and speech for a period of a hundred years.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 489-490.

\textsuperscript{60} Giles W. Gray, "The Voice 'Qualities' in the History of Elocution," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXIX, (December, 1943), 475-480.
In the establishment of his system for speech improvement, Rush wished to prove that the expression of the voice could be described in an orderly manner. He prescribed the study of the voice not as a mechanical pursuit but as an approach, as Woolbert called it, through the study of the elements. Commenting on the subject of elocution Rush declared that it could definitely be taught. The study of the voice in an orderly and comprehensive manner, he says, would enlarge a student's observation of nature, which then might be more of a controlling influence in his interpretation of words and ideas. Rush subscribed to the theory that the student should be required "to exercise his voice on the real constituents, as they are sounded in a strict analysis of words."

Training in elocution was considered by Rush as indispensable for the mastery of expression. For him who had a knowledge of the constituents of speech and understood their power and uses there was promise. It is such a one who "... is the potential master of the science of Elocution. ..." Yet Rush, possibly thinking of some of the bombastic speakers of his day, indicated that a sense of propriety and taste "must then derive from his ear. ..."

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63 Ibid., 465.
64 Ibid., (Fifth Edition), 503.
these words it is plain that a mechanical approach to his classification of the inherent properties of the voice was not intended.

What is specifically the result of Rush's own physiological observations? The central principles with which "he should be accredited most particularly" are his treatments of the radical and vanish movement, nomenclature, syllabication, alphabetic elements, and the specific intervals of inflection. Thus, for the first time was physiological, musical and psychological information directed into a subjective analysis pertaining to the entire vocal phenomenon of speech. Speaking in the frontier town of Cincinnati in 1835 before the Western Literary Institute, an organization which was a forerunner of the teachers' associations, Donald Macleod declared that through Dr. Rush's powers of observation and analysis, elocution had for the first time assumed the dignity and importance of a science. In this speech Macleod took sharp issue with Whately's visionary fears regarding elocutionary instruction and steadfastly committed himself to the stand taken by Rush, that elocution could be taught on a scientific basis. Macleod was convinced that the "natural school" should not be adhered to, instead he advocated that the American public should be taught "clearness, grace, and energy of expression."

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65 See Lester L. Hale, A Re-Evaluation of the Vocal Philosophy of Dr. James Rush as Based on a Study of His Sources, (Ph.D. Dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1942), 253.

66 Ibid., 44.


68 Ibid., 9-11.
Dr. Rush's work was received by nineteenth century teachers of elocution with a marked diversity of reactions. The system itself had the appearance of difficulty to the point of insurmountability. It was an interminable task to educate the ear to distinguish, for example, such numerous varieties of sound elements as the "wave" of the octave; and to apply these principles to the study of reading aloud was even more of a problem. Yet a whole host of authors and teachers alike went forth into the country to teach elocution on the basis of Rush's philosophy. As in the case of other specialists, however, an unusually large number of itinerant elocution teachers lacked a fundamentally sound approach. They plagiarized, entirely disregarded, mechanized, simplified, misunderstood or accepted indiscriminately Rush's American system of elocution. Although his work was mutilated to a considerable degree by nineteenth century elocution teachers, there were a few scholars who understood and made usable his description of the concrete function of the voice. Among the more notable of these personages was Dr. Jonathan Barber, a former member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, and instructor in elocution at both Yale and Harvard, who contributed to making the system understandable to America. Other outstanding contemporaries who accepted Rush's principles either wholly or partially were William Russell, the distinguished educator, Samuel Cummings, Merritt Caldwell, Dr. J. Seaver, Dr. Andrew Comstock, and a large number of others less significant.

Articulation. In the settling of the vast country to the West, as has been pointed out in Chapter I isolated frontier conditions
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required the surrender of some of the cultural opportunities that previously had been enjoyed in the more advanced East. Among other things speech became coarser. Frances Trollope was particularly amazed at this circumstance to the extent that her feelings were jarred and her taste shocked.69 Nevertheless, Partridge, who recorded the diary notes of his father, a nineteenth century lawyer, reports that the people themselves expected a good articulation from a person of learning or culture and especially from a leader, even though they did not have it in their own speech. In looking for prospective candidates for political office the question was sometimes asked, "Does he always talk like that—with only half of his mouth?"70 That poor articulation existed in a region almost destitute of speech training and educational opportunity should not be surprising.

In his study on "The Speech of the Frontier," Dale comes to the conclusion that with the exception of some geographical or cultural differences, the deficiencies in speech and manner of the American frontiersmen have been essentially the same wherever found.71 This was particularly true of slovenly and indistinct utterance whether it was in Virginia or Nebraska, or in one period or another.72


72 Ibid.
In this land of self government meetings and gatherings became more necessary to the functioning and growth of the community. The convincing speaker was in a position to command influence, but the man who could not communicate his ideas and his cause was lost in insignificance. On the other hand the refined and cultured persons found themselves better equipped to take part in such public meetings than those who had no benefit of speech instruction. The importance of better speech to backward individuals was fully recognized by Horace Mann, editor of The Common School Journal, who said it was everybody's duty to cultivate the faculty of speech:

Our power over others lies not so much in the amount of thought within us, as in the power of bringing it out. A man of more than ordinary intellectual vigor, may, for want of expression, be a cipher, without significance, but he greatly aids his own intellect, by giving distinct and forcible utterance to his thoughts. We understand ourselves better, our conceptions grow clearer, by the very effort to make them clear to another. Our social rank, too, depends a good deal on our power of utterance. The principal distinction between what are called gentlemen and the vulgar lies in this, that the latter are awkward in manners, and are especially wanting in propriety, clearness, grace, and force of utterance. To have intercourse with respectable people we must speak their language. These are no trifles; nor are they superfluous to any class of people. They give a man access to social advantages, on which his improvement very much depends. The power of utterance should be included by all in their plans of self-culture.  

The prevalence of indistinct speech among the American people was quickly noted by the teachers of elocution as one of the faults

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73 Horace Mann, "Duty of Cultivating the Faculty of Speech," The Common School Journal, I. (June, 1839), 187-188.
of speech which required prompt attention. The carelessness in discourse was not unusual or limited to Americans only, for in the preceding century in England, John Walker had been among those who were cognizant of articulatory errors and had written of such in 1787. He advised the teacher regularly to have his pupils pronounce each letter of the alphabet distinctly, "dwelling a considerable time on each." David Garrick also stressed in particular the loss of effect which "gabbling" produces: "If the minister gabble over his verse like the manner the people generally do theirs, all sacred and devotional effect is at once destroyed." In America Noah Webster discussing articulation in the same period:

Let each syllable and the letters which compose it, be pronounced with a clear voice, without whining, drawling, lisping, stammering, mumbling in the throat, or speaking through the nose. Avoid equally a dull, drawling habit, and too much rapidity of pronunciation; for each of these faults destroy a distinct articulation.

During the period following 1827 a number of elocution teachers noted, as had Rush, that mere declamatory training in schools was not accomplishing needed improvement in articulation. One of the most influential men in the field of education, as well as of elocution, was William Russell, the editor of the American Journal of Education.

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75 Richard Cull, Garrick's Mode of Reading the Liturgy of the Church of England. A New Edition With Notes, and a Preliminary Discourse on Public Reading, (London: John W. Parker, 1840), 81.

Education in 1826, who like Sheridan, Garrick, Webster and a whole host of others, became aroused over the speech of both the leaders and the masses of the people. Russell held many prominent teaching positions and with humanitarian aims wrote more than twenty textbooks, of which over a half dozen were devoted to elocution. Being an editor and lecturer in addition to his other accomplishments, his following observations are of interest:

The worst defects in reading and speaking are by no means confined to professional life, and occasions which call for eloquent address; they extend through all classes of society, and are strikingly apparent in the public exercises of colleges, the daily lessons of schools, in private reading, and in common conversation. The faults now alluded to, are owing to the want of a distinct and correct enunciation, which, whatever may become of higher accomplishments, would seem to be alike indispensable to a proper cultivation of the human faculties, and to the useful purposes of life. . . . The chief object, accordingly, in this department of education, is by appropriate exercise, to cultivate the organs of speech, to strengthen and discipline the voice, and, at the same time, to eradicate incorrect habits of utterance, which may have been contracted through early neglect.77

To Russell and other influential elocution teachers the initial phase of elocution was the attainment of good articulation for practical use in communication.

We commence, accordingly, our present survey of elocution with that part of it which subserves the purpose of utility, in reference to communication. This division of the subject comprehends those mechanical functions of voice, which are requisite to intelligible speech. We embrace, under this head, utterance, or the mere emission of the voice, articulation, or the formation of definite and distinct sounds;

77 William Russell, Lessons in Pronunciation, (Boston: Lord and Holbrook, 1830), 4-5.
pronunciation, or those modifications of articulate utterance, which are required in the enunciation of the words of a language.78

In his *A Grammar of Elocution*, which was written at Yale in 1830, Barber bluntly informed his reader that elocutionary training was a sorely needed study by the American citizenry. He had observed numerous men training for the gospel and bar who were devoid of clarity in their vocal utterances. Recognizing the people of the land as the voice of the nation, Barber pointed out that it was their duty "to speak with correctness, ease and impressiveness . . . or painfully feel the disadvantage arising from the deficiency."79 Moreover he was also certain that mere declamatory work in schools and colleges did not constitute adequate speech training. It was his observation that in public exhibitions at commencement exercises, in the recitations delivered by professed readers and reciters, and in the discourse of the pulpit, the bar, the assembly halls, the public meetings and of congress there was extremely faulty articulation. In addition he mentions the consequences of faulty elocutionary instruction:

... a faulty articulation is so extensively and generally prevalent, that I have scarcely ever attended an exhibition of public speaking, by young persons, without hearing the language literally murdered. The defects carried from schools and colleges are but very partially remedied in the world.

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Now, a speaker may be sure that an audience will never
give him their attention long, if his articulation is such
as to disappoint the ear and thus to confuse the mind.
Thus the very purpose for which he rises from his seat is
frustrated. 80

Barber declares that it would not be advisable for the student
to proceed with the study of reading and speaking until he had com­
pleted thorough exercises in articulation. In his first lesson on this
subject he states that "a good articulation is an affair altogether
mechanical" and prescribes a "SERIES OF PRACTICAL ELEMENTARY EXERCISES,
which shall constitute a sort of gymnastics of the voice." 81 These
exercises, which students must practice and in which they must per­
severe, consist of elementary tables showing sixteen vowel and twenty­
seven consonant elements as heard in various words. For example,
the student should sound distinctly the vowel e as heard in the word
e-rr. Taking one example from the table of consonant sounds, the
letter b should be sounded distinctly as in b-ow. 82 The man or woman
with careless speech was advised over and over again to "speak tripp­
ingly on the tongue" and was told to practice "tongue twisters"
made up of difficult sound combinations. Barber advocated practicing
such involved combinations as dthe in breadths, lmd in whelmed,
nds in bands, rzz in burghs, rcht in searched, thz in wreaths, zlz
in muzzles and zms as in spasms. Finally the student was required
to read aloud a number of sentences in which these sounds were included. 83

80 Ibid., 14.
81 Ibid., 15.
82 Ibid., 21-22.
83 Ibid., 45-47.
Many of the intellectual pioneers of elocution left a lasting imprint upon the minds and feelings of those whom they benefited in learning better speech. Barber's inspirational effect upon the young men who attended his classes is reflected in a letter of Wendell Phillips to James E. Murdoch in 1879, in which he praises his teacher:

... You ask me to tell you something of my acquaintance with Dr. Barber, the elocutionist. I had the good fortune to be his pupil, at Harvard College, in a class which fully appreciated the value of his lessons and system. I think I may say we were his favorite class. ... Based on Rush, the Doctor's system was at once philosophically sound and eminently practical. ... The Doctor's reliance on principle, and comparative disuse of technical rules, seem to me a great advantage over all the other systems with which I am acquainted. His teaching tended to make good readers and speakers, not readers or speakers modeled on Barber. It brought out each pupil's peculiar character of utterance and expression, without attempting or tending to cast him in any mold. After leaving Barber a pupil had no mannerism to rid himself of before he got full possession of his own power ... .84

Also according to Chauncey M. Depew, Barber's teaching apparently proved successful. Depew designated Wendell Phillips as the most effective speaker he had ever heard, and stated that "his articulation was so perfect he could be heard everywhere. ..."85

Various other devices were used to teach the articulation of sounds. For example, the simple word method plan was used by

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W. Ballantine in Pittsburgh in 1831. In his *The Infant School Reader* he employed selections having but monosyllabic words. In this way he contended that every sound in the language would more easily be articulated and selections could thereby be read "with ease and readiness." The McGuffey Readers also included the study of articulation. Several pages were devoted to rules with illustrations of the various sounds furnished by certain key words in each exercise. McGuffey felt that articulation could best be taught by imitating the example of the teacher. At the same time the practice of the various sounds was to be persevered in until distinctness was accomplished.

In the mid-twenties C. P. Bronson, after saving eight dollars for his expenses, traveled from his home in Columbia, Ohio, through the wilderness to Middlebury College in Vermont for a theological course. He became another of the itinerant elocution teachers in the west both to entertain and instruct the people. Forced to abandon the Episcopalian ministry because of poor health, Bronson devoted his entire time to the private teaching and advancement of elocution in the Mid-west and South. Crowded audiences listened attentively to his recitations and lectures. A number of students

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of law, divinity and music studied his works. In his Abstract of Elocution and Music, Bronson diagnosed poor articulation as "incorrect and offensive sounds" which come from "drawing the mouth back and keeping the teeth too close." This habit, he felt, was due to cold weather which forced people to keep their mouths closed. To overcome this objectionable practice Bronson advised his students to open the mouth wide, project the "under jaw" and "make the sound deep in the throat." 88

A system of elocution for students in the Alleghany mountain region of Pennsylvania was prepared by Merritt Caldwell, a professor of metaphysics, political economy and elocution in Dickinson College at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1845. He entitled his work A Practical Manual of Elocution. In his discussion of faulty speech Caldwell asserted that poor articulation represented a sluggish mind and was therefore an indication that the reader or speaker was slothful. 89 Like Barber, Caldwell provided his students with a list of intricate sound combinations, a few of which are gldst, lpsn, mpts and lbz. After the list was mastered, sentences involving these sounds were prescribed for further practice. 90

Among the most important contributors to elocutionary training during the thirties and forties was Dr. Andrew Comstock of Philadelphia,

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90 Ibid., 40-47.
who was vitally concerned with both deficient and defective speech.

Like Barber he recommends vocal gymnastics for the following reasons:

By the term, VOCAL GYMNASTICS, may be understood the principles of the human voice as employed in speech and song, as well as the training of the organs by which this voice is produced. The principles are the science of the voice—the training, the exercise of the organs, necessary to develop their powers, and enable them to act with rapidity, precision, and effect.

Vocal Gymnastics give the pupil complete command of the muscles of articulation, extend the compass of the voice, and render it smooth, powerful, and melodious. They not only call forth all the energies of the vocal organs, correct stammering, lisping, etc., but they invigorate the lungs, and, consequently, fortify them against the invasion of disease.91

In his edition of 1845 Comstock had formulated a variety of exercises for overcoming defective articulation. Cuts such as the one herein illustrated were used in his private school to demonstrate the positions of the mouth in the formation of the various sound elements. An accurate knowledge of these positions was considered essential to those persons desiring distinct speech. Pupils accordingly were taught to exercise their organs of speech in a forcible manner three times a week, or if possible, daily. Comstock's insistence upon the variation and forceful exercise of the vowels is noted:

The vowels should be exploded from the throat, both interrogatively and affirmatively, in every range of pitch within the compass of the voice, and with every possible degree of force.92

In collaboration with James B. Murdoch, William Russell in 1845 wrote Orthophony, a further attempt to apply Rush's principles.


92 Ibid., 27.
Positions of the mouth for the above sounds as prescribed by Comstock in his *System of Elocution*, 29.
The book appears to have been a decided success in America for its popularity was tremendous. Its demands made necessary the publication of numerous editions, the latest in 1882 by the Reverend Francis Thayer Russell, son of one of the collaborators. The book was well supplied with "copious examples and exercises, selected for the purpose of facilitating the application of theory to practice." The term orthophony, according to the 1845 treatise, is used to designate the systematic cultivation of the voice for the purposes of reading, recitation and declamation. Hence a new name was given to the training of the vocal organs in relation to the formation of sound. This system of instruction is superior in the minds of the authors for it provides a "progressive cultivation and development of the vocal organs, for the useful purposes of education, and as a graceful accomplishment." They insist that such a study also affords "an intelligence," and an understanding of the functions of the voice. Both Murdoch and Russell urged a rigid adherence to the gymnastics of voice, and like Barber and Caldwell they listed numerous unusual sound combinations for practice.

An anonymous author in 1848 in Cincinnati designed The First Book of Spelling and Reading Lessons for the Catholic schools of the

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94 Ibid., 7-8.

95 Ibid., 57-58.
nearby midwestern and southern areas. In the treatise fiction, fables and other stories of a secular nature had been omitted. Evidently copied from the methods of McGuffey, this book contained in each passage various words to be carefully articulated. Also included were brief explanations of the differences in vowel sounds and of the formation of the consonants. In the case of the latter he merely described whether a consonant was voiced or voiceless.96

In the years immediately preceding the Civil War an elocution teacher in rural Pennsylvania wrote a textbook following the principles of Walker, Steele, Rush and Barber. Samuel Gummere of Burlington, Pennsylvania, who had been teaching elocution privately since 1811, purposely omitted gestures in his book as had Rush and others, because to him vocal expression was of far greater importance.97 In his opinion elocution was founded upon sound, each utterance of which must be distinctly heard. In teaching articulation Gummere followed the accepted principle of the mastery of sound combinations prior to undertaking declamation.98 John W. Watson, whose Independent Sixth Reader in 1871 was published in both Chicago and New Orleans, taught articulation by writing the words utilizing only the letters which are sounded. For example, "Hiz iz amidst thu mists, mezherd an aaher ski."99 Apparently this was an attempt at a crude phonetic writing.

96 The First Book of Spelling and Reading Lessons: Compiled from Several Instructive Works; Designed for Catholic Schools, (Cincinnati: Published by Louis Meyer and Company, 1848), 3-10.


98 Ibid., 23-39.

A detailed work by Dale of Danville, Indiana, in 1877 pressed the advantages of a mechanical elocution which would embrace "formative and developing processes through which the person must pass in becoming capable of artistic expression." Dale, who was known as a vocal culturist and lecturer of elocution, frankly admits that his method does "not necessarily involve sense." His plan for developing good articulation, for example, involved the muscular exercising of the jaws and lips. Another somewhat similar mechanistic treatment of the subject is George L. Raymond's, The Orator's Manual written in 1879, a book completely filled with extremely detailed rules on the subject of elocution. In regard to articulation, Raymond also recommended muscular practice of the mouth and specifically prescribed that the student should "alternately gape" and execute movements as if about to swallow.

J. U. Barnard, a teacher of elocution in the State Normal School in Kirksville, Missouri, in the eighties, who it appears had become impressed with the work of Johann Pestalozzi of Germany and his "object method," planned in his instruction in reading and speaking to eliminate abstractions and have the students concerned only with the objects surrounding them. In this method, one would begin

100 G. Walter Dale, Outline of Elocution with an Abridgment of Principles from the Author's Complete Work, (Pittsburgh: Nevin, Gibbon and Company, 1877), 7.

with words as units representing ideas. Barnard, like his predecessors, was confident, however, that before declamatory work could be undertaken profitably, a good articulation should be cultivated. His method of obtaining this skill consisted of mastering the difficult sentence exercises involving the currently popular laborious sound combinations, for example, "Thrice six thistle sticks thrust straight through three throbbing thrushes." 

Some elocutionists resorted to unconventional techniques to improve the articulation of their pupils. In the early nineties J. V. Coombs, a professor of elocution and reading in Salina Normal University in Kansas, recommended this archaic bit of advice concerning indistinctness:

To break up bad articulation practice with the mouth full of pebbles, marbles, or smooth hickory nuts. The author has tried this plan often, and is satisfied that it is worthy of attention. Fill the mouth full and attempt to read one or two pages. Then remove the pebbles and read a few pages. The organs of speech will now be as "sportive as the swallow and as versatile as the streamlet." Let public speakers who are annoyed with indistinct articulation try this plan.

The trend toward the emphasis on the physical culture of muscles involved in the speech process was apparent among such private elocution teachers as G. Swede Lewis of the Made-to-Order School of Elocution and Oratory, which apparently had its location in the

102 J. U. Barnard, Outline of Elocution, (Kirksville, Missouri: Published by the author, 1880), 19-21.

103 Ibid., 17.

West. Lewis who taught in the eighties and nineties offered lip, mouth, and tongue exercises of a highly unique nature. The unusual quality of his methods may be observed from the following:

Open the mouth in every direction as far as you can. Smile with the lips tightly closed and then quickly protrude the lips. Repeat rapidly until tired.

This exercise is intended to correct the fault that many persons have of speaking with stiff lips and closed mouth. The practice is simple and absurd in appearance; but you will appreciate the value and need of it, for a perfect enunciation, when you observe how seldom the mouth is opened to its utmost limit—"after the pie eating age is past, and society elegance forbids us to indulge in a helpful and expressive yawn." 105

In addition, to increase the agility of the tongue:

Keep the lower jaw and lips immovable while the tongue is exercising.

1. Draw the tongue back as far as possible.
2. Extend it out of the mouth to its extreme length.
3. Draw it back very quickly.
4. Flatten it; then with the tip touch the inner side of the lower front teeth, and then push it out to its full length, keeping the tip in the same position.
5. Draw back rapidly, flatten the root, then raise the tip perpendicularly and very slowly toward the roof of the mouth, and then resume the original position.
6. Describe a circle with it, and then touch both cheeks rapidly several times. Any similar exercise will do, the effort being to make the tongue supple.

SUGGESTIONS

It will be well to brush the tongue with pure white castile soap and water, now and then, after the exercise, which should be taken morning and night until every physical movement of this great speech maker is mastered.

Be careful not to go through the exercises more than twice at the first practice, for the tongue is very sensitive of any violent use and may give you discomfort.

Remember that the only way to realize any benefit from these instructions is to obey them. 106


106 Ibid., 53.
Summary. Nineteenth century American elocution teachers detected careless and mumbled speech in the majority of American people as well as in their public reading and speaking exhibitions. They therefore concluded that specific training in the vowels and consonants should precede declamation exercises. Viewpoints concerning methodology in numerous instances followed a similar pattern. Note-worthy is that of Barber and his following, whose plan concerned the rigid enunciation of all the vowels as in exemplified words and of the consonants as illustrated in especially difficult combinations. This was to be followed by the rendition of complete sentences which included the sound combinations that had been previously drilled. The McGuffey Readers were outstanding in the promotion of the study of articulation throughout the West in the period following 1837. The imitative method whereby the teacher demonstrated the correct articulation of sounds was subscribed to by McGuffey. Following the Civil War examples of elocutionary teaching techniques taken at large showed signs of the mechanistic assumption that correct articulation could be achieved by practicing a variety of mouth exercises through a physical culture procedure.

Pronunciation. In the settlement of the West the pioneers found that there was little time for developing their knowledge, manners and speech habits. Primitive social conditions furnished little inducement for cultural or educational improvement.107 When

the roving settlers had firmly established themselves into communities, educational habits were made more possible by the building of schools. According to Mencken a vast number of new words were being formed in the West from the time of Jackson's presidency to 1885, a period when the great pioneer movement reached its height.108 Faulty pronunciations were obvious among these newcomers to the West and the number of these mistakes of pronunciation by the settlers drew unfavorable comment from critical observers. Trollope, while riding on a steamboat in the West in 1828, observed numerous uncouth phrases and strange pronunciations.109 James Fenimore Cooper, on the other hand, was of the opinion that the great body of American people spoke "their language more correctly than the mass of any other considerable nation." He lists as common faults an ambition of effect, a lack of simplicity, a turgid abuse of terms, provincialisms, the mixing of sounds like ough, false accentuation and uncertainties of pronunciation.110

Combe in his tour throughout the West found that the undeveloped state of the country had a retarding effect upon the manners and knowledge of even an educated person.111 There is no doubt that a


number of errors from English speech became a part of the American
tongue. In his travels in the sixties Nichols heard such phrases
as, "I vum," "I swon," "I swow," "gaul darn your picter," and "golly
orimus," from old-fashioned Yankees who were shy of swearing.\textsuperscript{112}
Partridge observed a tendency among the settlers to gloss over the
facts of life by the use of euphemisms.\textsuperscript{113} A "chair" became a "seat;"
a "female," a "woman;" a "wife," a "lady;" and "breasts" came to be
"bosom."\textsuperscript{114} Mencken mentions the period particularly from the twen-
ties to the eighties as being the "palmy days of euphemism."\textsuperscript{115}

The problems of pronunciation were not something new to
American elocution teachers, for as early as in the middle of the
eighteenth century Samuel Johnson in his elaborate two volume work
had recognized the impossibility of agreeing on pronunciation.\textsuperscript{116}
Moreover, in 1774 John Walker had written of numerous uncertainties


\textsuperscript{113} Eric Partridge, \textit{Words, Words, Words}, (London: Methuen
and Company LTD., 1933), 97.

\textsuperscript{114} Erwin C. Shoemaker, \textit{Noah Webster Pioneer of Learning},
(New York: Columbus University Press, 1936), 293.

\textsuperscript{115} Op. cit., 651.

\textsuperscript{116} Samuel Johnson, \textit{A Dictionary of the English Language: In
Which the Words are Deduced from their Originals, and Illustrated in
Their Different Significations By Examples from the Best Writers},
of pronunciation in England. In his seventh edition printed in 1783 Johnson claimed that his dictionary was more complete than any heretofore written. He asserted that in his work he had more words than found in previous dictionaries, that he had rejected barbarous terms, that he had included the correct spelling of words, that he had traced words more clearly in their etymology and that he had furnished a good definition for each word. In addition he said he had inserted many poetical terms for the better understanding of great literature.

Two years later Walker in his Rhetorical Grammar advised an imitative method of learning pronunciation, recommending that the teacher pronounce the words correctly and as a result the students would do likewise. The influence of Walker upon the American pronunciation of words was without doubt unparalleled. According to Dawson, his dictionary has been a standard word of reference for over one hundred and fifty years. Sheldon writes that both


118 Samuel Johnson, A Dictionary of the English Language; In which the Words are Deduced from their Originals, Explained in their Different Meanings and Authorized by the Names of the Writer in Whose Works they are Found, (London: Seventh Edition, Printed by W. Strahan, 1783), I, Preface, n.p.


Sheridan and Walker have commanded a great respect in America. Credit is given to Sheridan for his initial efforts in indicating the pronunciation of every word. To Walker, whom Webster followed a little more closely than Sheridan, commendation is accorded for more precise sounds and for more logically arranged material.\(^{121}\)

Webster's first dictionary, which appeared in 1806, was a direct outgrowth of the differences in words noted in American speech as compared to that of English. New circumstances of life, new habits and new inventions were making material differences in the two languages. In 1807 Webster protested that English dictionaries contained too many obscene and vulgar words for use by American children. He also noted that numerous words were beginning to have a different meaning in America and that accents and markings had to be changed accordingly.\(^{122}\) The idea of an American dictionary was ridiculed by a number of editorialists\(^{123}\) early in the century, but Noah Webster stalwartly held out against their criticism.\(^{124}\) By compiling his


\(^{122}\) Noah Webster, *A Dictionary of the English Language; Compiled for the use of Common Schools in the United States*, (New Haven: I. Cooke and Company, 1807), iii.


dictionaries he became one of the chief proponents of American education in the nineteenth century.

A number of American elocution teachers included in their teaching methods and books, rules concerning the pronunciation of words for the benefit of their nineteenth century readers. In general the dictionaries of Johnson, Walker and Webster had been consulted and followed. In rural Maryland John Getty of Easton Academy in 1831, who still entertained the classical belief that elocution was a part of rhetoric, stated that accent was an essential factor to be considered in pronunciation. He encouraged his students to stress a certain letter or syllable in order that it might be distinguished from the others.125

Samuel Kirkham, another early "free stater," who having heeded the absence of adequate elocutionary training in Maryland schools in the thirties, was among several pioneering elocution teachers to detect the need for a private school. This he accomplished in 1831 for the "young ladies and gentlemen" of Baltimore. At his school, students had "the advantages of an extensive and elegant yard." The building itself was large enough to accommodate both sexes in "separate and totally distinct apartments."126 His staff taught elocution, geography, languages, arithmetic and penmanship. Lectures in moral

125 John A. Getty, Elements of Rhetoric: Exhibiting A Methodical Arrangement of all Important Ideas of the Ancient and Modern Rhetorical Writers Designed for the use of Colleges, Academies, and Schools, (Philadelphia: Published by S. Littell, 1831), 95.

codes were considered essential and declamation pieces were used to instill social principles into the minds of the students.\textsuperscript{127} It was Kirkham's opinion that pronunciation was at as low an ebb in America as in Great Britain and in his school he strove diligently to make his students conscious of overcoming mispronunciations.\textsuperscript{128} However no method was set down as to how they were to be eliminated. Kirkham's book, \textit{An Essay on Elocution}, which contained numerous selections, met with widespread approval and is said to have found its way into the interior of Pennsylvania, the Mississippi Valley and other sections of the country.\textsuperscript{129}

Out in Pittsburgh, Lacey, who was very cognizant of inaccurate pronunciations, termed the "vicious" mispronunciations of the speakers of his time unpardonable. Lacey regarded Walker an outstanding authority on pronunciation, as had Getty, and cited the importance of the correct accentuation of words.\textsuperscript{130} In Cincinnati McGuffey's practice of placing after each selection examples of the most frequently mispronounced words among the uneducated was decidedly beneficial to his many students in the West.\textsuperscript{131}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 8-9.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Ibid., xiii.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Ibid., xiv.
\item \textsuperscript{130} Op. cit., 14-15.
\item \textsuperscript{131} The Eclectic Third Reader, Op. cit., 8.
\end{itemize}
In the minds of the elocution teachers, the errors in pronunciation, as well as those of articulation, were prevalent mistakes which had to be eliminated for the sake of refinement and distinctness. George Vandenhoff, formerly an English actor, who had come to New York to teach elocution, gave public recitations in crowded halls and published in 1844 a "little work" with "no pretension to profundity" being "simple and intelligible... and easy of practice." In the preface he speaks of elocution as "an art... daily gaining ground as an essential part of the education of a gentleman." Aware of the defective pronunciations of his time, Vandenhoff makes the statement that, "pronunciation distinguishes the educated gentleman from the vulgar and unpolished man." The customs of these "vulgar thousands," he says, "cannot sanctify their errors; nor can the daily practice of thousands change folly into wisdom... ."

In 1861 in his The Art of Elocution Vandenhoff intensely disagreed with Whatley's view that elocution was a needless and harmful practice. He also stated that poor articulation and pronunciation were not characteristic of America alone but existed in

132 Anna Cora Mowatt, Autobiography of an Actress; of Eight Years on the Stage, (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1859), 139.


134 Ibid., 16.

135 George Vandenhoff, The Art of Elocution, As an Essential Part of Rhetoric; With Instructions in Gesture; and as Appendix of Oratorical, Poetical, and Dramatic Extracts, (London: Sampson Low and Son, 1861), 4-17.
England as well. That the educated did not furnish exemplary speech is a fact he regrets:

The pulpit, the senate, and the bar, ought, from the advantages of education generally possessed by their members, and their social position, to be the standard authorities to which we might appeal with certainty; (for our language is continually undergoing change, addition, and improvement;) but, unfortunately, the gentlemen of the learned professions are frequently so careless in their own pronunciation as rather to require admonition, . . . than to be looked to as authorities; so that they may, (from their own inaccuracies) be considered a Court of Error, but not of Appeal. We must, therefore, rely upon such lights as we have, and the assistance of those who, well educated in other respects, make their own language their particular study.

To assist students in his private school, which was established in New York in about the late forties, Vandenhoff prepared lists of words likely to be erroneously articulated or mispronounced. These words were to be carefully noted with special attention to be given to correct accenting and the accurate sounding of the vowels.

That the Middle West needed particular assistance in good speech was realized by Penrose Hussey of Ohio, who in 1847 stressed both the spelling and pronunciation of words in his *The Home Teacher*. Following in the footsteps of Walker, Hussey was convinced that the teacher should pronounce the word correctly for the young pupils. In particular he pointed out the sounds represented by the various combinations of letters.

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136 Ibid., 37.
137 Ibid., 44.
138 Ibid., 38–45.
Henry Maglathlin, a follower of Rush, Murdoch, Russell and Barber, was a private elocution teacher in Boston in the eighteen forties. Like Vandenhoff, he believed that good pronunciation was an indication of refined and cultivated society and commended the frequent use of the dictionary. Maglathlin lists three ways by which pronunciation may be rendered faulty:

1. By omission of one or more elements; as 'round, 'scribe, 'cur, 'xist, ev'ry, pr'vent, d'part, sev'ral, w'at, vess'1, an', govern'ment, wool'n, bein', doo', wa', for around, ascribe, occur, exist, every, prevent, depart, several, what, vessel, and, government, woollen, being, door, war.

2. By sounding letters which should be silent; as, sounding the b in subtle, the h in honest, the e in grovel, the o in unison.

3. By perversion of sounds; as, abundance, eatable, behold, compare, separate, winder, potater, nchure, forchune, Cord, lawr, for abundance, eatable, behold, compare, separate, window, potato, nature, fortune, God, law.

Robert Kidd, who left Princeton Theological Seminary to teach elocution in several teachers' institutes in the vicinity of Pittsburgh in the eighteen fifties, and who established the first department of elocution in Evansville College in Indiana in 1877, taught pronunciation by formulating exercises containing lengthy words which he felt would facilitate the understanding of accent.

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141 Wilbor, 287.

and syllabication. Some typical words he used are *valetudinarian*, *perpendicularly*, *uncontrovertibly*, and *incomprehensibility*.\(^{143}\)

In the midst of the perplexing difficulties of the South during the Civil War Adelaide Chaudron in Alabama wrote *The Second Reader* designed for use in primary schools. She advocated the classical theory of teaching elocution to children early in life and wholeheartedly advocated that students be required to use correct pronunciations. Despite her southern background she favored sounding the *r* medially or finally but without harshness.\(^{144}\)

Among the Westerners in the post war period, Frobisher in 1867 called attention to some common errors:

> Be especially cautious in the pronunciation of common words, such as been, again, against, often, little, and, none, nothing, ignorant, patriot, patriotism, national, government, &c., which are often frightfully distorted by students.\(^{145}\)

Meanwhile Allen Ayrault Griffith, a teacher of elocution in the state normal school in Michigan in the eighteen sixties, took notice of the commonly mispronounced words, *git*, *hev*, *criter*, *lenthen*, *exlent* and others and stated that these must be avoided.\(^{146}\)

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\(^{143}\) Robert Kidd, *Vocal Culture and Elocution; with numerous exercises in Reading and Speaking*, (Cincinnati: Wilson, Hinkle and Company, 1857), 25.

\(^{144}\) Adelaide V. Chaudron, *The Second Reader, Designed for the use of Primary Schools*, (Mobile, Alabama: Published by the Advertiser and Register, 1863), 7.


\(^{146}\) Allen Ayrault Griffith, *A Drill Book For Practice of the Principles of Vocal Physiology, and Acquiring the Art of Elocution and Oratory, Comprising all the Essential Elements of Vocal Delivery and Gesture, For Common and Parish Schools, Colleges, and Private Learners*, (Chicago: Adams Blackmer & Lyon, 1868), 33.
Anna T. Randall, a private teacher of elocution in Louisville, Kentucky, whose *Reading and Elocution* (1869) was written specifically to furnish choice selections of prose and poetry for schools, parlor and lyceum occasions, applied the term *Orthoepy* as had Murdoch and Russell to the pronunciation of words. Her design in meeting the needs of the unlearned students in western Kentucky and southern Indiana was to "fix the habits of correct pronunciation and distinct enunciation" by drilling the voice upon the elementary sounds of the language.147

In Michigan in the early eighties a private teacher of elocution, namely, Carrie Dean, objected to the over use of the ū sound in words like windūh and putatūh and would not even permit its use in the words *charity* and *enemy*.148 She taught "correct pronunciation" by giving lists of words which illustrated both the correct and incorrect forms.149

One of the outstanding itinerant elocution teachers of the Midwest and of the Far West was William T. Ross. A native of Ohio, who enlisted in the Navy during the Civil War and served as a mate on a Mississippi gunboat, Ross had been a student of Robert Kidd, whom he considered his most influential teacher. Following the war he was

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actively engaged in teaching large classes in elocution in his native state. For his services he charged only a nominal fee but subsisted primarily on the earnings he derived from the entertainments after the classes. He advanced the profession of elocution through his lectures and recitations not only in Ohio but also in Illinois, New York, Vermont, Wisconsin and finally in California, where he began a crusade in 1875. Although some pioneering in the field had been done here by a few teachers from the East, their efforts met with little success and some of them abandoned the state. Ross, however, was successful in arousing interest and raising the standards of elocution by his effective lectures and impressive public recitations. Heretofore the California public had had very inadequate ideas of the scope of elocution. However this did not discourage Ross because he had already coped with such ignorance in his vast experiences elsewhere. He therefore appeared before state teachers' conventions to point out the need for elocutionary training in the public schools. In his many contacts he discovered an abundance of native talent, the crudeness of which convinced him all the more of the absolute importance of voice training.\footnote{150}{Wilbor, 287-288.} To meet this circumstance Ross in 1878 established a private elocution school in Saint Ann's Building in San Francisco.\footnote{151}{See Advertisement page, The Voice, I, (December, 1879), 148.}

In the matter of pronunciation, Ross contended that the important thing was to determine the correct utterance of the word and then to practice it frequently. He prescribed "the dictionary" as
a final authority in this matter. Declaring that teachers and students alike should take particular note of mispronunciations, he devised a long prose selection filled with troublesome words for the study and practice of correct pronunciation.\textsuperscript{152}

Many teachers of elocution met with difficulty in accurately indicating errors in pronunciation and in determining the correct pronunciation to use in a given area. As a result their efforts in numerous instances succeeded only in creating false standards. Furthermore, a number of their "so-called" mispronunciations were not mispronunciations at all. Setting an example in pronunciation was likewise found to be a problem, for the elocution teacher himself no doubt reflected the area or the environment in which he lived. Evidence to this effect is found in a meeting of the New York State Association of Elocutionists. That there were mispronunciations in the readings in their annual meeting held in Carnegie Hall in New York City in April, 1900, is demonstrated in this statement made by an anonymous member:

One of the rules of the convention was that all criticism should be given and accepted for the purpose of bettering conditions. We shall be governed by this rule in this report. If errors are not pointed out, reforms can not follow. Not a few of the members of the convention themselves showed faults which it is their business to correct in others. There were many mispronunciations. Here is a brief list picked from the readings alone:

- Com-ment\textsuperscript{1} for com\textsuperscript{1}ment; per\textsuperscript{1}\textsuperscript{1}-is-style for per\textsuperscript{-1}-is-style;
- wuz for was; ull for all; forum for form; ok? for ask;
- fost for fast; list-lus for listless; gurl for girl;
- kur-tos-ly for cour-te-ously; sha-da for shad-ow; sawr for sore.\textsuperscript{153}


\textsuperscript{153} "The New York State Association of Elocutionists," Werner's Magazine, XXV, (May, 1900), 305-316.
Summary. In his attempt to curb numerous mispronunciations in the rapidly developing country, the elocution teacher resorted chiefly to the practice of directing the attention to the most commonly mispronounced words. To test his ability, the student was often required to read passages in which numerous lengthy words were included. In a majority of instances the teacher attempted to exemplify what he thought was the correct usage, but in supervising the pronunciation of word lists compiled for such practice he frequently was guilty of making numerous errors himself. Furthermore, it may be charged that he often created false standards and inaccurately indicated prevalent errors. Nevertheless the elocution teacher no doubt did a great amount of good by his explanation of the dictionary and by his insistence upon its use.

Attitudes Toward American Variations of Speech. In a number of respects the pronunciation and choice of words were undergoing changes according to the geographical environment of the inhabitants. Wherever transplanted groups had settled together in isolated mountain districts far from contact with others,\textsuperscript{154} there evolved a distinctive local speech or old forms tended to be maintained. These mountain people derived chiefly from Scotland and Ireland and for the most part kept their Elizabethan peculiarities of speech and manner. Their use of the archaic words of their ancestry has persisted "because the modern equivalent has not yet come in."\textsuperscript{155} In general,


however, common speech habits appeared in the three larger areas, namely that of the South, the region beyond its borders stretching from coast to coast, and the New England states.

Travelers have recorded these interesting variations in speech. Dickens was among several who have written of the dialect peculiar to the Westerner. In his travels in the forties by stagecoach and flatboat, listening with a keen interest to the oddities of expression, he noted a number of new usages which were rapidly filtering into the American language. He heard such words as nohow, fixings and afternoon. A teacher from New England, where speech was patterned after the British, upon attending a public debate in the Middle West in the mid-century was struck by the "inelegant" dialect. Nichols, who traveled widely in the frontier reported variations in the pronunciations typical of the West, the South, and also of New England. It seemed to him that the language, like the country, was composed of a certain amount of expansiveness. In the West a man exhibited hostility to all "cussed varmints," or a story "smells rather tall." In the South if you visited a man, he'll "go for you to the hilt again creation." Here also to make a wager is "to size his pile." Mark Twain reported the South as dating events according to their proximity

156 Charles Dickens, American Notes and Pictures from Italy, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), 117-121.

157 "Village Affairs, A Sketch From Life," The Knickerbocker, XLV, (February, 1855), 156-170.

to the Civil War. Du'lin' the war, or befo' the war, or right aftah
the war were common expressions.\textsuperscript{159} These and many more Americanisms
were common in the frontier. They were so numerous in each section
that they "would fill a small volume."\textsuperscript{160} Beveridge writes that
such peculiar and distinctive dialect resulted from the untaught and
unrestrained speech of western people who had no access to the agencies
of culture.\textsuperscript{161} A similar condition entered largely into the formation
of dialect and a somewhat different code of manners in the South.\textsuperscript{162}
Here the "African flavor" of American Negro speech in tone, pitch
pattern, rhythm, emphasis and indistinct enunciation affected the
speech of the illiterate whites.\textsuperscript{163}

Although variations in American speech are detectable, Wise af­
firms that "it is difficult if not impossible, to say what is typical
speech of a region or to define accurately a dialect area."\textsuperscript{164} Gray
in discussing American speech likewise is of the opinion that no
distinct line separates the areas of speech and points out that di­
vergencies of American speech are not enough to cause a barrier to

\textsuperscript{159} Mark Twain, Life on the Mississippi, (New York: Harper and
Brothers, Publishers, 1901), 317.

\textsuperscript{160} Nichols, 386.

\textsuperscript{161} Albert J. Beveridge, Abraham Lincoln 1809-1858, (New York:

\textsuperscript{162} W. H. Sparks, The Memories of Fifty Years, (Philadelphia:
Claxton, Remsen and Haffelfinger, 1870), 117-119.

\textsuperscript{163} Oma Stanley, "Negro Speech of East Texas," American
Speech, XVI, (February, 1941), 3-16.

\textsuperscript{164} Claude M. Wise, "Southern American Dialect," American
Speech, VIII, (April, 1933), 37-43.
Both agree that in the three areas many inconsistencies and variations exist and that when language is spoken over any considerable area these variations of pronunciation are unavoidable and resultant dialects are inevitable.

Not much information is given on the subject of dialect by the elocution teachers, yet their attention was drawn to the matter and some consideration of the problem is noticeable. In England dialectal variations were more evident and more prevalent in each county than in America. According to Sheridan in his Lectures, these dialects labelled the individual and were sure signs of one's having a provincial, pedantic, rustic, or inferior education and therefore bore some degree of stigma.

According to Mencken, the first all-out attack on Americanisms in speech came in 1781 from John Witherspoon, who recorded numerous peculiarities of speech in the Colonies. Noah Webster in 1807, who went too far in sanctioning the speech of New England, thereby falsely influencing a number of elocutionists, foresaw that although the American language was derived from the English the similarity of the languages would not continue. In clarifying his position he cites


167 Thomas Sheridan, A Course of Lectures on Elocution; Together with Two Dissertations on Language; and some other Tracts relative to those Subjects, (London, A New Edition, C. Dilly, 1798), 47.

in his dictionary such differences in the two countries which af-
fect the language as climate, government, modes of life, artificial
objects and physical and moral causes which cannot be defined.
Dialectal variations in oral utterance would in his opinion in-
evitably vary the spoken language of remote nations.169 In his ob-
servations of place names in Iowa, Read found that the sources for
many new names and words ranged from "the epic poet of ancient
Greece, Homer, to a child's mispronunciation of his pet dog, Colo,
for the dog Carlo, . . . ." Among other sources for names of
frontier towns in Iowa were: national heroes, loved ones, virtues,
ideals, novelties, distinctiveness of the locale, the railroads,
and the Indians.170

In the period of American elocution the statements made by
the teachers on the subject of dialect were often contradictory, con-
fusing and clearly speculative. Nevertheless there was agreement
on some principles and methods. Kirkham's claim that the deviations
in the spoken language were at as low an ebb as in Great Britain was
typical of many who admitted this fact.171

William Russell, who collaborated with John Goldsbury in
publishing The American Common School Reader and Speaker in 1844,

170 Allen Read, "Observations on Iowa Place Names," American
Speech, v, (October, 1929), 27-44.
attempted to correct the diverse forms of pronunciation by denouncing deviations from the standard and the liberty with which individuals chose to set up their own standards. The following excerpt contains their definition of good pronunciation:

That pronunciation is correct which is sanctioned by good usage, or custom. Good usage implies the habit of persons of good education, as regulated by the decisions of learning and taste, exemplified in standard dictionaries,—a style which is equally free from the errors of uneducated or negligent custom, and the caprices of pedantry,—which falls in with the current of cultivated mind, and does not deviate into peculiarities, on the mere authority of individuals.172

Moreover, Russell pointed out in his Pulpit Elocution two years later in 1846 that the uncultivated speaker usually renders himself disagreeable by his customary violations of propriety and taste. He specifically blames the prevalence of the dialects of the British Isles which Webster allowed in his dictionary.

It is a matter of regret, that this subject is so much neglected in early education, and that professional men, generally, do so little justice to themselves and their language by the numerous improprieties which they habitually exemplify in speech. New England, more particularly, is marked by the extensive prevalence of local faults, in this respect; and most of these are owing to the sanction unfortunately given by Dr. Webster to such peculiarities. An obsolete and awkward style of pronunciation, has thus gained currency, even in places of learning. But many of Dr. Webster's modes are, at least, eighty years out of date, for the present day; and not a few are obsolete Scotticisms, and errors of dialect, peculiar to Yorkshire or to New England.173


Meanwhile North at Yale, upon observing the diverse student population and their peculiarities of speech, held that the speech of the middle and southern states was a "genteel pronunciation" and therefore preferable to that of the uneducated classes of New England. He advised the avoidance of pronouncing words in any way that would attract attention either by its erroneousness or its singularity. Good pronunciation, he wrote, depends to a great extent on distinct speech.174

A number of elocution teachers came to the conclusion that merely practicing the pronunciation of words was not getting at the root of the problem. Hence, they conceived the notion that students should practice elemental sounds accurately and vigorously either alone or in words. In an attempt to help solve the confusion arising in the making of correct sounds, Comstock, one of the early American pioneers in elocution, formulated his own phonetic system using letters or symbols appropriate to the elementary sounds.175 In this manner it was supposed that accuracy in the formation of sounds could be attained. In the same year J. C. Zachos, a private teacher of elocution in Cincinnati, recommended a simple yet wholly unscientific sound system for his students with the aim of helping to "fix the student's mind" upon the correct sounds in a word. The use of numbers


over the vowels were meant to signify the kind of vowel to be used, for example, fat, fare, fast, far, fall, fate.\(^\text{176}\)

A year later in St. Louis Anton Stamm in his *Phonetic Primer* applied the "phonetic method" in teaching Missouri students the correct sounds in reading and speaking. The key used was similar in appearance to that in the conventional Webster's dictionary of today, yet the marks were applied differently. As illustrations the words move, rule, met, and war may be noted. For practice Stamm marked the vowels in several selections which were to be studied and read.\(^\text{177}\)

In 1868, Noble Butler in Louisville, Kentucky, illustrated sounds in a different manner in his "phonetic method." He taught the pupil to utter the sound of the alphabetic characters instead of giving the "name" of the letter. A word was given to exemplify each sound, as for example the sh sound was illustrated by words like ship and shop.\(^\text{178}\) An anonymous Mormon work in Salt Lake City in the same year represents another attempt at adopting characters of a phonetic nature to assist the students in overcoming errors in the sound system. A few illustrations chosen at random are: ð = eng, f-h, and ð-ooze.\(^\text{179}\)


\(^{177}\) Anton Stamm, *Phonetic Primer, or Primary School Pronunciator and Articulator*, (St. Louis: A. Wiebush and Son Sterotypers and Printers, 1860), iv-vii.


\(^{179}\) Board of Regents, *The Deseret First Book* (Salt Lake City, Printed privately, 1868), 3.
W. H. Fertich, a professional lecturer and teacher of elocution, who traveled extensively throughout Indiana in the eighteen seventies giving lectures and reading recitals, insisted that provincial forms of pronunciation be avoided because they had no standard authority. He warned against either the omission or the "burring" of the r and considered it unfortunate that Webster advocated the "Italian ë" sound in words like half, calf and laugh. Fertich declared that speakers who do not correct their substandardisms deserve severest censure.

Griffith, who traveled from Michigan to Illinois to become president of both Northern Illinois College and his own Griffith School of Reading and Oratory in Fulton, Illinois, in 1879, makes mention of a number of dialectal errors in the Mid-west that he felt obliged to bring to the attention of his students. Disregarding the use of symbols he cited a few characteristic words to avoid. By simply spelling the incorrect pronunciation he points to words like kyard for card, regyard for regard, gyld for guide and kyandl for candle. These had been advocated in Walker's dictionary and may still be heard in tidewater Virginia and Maryland.

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180 W. H. Fertich, *An Instructive Elocution: Designed Especially For Teachers and Private Learners*, (Muncie, Indiana: Published by the author, 1876), 7.

181 Ibid., 38-39.

182 See his Advertisement, *The Voice*, I, (December, 1879), 147.

In California in the eighteen eighties Ross advanced the theory that the whole problem of standards in pronunciation was an irrepressible struggle between custom and rule. He advocated uniformity but was skeptical as to how it could be obtained. As a guide to be consulted he adhered to the dictionary, though he named no certain one.\textsuperscript{184}

Maria Porter Brace, a teacher of elocution in Vassar College and in the Brearley School in New York, who accepted a teaching position in elocution at Indiana University in 1882,\textsuperscript{185} was very much interested in correcting the erroneous doctrine of "speaking naturally" with reference to the prevailing dialectal pronunciation. In the words of Miss Brace in which she overlooks the New England speech:

> While we Americans acknowledge that nature must give place to art in the study of professional speech, we have apparently not yet learned that perfect colloquial speech cannot be attained without artistic training. "Speaking naturally" often means, in the North, slovenly consonants and muffled vowels; in the South, vowels somewhat flattened, with suppressed consonants; in the West, harsh and exaggerated consonants and nasal vowels.\textsuperscript{186}

\textbf{Summary.} The diversity of language forms in American speech was recognized as undesirable yet the problem was a perplexing one for elocution teachers. To determine the correct standard of pronunciation was of primary concern. Objections to Webster's sanction

\begin{footnotes}
\item[185] Rahe, 260.
\item[186] Maria Porter Brace, \textit{A Text-Book of Elocution}, (New York: Leach Shewell, and Sanborn, 1892), 6-7.
\end{footnotes}
of New England speech were in many cases emphatically evident. Convinced that mere pronunciation exercises were an insufficient method of overcoming the peculiarities of speech, many adhered to a variety of rudimentary phonetic systems. There seemed to be a marked trend toward the formulation of sound notations in an attempt to indicate correct speech. A more specific method of teaching good pronunciation was thus in the process of evolution.

Immigration and Foreign Dialect. The peopling of the West was not entirely accomplished by the migrations of native Americans, for the independence and promise of the new West served to attract immigrants from all over the world. The heavy yoke of political inequality throughout Europe and the economic distress such as that created by the Irish potato famine in 1846 brought numerous groups to America. Upon reaching American shores in crowded steamers a flood of immigrants poured into the expensive West and swelled the population of small cities throughout the country. For the purpose of furnishing protection whereby several wagons would travel together, a number of immigrant aid companies were incorporated along the seaboard. Places for settlement were chosen by these groups in an organized manner so that the sparsely populated territories would be more systematically inhabited. Numerous agents met the foreigners and persuaded these new arrivals to join with groups or companies for the crosscountry trip under their supervision.¹⁸⁷

The European immigrant saw in the West, as did the early settlers from the East, a free and competitive life with a chance to break bondage and achieve social rank. There was the passionate desire to secure for one's family a favorable place in the midst of opportunity. Located in a country highly favorable in its undeveloped resources, the immigrant speedily captured the enthusiasm of the American West.188

The steady flow of immigration, besides bringing to the states men and women of high intellectual and moral status189 who were skilled in numerous professional pursuits, brought also many undesirables from foreign lands. Combe declared, for example, that three-fourths of the inmates in American alms-houses were foreigners who had been cast forth from all the countries of Europe to be a burden on the United States.190 Fear was expressed by some settlers that the immense number of immigrants arriving in the country would increase the possibility of disease.191 Von Raumer believed, however, that although "it is true that many criminals, idlers, malcontents, and the like, seek here a place of refuge; . . . their number is proportionately very small. . . . "192 Together with this

188 Hancock, 65.


191 Hagerstown, Maryland, Weekly Herald of Freedom, April 28, 1847.

small number of unfortunates were men and women who were characterized by social convictions, utopian ideas or religious fads. What had been a fairly homogeneous land, now became a "Melting Pot."

Mrs. Felton, in her two years of travel in America as a visitor from abroad in the thirties, remarked that America was rapidly becoming inhabited by miscellaneous specimens of human beings from all quarters of the world. Despite this influx of foreign peoples with their own national characteristics, she concluded that there were a sufficient majority of native or similar types of inhabitants to establish a nationality of character. 193

To come into a strange land where customs in manner and language were in most instances extremely different, meant confusion and uncertainty. According to Stuart, the number of immigrants was so great one could hear the various foreign languages everywhere. 194 These inhabitants formed "an astonishing contrast in manners, languages and complexions." 195

Taking an active part in community affairs was accomplished with difficulty by many of the immigrant citizens. Nichols observed that some of these found it unusually hard to express themselves in the English language. 196 For instance, in the fifties in a public meeting in the Middle West, one Auguste Alter being called upon to

195 Ibid., II, 198.
speak was highly embarrassed because of his foreign dialect. The audience reaction was that of amusement. The Reverend Christian Newcomer who endured an equally trying experience in Maryland, where he was required to speak before numerous religious meetings says:

... this was a great cross to me, a poor, ignorant soul as I was, should stand up and preach before a congregation of well educated and far better informed persons than myself, in addition it was requested of me to speak in the English language, which at best I could speak but very broken. ...

The large number of immigrants who poured into America were without question creating a number of dialects, whose long continuance would undermine the homogeneity of American speech. Moreover, they were finding it difficult to rid themselves of native sounds which were not present in the English language.

To help these new citizens free themselves from foreignisms and to make them better qualified to speak in community affairs, the American elocution teacher devised certain plans for the teaching of unaccustomed sounds. Outstanding in this work was again Dr. Comstock, who in the thirties had his own Vocal and Polyglot Gymnasium in Philadelphia. Here he offered his assistance to those interested in learning the new language. Foreigners, he advertised, would be "enabled to pronounce the English language in a short time," and should report to his school over the Lecture Room of the Seventh

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198 Christian Newcomer, The Life and Journal of Christian Newcomer, (Hagerstown, Maryland: Printed by F. G. Kapp, 1834), 16.

199 Warfel, 128.
Presbyterian Church, at the rear of the United States Hotel. These private lessons cost thirty dollars for thirty-six lessons.  

He explains somewhat his system in the following:

The original, and minute analysis of the elements will be found invaluable, not only to the American who is desirous of accurate knowledge upon this subject, but also to the foreigner who is learning to speak the English language; nor will the wood cuts, showing the positions of the mouth in the energetic utterance of the elements, be found less important in the acquisition of this knowledge. In this edition the various movements of the voice are illustrated by original diagrams. The exercises upon these diagrams have been found happily calculated to render the muscles of speech obedient to the will, extend the compass of the voice, and increase its power. Hence, they are of primary importance to those who are desirous of accomplishment in elocution.

According to Tousey, the McGuffey Readers also were designed to assist the foreigner in his faulty pronunciation. These books were a positive influence upon millions of immigrant students who needed practical instruction in correct articulation, English pronunciation and the American habits of life.

Bronson in 1845 advised the immigrant that his pronunciation must be changed to meet the requirements of the English sound system. In diagnosing the problem he detected that their confusion in learning sounds lay in the inconsistency of the spelling of the word and its actual sound. He pointed out that these characteristic oddities of spelling had not been as yet successfully dealt with in any method.

201 Ibid., 3.
or sound system. Moreover Bronson was of the opinion that the only means by which foreign accents could be removed was by individual attention and effort with the assistance of a qualified teacher in "true English pronunciation." He lamented the fact that many foreigners were improperly taught because their teachers could not even pronounce one half of the words with propriety. Like Bronson, Gummere in 1857 held that a new language was a matter of changing sounds and indicated that the y sound, which is difficult for "Europeans," should actually not be awkward to make in place of the w, for they are quite capable of pronouncing it in love, move, and dove.

Alexander Melville Bell, best known for his analysis of sounds and their formation in 1836 and Visible Speech in 1867, a work based on his earlier study of sounds, was a foremost con-

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203 C. P. Bronson, Elocution; or, Mental and Vocal Philosophy; Involving the Principles of Reading and Speaking; and Designed for the Development and Cultivation of Both Body and Mind, in Accordance with the Nature, Uses, and Destiny of Man; Illustrated by Two or Three Hundred Choice Anecdotes; Three Thousand Oratorical and Poetical Readings; Five Thousand Proverbs, Maxims and Laconics, and Several Hundred Elegant Engravings, (Louisville: Morton and Griswold, 1845), 81.

204 Ibid., 83.


From *Visible Speech*, 110.
disgruntled because the English had failed to adopt his system generally, Bell and his family emigrated from England to Canada in 1870. He later came to Boston and finally settled in Washington, D. C. Bell's analysis, which is still widely used among twentieth century phoneticians as well as by teachers of the deaf, called the attention of foreigners to "English as spoken." He described for them the sound system of the English language and the formation of those sounds. In addition he indicated the various corresponding sounds in German, French, Scotch, Gaelic, Italian, Irish, Welsh and Hungarian. In an address before the National Association of Elocutionists in 1895 Bell explains the significance of his earlier effort in the eighteen sixties regarding his universal alphabet:

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208 The International Phonetic Alphabet based on Sweet's Broad Romic Alphabet has been chosen as the preferred phonetic system. See Gray and Wise, Op. cit., 217-302. Sweet, a student of Bell, was convinced that progress lay ahead in the use of Visible Speech. His change to a 'Broad Romic' notation was made in part to supply a want for an easier and more accurate written notation more inclusive of sounds. See Henry Sweet, A Primer of Phonetics, Second Edition, Revised, (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1902), iv. See Also his The Sounds of English, (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1908), 114-115.

209 In 1885 in a series of lectures at Johns Hopkins University, Bell declared that by using his "symbolic writing" there was no longer any need for a child of six or seven to remain dumb. See his University Lectures on Phonetics, (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1887), 59.

210 Alexander Melville Bell, Sounds and Their Relations, A Complete Manual of Universal Alphabets. (Salem, Massachusetts: J. P. Burbank, Publisher, 1881), 20-34.
English-French, Scotch-French, Irish-French, German-French, &c.; the nationality of the speaker being revealed through some petty difference in the utterance of an elementary sound. Such shibboleths are— the trilled R of Scotland, the vowelized R of England, the name-sounds of A and O in both these countries, the sounds of B D G in Germany, and the sound of Sr, and also the diphthongal pronunciation of short vowels, in the United States. . . .

An international effort had been made by leading philologists of Europe to frame a Universal Alphabet by collecting the elementary sounds from languages; but the attempt had been definitely abandoned as impracticable, or,—as the record shows,—as "impossible." I had been striving, in the meantime, to find the basis of a universal alphabet—not in languages, but in the organs of speech. In this, after many years, I was successful. Then—and not till then—I discovered that my schemes of sounds were susceptible of a self-explanatory symbolism, by which writing became a real VISIBLE SPEECH. Seeking merely for a universal alphabet, I had found a means of teaching Universal Speech in connection with any language.211

Alonso Butterfield, who was a teacher of elocution at Dartmouth in the eighties, in an article in The Voice noted the practical utility in the visible speech system of Bell for learning foreign languages. Butterfield elaborates on the effectiveness of this method:

In the Visible-Speech alphabet will be found symbols to represent all the sounds of all languages and all dialects, and any one understanding the principles of Visible Speech can articulate all these sounds by simply executing with the organs of speech whatever the symbols dictate.

Foreign Languages. Visible Speech is of great value in acquiring the exact pronunciation of foreign languages by learners in all countries.

A Japanese student, who had been in an American college for two years, called at our office. We enabled

211 Alexander M. Bell, Address to National Association of Elocutionists, (Washington: The Volta Bureau, 1895), 8-11.
him in five minutes to pronounce some English words which two years of drill in the usual arbitrary method had not enabled him to pronounce. We had only to direct his attention to the definite positions of his own organs of speech as symbolized by Visible Speech.212

Not only did Bell's study furnish a new method for teaching foreigners and the deaf but it also applied the study of sounds to reading dialectal declamatory selections. Bell says:

Elocution has also a special application to the language or dialect employed, that the elements and vocables of each may be pronounced according to its own standard of correctness;—that being correct in one which is incorrect in another. Thus, in the elocution of the northern British, the Irish, the New England and other American dialects of our tongue—for all dialects may have their elocution, or effective utterance—the vowels a and o, and the letter r, have different pronunciations from those which obtain in the southern dialects of England. The student of elocution should be capable of discriminating these and all similar differences. He should not be enslaved to the peculiarities of any dialect; he may, when occasion requires, speak English like an Englishman, Scotch like a Scotchman, and Irish like an Irishman; but his reading should not be imbued with the characteristics of Irish, of Scotch, or of any local pronunciation, when he delivers the language of Shakespeare, of Milton, or of Addison.213

During the latter decades of the century other elocution teachers attempted to assist foreigners by analyzing their various sound systems. One of this number was Frank Fenno, who taught elocution in Mississippi both privately and in Blue Mountain College.

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212 L. Alonzo Butterfield, "Visible Speech," The Voice, II, (August, 1880), 100-102. In addition to its usage in schools for the deaf, the system was used in the Soper School of Oratory which was established in Chicago in 1877. See catalog, (Chicago: Press of Gifford W. Booth, 1897-8).

By using diacritical marks and alphabetical characters he outlined an elementary sound system for Latin, French, German, Spanish and Italian. Fenno also highly endorsed the use of either Webster’s or Worcester’s dictionary.  

Teaching phonetics by the sound system as originated by Bell was not favorably received by numerous elocution teachers. Virgil Pinkley, a teacher of elocution in Lane Theological Seminary who in the eighteen eighties became the Director of the Department of Elocution in the College of Music in Cincinnati, declared that phonetics, the science of sounds to facilitate pronunciation, was shamefully neglected by the people. Yet he himself merely recommended the unscientific use of diacritical markings as found in Webster’s dictionary. These he explains for the better understanding of those not accustomed to accurate sounds. Under his section "phonetic ills," Pinkley vaguely cites some differences in sounds found in various words.  

In the numerous private schools of elocution existing throughout the land which assisted immigrants to develop better pronunciation of English sounds, little is really known of their methods of

214 Frank H. Fenno, The Science and Art of Elocution Or How to Read and Speak, (no publisher, 1873), 80-84.


216 Ibid., 76-77.
teaching. Mere advertising material is usually all that is available of their instruction. This reluctance to disclose special teaching techniques was a common attitude among many in the profession. No doubt much of this teaching was far from scholarly, for a decided monetary interest prevailed among the private schools. Among the multitude of such schools in operation in the last quarter of the century was the Martyn College of Elocution in Washington, D. C. Records cannot be found other than their catalogs and a treatise or two written by the president of the school, Webster Edgerly, who reveals nothing more than vague generalities in regard to methodology. However, the fact that schools like the Martyn College of Elocution did train foreigners in elocution is evidenced by the following announcement made in one of their early bulletins:

SCHOOL FOR FOREIGNERS IN ARTICULATION AND PRONUNCIATION.

During the past year many persons from France, Italy, Germany, Spain, and other foreign countries, whose knowledge of English was imperfect, have received instruction at this College, for the purpose of enabling them to master our language.

As we teach all sounds from position we have in every case assisted these persons to conquer the difficulties of the English language, in a very short time. Our method offers advantages to all who desire to articulate and pronounce perfectly.

Private lessons in the School for Foreigners are as follows:

Single Course, 26 Lessons, $25
Full Course, 52 Lessons, $452

There is evidence to indicate that little was actually known concerning the scientific formation of sounds. It is found that a

large number of elocution teachers avoided the subject altogether in their textbooks or merely made known personal conjectures concerning the formation of some few sounds. For example, Dr. Wilson, a private teacher of elocution in Paris, Illinois, took notice of the foreign dialect of the school teachers in his midwestern town. Describing this faulty situation his only comment is:

There are but few teachers in our public schools who give the letters f and v correctly. For the letter f they open the mouth too soon, and enough breath escapes to make two or three fs. 218

Wilson describes his peculiar method of distinguishing the sounds of c and v.

In order to find the cognate of f, place the upper teeth and lower lip together, and change the pressure of the breath to the larynx, and we have the letter v. 219

About the same time, Edward Brooks, the principal of the State Normal School at Millersville, Pennsylvania, who trained students especially in reading, observed the characteristic pronunciations of the children of the German immigrants of his section. In his A Manual of Elocution and Reading, Brooks attempts to record examples of their dialectal speech. However, his observations were faulty and his analyses of the sounds in some cases are questionable. An extract from his work illustrates his inadequate knowledge:

Peculiar Defects.—In pupils accustomed to use the German language, we find several distinctly marked errors. Thus, they confound the z and c, calling is, iss instead of iz.

218 D. Wilson, Wilson's Elocution, (Cincinnati: Fillmore Brothers, 1891), 4-5.
219 Ibid.
his, hiss instead of his, etc. They confound v and w, saying wine for vine, and vine for wine, etc. They confound s and th, saying wis for with, sin for thin, thick for sick, etc. They confound ch and j, as church for church, ohug for jug, Chon for John. They confound d and t, as "town the hill," for "down the hill," and "I can't do it." They confound d and th, as den for then; and even b and p, as bray for prey and prick for brick.220

Summary: The many immigrants who reached American shores in the nineteenth century were in need of guidance to rid themselves of their foreign dialects and learn the sounds of the new language. The elocution teachers were able to help many of these people. To do so they frequently employed the imitative method. Comstock of Philadelphia in the eighteen thirties and McGuffey throughout the nineteenth century greatly contributed to the improvement of American pronunciation. Bronson pointed out the absolute necessity of a teacher capable of setting a good example in speech.

Alexander Melville Bell in his analysis of sound and in his Visible Speech was of influence in the advancement of phonetics for foreigners and the deaf, although his system was not accepted as an international phonetic alphabet, nor was it employed by numerous elocution teachers. In this study it is evident that a number of elocution teachers, through their failure to record their methods of teaching correct pronunciation of English to foreigners, either avoided this phase of elocutionary instruction altogether or were

reluctant to disclose their particular methods. In the statements made by other elocution teachers relative to the sounds used by foreigners, it is clear that the teachers had an inadequate knowledge of the subject of the sound system and were totally unprepared to teach it.

Speech Defects. There is without doubt a keen mental suffering on the part of those afflicted with a serious speech impediment when called upon to communicate an idea—particularly in a public situation. Many cases of such difficulties are cited by the writers of the period. One interesting example is furnished in the case of Bishop William McKendree, the famous Methodist itinerant who migrated from Virginia to Ohio in the eighteen thirties. The Bishop was known to falter in his speech, and as a result "his elocution [was] very defective." Ruxton recalls in the forties seeing a rugged, hardfeatured Mormon preacher among the log shanties of Arkansas by the name of "Cap'an Brown," who being hesitant of speech was severely handicapped in preaching. Among the laymen this hesitancy of speech likewise proved annoying particularly when communicating an important viewpoint. In a village meeting in the Mid-west in the eighteen fifties, the anonymous author of "Village Affairs, A Sketch


From Life," noted that a settler whose name was Brown found himself in a predicament when called upon to express his views because of a speech defect.223

To remove a speech impediment has been in all ages a difficult problem to accomplish. This was true of Demosthenes in ancient Greece, who through ardor and perseverance claims to have overcome his own speech infirmity. In order to pronounce those sounds which he had been unable to form, according to tradition, he placed pebbles in his mouth and while walking to and fro and mounting steep inclines would pronounce several verses.224 In Great Britain stammering, lisping and the like existed not only among the mechanics and rustics but also among persons at the universities and the court.225

Among the early teachers to train those who suffered from speech defects was the Englishman John Thelwall, who in his private school in 1801 in Bedford-Place employed a physiological method of teaching. An impediment of his own, a lisp caused from imperfect teeth,226 was more than likely a motivating factor in his developing a system for the re-training of defectives. In addition to his private school for speech defectives there was a beautifully adorned


225 Sheridan, 46.

226 John Thelwall, A Letter to Henry Cline, Esq., on Imperfect Developments of the Faculties, Mental and Moral, as well as Constitutional and Organic; and on the Treatment of Impediments of Speech, (London: Printed by Richard Taylor and Company, 1810), 19.
lecture hall for his students in law, religion and acting. However, Thelwall thought too much in terms of the principle of rhythms rather than of the psychology of the individual in dealing with speech defects, and therefore "suffered the limitations of a mechanistic philosophy." Even so, he was considered an outstanding therapist in his day.

Alexander Bell, the father of Alexander Melville Bell, was also intensively engaged in speech therapy in England in the early part of the nineteenth century. Declaring himself to be a "professor of elocution," Bell promised in his treatise called *Stammering, and Other Impediments of Speech* to "cure" his students in the course of three months of training. "Pure" enunciation, harmony, modulation, and ease of delivery were the results he strove to achieve. Bell stated that among the chief causes of stammering there are the want of a knowledge of the vocal positions, the ill-management of breath and the difficulty in sounding the consonants. He did not feel that nervousness caused this affliction.

In a lecture delivered before the American Lyceum in 1837, Comstock blamed the lack of proper speaking and reading instruction

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227 "Thelwall's Lectures," The *Portfolio*, III, (April, 1810), 282-287.


Stammering may be considered a fault in elocution, the result of defective education, and is confirmed by habit. If children were properly instructed in speaking and reading, this affection of the vocal organs would, probably, seldom or never occur. . . . The stammerer must be taught how to give language the pitch, time, and force which the sense requires. To effect this, his muscles of speech, which have long been refractory, must be trained till they are brought under the control of volition, and, like a well-marshalled troop of soldiers, made to act in harmonious concert.232

Students who needed private lessons in speech met with Comstock in his Vocal Gymnasium, the price being either thirty-six lessons for thirty dollars or the "cure of stammering" for fifty dollars.233

Noteworthy is the fact that Comstock was not afraid to explain his methods fully, as was the common tendency among other private practitioners. The treatment of stammerers and stutterers as reported in his lecture before the lyceum was physiological and psychological, and involved vocalic exercises. Comstock explained that the stammerer should be impressed with the giving of "exclusive attention to the subject," that he should not "converse with any one till he can speak without stammering." Moreover he insisted that "the habit of stammering should be arrested at once; for, while it is continued, how is it possible that the habit of speaking correctly can be established?" He held that the stammerer must be inspired with confidence, that upon his own exertions depended success, and that the patient must be rendered cheerful and happy. Further, various athletic exercises should be held daily to invigorate the muscles.


and diminish nervousness. In extreme cases he recommended bathing in salt water or using electricity "as a tonic and also as a means of interrupting the spasms of the vocal organs."

In teaching the sound elements, Comstock recommended using his illustrated positions of the organs of speech for the production of vowels and consonants. The stammerer was to be acquainted exceptionally well with these positions. The vowels should be exploded "with great force" and "various exercises whose highest peculiarity is time and force" should be employed, after which conversation with the teacher in a deliberate manner in a very low pitch could be performed. Following this procedure, Comstock had his pupils commit to memory short pieces such as "Satan's Speech to his Legions," to be given with explosive force. Then the members of the class "should stand at a sufficient distance from each other...and pronounce the speech in concert, after the teacher." This was to be done with "appropriate gesticulation." Comstock further suggested that to prevent stammering it would be helpful if the teacher himself would accompany these performances by playing some instrument. Finally, a few visitors could be introduced to the scene and the number increased from time to time. The stammerer's ability to speak before an audience in a dark room furnished Comstock a basic clue with which to proceed. In all cases, he recommended a plentiful supply of air in the lungs, for the reason that continuous loud

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234 For a portrayal of these gestures see A System of Elocution, 185-191.
speaking with the "lungs but partially distended, is very injurious to these organs."  235

The corrective work of J. F. Dieffenbach in Germany met with sharp criticism in America. According to his method, first applied to German stammerers and stutterers 236 in 1841, the patients were placed on an operating table for an incision to be made completely through the root of the tongue. The incision was for the purpose of producing an alteration in the nervous reactions experienced by the tongue. This, he said, would allay the spasm. 237 Alfred C. Post in New York City in the forties, using a modified French method of operating, 238 which he does not accurately describe, claimed that his own methods were superior to those of Dieffenbach. He also asserts that one of Dieffenbach's patients died from hemorrhages suffered during an operation. 239 The method was used in America for only a year or two, and was quickly abandoned.

An immigrant from Germany by the name of Oskar Guttman was instrumental in teaching speech defectives in both Germany and the

235 Ibid., 38.

236 Both terms were erroneously used to mean the same thing early in the century. See for example J. F. Dieffenbach, Memoir on the Radical Cure of Stuttering, Translated from the German by Joseph Travers, (London: Samuel Highley, 1841), vi.

237 Ibid., 7.


239 Ibid., 56.
United States. Beginning in 1859, he taught speech correction over a period of forty-two years. In addition, in New York City he was known as a teacher of elocution and dramatic art. Guttman based his theories entirely upon physical rules and prescribed physical and vocal exercises as well as deep breathing. He lays claim to the source material for many later works in elocution, but admits that he himself had not discovered a "real system" for the correction of stammering.

There is little if any evidence to indicate that the people of the West had access to any beneficial training for speech disorders early in the century. One of the first elocution teachers of this region to mention disorders is Charles W. Smith of Ohio who in 1871 had developed his own personal views on the subject. Believing that one could not describe or illustrate sounds accurately through such devices as the engravings of Comstock, Smith submits his beliefs:

The best method of correcting defective speech, when not arising from organic defect, is to imitate the pupil's mode of pronouncing to show him what is wrong, and then to pronounce the word correctly, to show him by the movement of your own mouth, how he should speak. Defective articulation frequently arises from endeavouring to speak too fast. Time is not given for the organs to form the correct sounds, and habit confirms the false. Children ought not to be allowed to repeat their lessons in a hurried manner, either while committing them to memory, or repeating them to the teacher.

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241 Ibid., vii.

In Chicago during this decade the Doctors Eugene L. and H. Rivenburgh at their own stammering institute persuaded those pupils with stammering difficulties to "strengthen" their articulation mechanically by practicing the elements of speech aloud, separately, and in combinations. To help restore the voice, patients were also directed to rotate their heads while speaking a word.243

Among other elocution teachers who understood the plight and misery of the stammerer, who was almost a misfit in society and received little encouragement from his fellow men, were such correctionists as Russell Trail. As principal and founder of the Hygeio-Therapeutic college in New York in the seventies, his sole advice was "to properly persevere in vocal gymnastics which would be certain to remedy the worst kind of stammering."244 However, in Edgar S. Werner's mind "severe articulation" drills were not enough. In an interview with Jacob Shoemaker in approximately the seventies, Werner, who was the editor and publisher of The Voice Magazine, admitted that as a stammerer he had had several of these unsuccessful mechanistic "treatments" and had come to the decision that other measures than these must be considered.245


According to Blanton, the practice of luring the stutterer by means of promising advertisements to the "quack stuttering schools" was a favorite device among many unethical elocution teachers in nineteenth century America. Here the favorite therapy consisted of rigid phonetic exercises and vocal drill. "Tongue-twisters" were given with the idea of permanently curing the stutterer. 246

Other methods besides vocal drill were evident during the period. However, the development of corrective methods in stuttering was slow, proceeding as a trial and error process. This was probably due in part to the fact that educational institutions did not undertake to advance the subject by including it in their curricula. Thus the entire matter was left in the hands of private teachers.

W. P. Hodgson of Philadelphia said in the 1870's that the prevailing practice of trying to conceal the best methods affording relief, and the lack of cooperation among the elocution teachers themselves were prominent factors in the retardation of teachers' skill. 247 His own private opinion was that stammering was a mental affliction, generally imitated from others in the family; yet in some instances the impediment might be caused, he thought, by diseased or paralyzed organs. 248 Hodgson was convinced that Dr. Comstock was


248 Ibid., 7-8.
perhaps the only one who could be relied upon for relief. In his own
words he says, "It is remarkable he came so close to truth and didn't
reach it."249

The substance of John Howard's technique was to apply more
"pressure in the respiratory" and to relax "constricting chest muscles."250

One of his students, by name of Joseph F. Morgan in Leonardtown,
Maryland, declared that Howard had helped him and so recommended
this method to others.251 William Hammond in 1879 defined stammer-
ing as a functional disorder of the brain and maintained that there
was nothing wrong in the organs of speech, which he labeled as ex-
citable. Hammond suggested that stammerers divert their attention
toward some activity such as tapping something with the finger.252

In the same year an editorialist in The Voice magazine recognized a
difference between stuttering and stammering. He pointed out a dis-
tinction which had not been widely recognized that in stuttering
there would be spasmodic fear and oppression, and an actual defect
in the speech during declamation and singing. In stammering, on the

249 Ibid., 6.
250 John Howard, "Treatment of Stuttering," The Voice, I,
(March, 1879), 31.

251 Joseph F. Morgan, "The Howard Method," The Voice, I,
(April, 1879), 43.

252 William Hammond, "Stammering," The Voice, I, (March,
1879), 31. Such distinctions were not universally held. Today the
term stammering is rarely used at all.
other hand, there would be no speech deficiency observed while the person concerned is singing or declaiming. 253

J. S. Preston, of Missouri, who, like Werner and several other Americans, had tried in various ways to cure his own defect, received helpful instruction from Charles Pope in St. Louis in the early eighties. Pope directed Preston to speak slowly and with full breath that he might acquire normal speech. In time Preston discovered that his vocal organs had no lesion and that his was a functional disorder. Consequently, he advocates in his book a form of physiological treatment consisting of nodding or moving the head while speaking. The purpose of this exercise, according to Preston, was to draw the thyroid muscles downward and make the vocal cords tense. At the same time, he suggests that one make a mental effort to speak. 254

Summary. A variety of opinions in speech re-education were offered in the nineteenth century by elocution teachers. Primarily the attention was focused on stammering, which was not recognized as being different from stuttering. Following the prevailing opinions of Alexander Bell and Thelwall of England, numerous elocution teachers adhered to the principle that stammering could be overcome by practicing a series of vocal drills and tongue-twisters. However,


254 J. S. Preston, A Scientific Treatise on the Origin, Cause, and Effect of Stammering and Stuttering, (Fayette, Missouri: Printed Privately, 1882), I-II.
results were not favorable, and Edgar Werner, in a better reaction, condemned this form of treatment. In the latter part of the century there were indications of the recognition of physiological methodology. In later decades Howard and Preston came to the conclusion that functional disorders generally were responsible for hesitance and that by means of physiological movements attention could be diverted from the affliction.

The Management of Voice. In the exhortations of the western evangelists before their excited followers there were flagrant violations of the principles of good quality, adequate loudness, proper rate, and meaningful use of pitch. It was not easy for the discriminating to understand how the denunciations of sin in such incredibly crude vocal utterances could be permitted. But rural America was often undiscriminating, inflammable, acting without deliberation and swept by emotional oratory. This description was equally applicable to members of the various denominations, as evidenced particularly in the sensational preaching of the Methodist George Whitefield in the previous century. Among the Catholics early in the nineteenth century a priest was observed by Stuart to have spoken with fiery zeal and in an angry tone of voice. In the courtroom, on

the stump, or in the legislative halls there were the shysters, the campaigners and the legislators who bellowed forth, pleading and bullying in raucous voices. Never had the people of the region heard such overpowering oratory.

In an article entitled "Principles of Elocution," published by an anonymous writer in The North American Review in 1829, it is clear that the basic rules of good public speaking were being largely disregarded. "There were violations of sense" and of grammatical construction, so that it was "really perilous" to listen. Among other objectionable practices, "the voice is harsh and vociferous, or feeble, or drawling and monotonous, and comes out with a languid and reluctant effort..." The alternatives seemed to be "speak or die." The alternatives seemed to be "speak or die." From this expression it is clear that training in what the earlier writers on elocution termed the "management" of the voice was an essential task for the elocution teacher.

Even the ancients were aware of the ill-management of voice, as is noted in the dialogue in which Crassus calls Antonius' attention to the inharmonious tones and poor quality of voice of certain speakers. According to Crassus in the De Oratore, those not talented in speech could not be taught to be accomplished orators.

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260 Ibid.

261 Cicero, Book I, XXV, 34.
significance therefore is Rush's observation that although the ancients perceived the blemishes of speech, they neither offered definite instruction nor did they believe that such training would develop speakers.

**Quality.** Notwithstanding the fact that numerous "good qualities" concerning the human voice had been listed by such authors as Austin, who is merely quoting Julius Pollux (*Onomasticon*, L. ii, c. 4, Amstel, 1706) in his index, no attempt at classification of the qualities of voice by preceding elocution teachers had been made up to the time of Rush. In his first edition in 1827, Rush lists quality as one of the five general headings "of the expressive powers of speech." Quality, or the kind of voice, he continues, may be distinguished as being rough, smooth, harsh, full, thin, slender, soft, musical, and the like. Later in his treatise he mentions harshness or roughness, nasality, shrillness, huskiness, and falsetto as "disagreeable qualities of the voice." Of these, a nasal quality is offensive, and shrillness never has dignity. According to

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263 Gilbert Austin, *Chironomia*, (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1806), See Appendix.
Bggleston, an unusually keen observer, the former quality was characteristic of the voice of a Reverend Mr. Bosaw, a "Hardshell" Yankee Baptist preacher in "Flat Creek settlement" in Indiana in the thirties, whose "preachin' down to the Bethel Meetin'-house" was delivered in a strong nasal twang and was accompanied with "see-sawing gestures." Nichols could see no physiological reason why a Yankee should talk this way through his nose, unless it was due to climatic conditions.

In 1827 Rush's specific emphasis upon the whispering, the natural, the falsetto, and the orotund constituted his basic analysis of the qualities from which he never departed in his six editions up to 1867.

No further analysis of the various qualities were found to exist until in 1844, when John Goldsberry and William Russell listed, in addition to the nasal quality, the harsh, the smooth, the aspirate, the pure, the pectoral, the guttural, the oral, and the orotund.

The various qualities were described in innumerable ways in elocution treatises. It was characteristic of many of the teachers

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272 This study substantiates Gray in that no complete list of qualities appeared until in 1844.
274 Ibid., 59.
to point out that each of these qualities could be employed advan-
tageously in the numerous declamations of the day to stimulate various
reactions or to represent different characters or emotions. Murdoch
and Russell were particularly efficient in teaching declamation to
students of high school age in Boston in the forties and were well
versed in the various qualities of voice with which they directly
associated tone. Their methods of teaching elocution proved very
successful and students of their private school monopolized the
prizes in the school contests. However, it was not well received by
the authorities of the high schools in Boston. Trueblood summarizes
the situation:

For two or three years all the prize winners were found
to have had training with Murdoch and Russell. In the
effort to make the contests fair to all, the Boston School
Board made a ruling that pupils from the Murdoch and
Russell school would not any more be allowed to compete
for prizes. This act took away so much of their patronage
that Murdoch and Russell found it unprofitable to continue
their school.

Caldwell in 1845 was the earliest to mention the tremor as a
voice quality. He observed that tremulous movements are present in
the act of laughing and crying and produce a sound which is therefore
associated with the language of mirth and sorrow. He was also
among the first who recommended the study of tones to produce various

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276 Thomas C. Trueblood, "A Chapter on the Organization of
College Courses in Public Speaking," The Quarterly Journal of Speech
Education, XII, (February, 1926), 1-11.

effects in declamatory reading or in drama. Caldwell's reasoning is of interest:

. . . the tones expressive of want and distress in the domestic animals are instinctively understood, and have a wonderful power over the human heart. The sigh and the groan produce in the hearer an emotion of pain, which the substitution of words however full of grief or anguish tends to relieve. These tones, so expressive in themselves, cannot fail to be impressive when united with words. 278

In public speaking the tremulous tone was not as a rule recommended. Rather such exaggerated performances as exhibited by the Reverend Mr. Bosaw in the early West were to be avoided. In his sermon on "the ox—ah knoweth his owner—ah, and—ah the ass—ah his master's crib—ah," the Reverend Mr. Bosaw's voice grew mellow and quivered in places, while in succeeding sentences his tones were most pathetic and lugubrious. 279 There was a noticeable feeling that such a disagreeable quality of voice in preachers was not to be sanctioned. According to an article on the "Inefficiencies of the Pulpit,":

Clearly all professional peculiarities should be avoided—a clerical dress—a clerical whine. There is something perfectly intolerable to us in that solemn nasal cant so common in the pulpit.

Young theological students should here also be cautioned against an offense against good taste, to which they seem specially liable. 280

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278 Ibid., 126.

279 Eggleston, The Hoosier School-Master, 139.

280 "Inefficiency of the Pulpit," Southern Literary Messenger, XXLV, (February, 1857), 81-112.
Mitchell's *A Manual of Elocution* (1868), a text based on Rush which was used in Wabash College in Indiana in the early seventies, contains some explanatory material on the tremor or trembling tone which Mitchell defines as "a tremulous iteration, or a number of impulses of sound of the least assignable duration." Its use in reading character roles may be found in "excessive grief, pity, plaintiveness; in an intense degree of suppressed excitement, or satisfaction; and when the voice is enfeebled by age." The following year, Charles A. Wiley, a teacher of elocution in Chicago gave preference to the orotund quality, a "full deep, round, pure tone of voice" for speaking and reading material free from peculiar effects.

The extent to which elocution teachers frequently developed their own voice qualities may be seen in the case of James Madison Harrison, who had studied vocal culture under a Professor Bush of Bush Academy in his early years and later under Alexander Melville Bell. Harrison gave numerous reading recitals and lectures in the sixties throughout the northern and western states. In the teaching of elocution, due to his splendid vocal control, he was particularly skillful in demonstrating "the soundness" of his principles and his

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281 Rahe, 371.


methods. His voice, which was known to have such a quality as to astonish the thousands who heard him, was a special asset in his teaching. In his excursions he proceeded as far west as Kansas, giving his services often to teachers' institutes. In connection with Harrison's unusual command of the vocal qualities, Wilbor's Directory observes:

Those who have heard Poe's "Raven" rendered by world-famous readers say that they never fully understood Poe until they had heard Professor Harrison recite this weird poem. His general appearance, repose in tranquil yet melancholy soliloquy, deep sepulchral tones in imitation of the croakings of the raven, the emotions of agony, the utter hopelessness, fear and horror depicted while laboring under the spell of despair, give a meaning to the poem that strikes deep into the soul of the hearer, and brings out the full passion of Poe in his fit of horror.284

Griffith paid particular attention to the qualities of the voice in his reading exercises. In his method of procedure he believed it was imperative first of all for the student to study carefully the spirit and meaning of the selection to be memorized. After the emotional passages were distinguished the appropriate qualities of voice should then be determined. Finally, the various qualities of voice with their corresponding emotions were to be practiced repeatedly until the student had thoroughly mastered them.285

Public disapproval of improper voice qualities was frequently heard in the early nineteenth century. Sensing this feeling, Henry


Ward Beecher, in his *Yale Lectures on Preaching*, warned that preachers who spoke harshly were not desirable clergymen because of their extreme unpopularity with the church laymen. He pointed out that with such a preacher in the pulpit "there would be a rebellion in the congregation; . . ."286

Fertich in Indiana in 1876 noted a "combative style" in the voice and action acquired by men who had learned to speak in debating societies and oratorical contests. Aware of the antagonism such a manner promoted, he recommended the absolute avoidance of these angry tones in speaking.287

In California, Frank Lee Chauvin, an itinerant teacher of elocution in the eighteen-eighties, raised his voice against Whately's adherence to the "natural school." According to Chauvin, numerous rules were necessary for good reading and speaking. Consequently, in writing his book, *Self Instructor in Reading and Public Speaking*, he drew heavily upon the principles of Rush, Vandenhoff, Griffith and other pioneers in the field. Chauvin reasoned that since the "pure quality" is most used in everyday conversion, it should therefore be carefully cultivated. This type of quality, he says, is a clear, distinct and "smooth" tone, free from gutteral, nasal, aspirate, or other impure qualities.288

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A professor of the English language in Northwestern University by the name of J. Scott Clark, who had previously been a teacher in Syracuse University since 1882, gave as vocal exercises for good tonal quality the following:

Next to weak or half-expanded lungs, the most serious obstacle to purity of tone is the sadly common habit of closing the throat while speaking, allowing the muscles of the throat to act, just as in swallowing, when they should lie perfectly quiescent. This "squeezes" the tones, so to speak, and produces the unpleasant oral quality so often heard. The following exercises, if faithfully practiced, will accustom the throat muscles not to interfere in tone production.

1. Take the tongue between the thumb and finger with the handkerchief, pull it out as far as possible without pain, open the mouth wide and sing the chromatic scale downward on sound 3-1 from G above middle to high C, prolonging each note softly. Do not allow the sound to degenerate into 8 or 9. This will be the tendency. Compel yourself also to make a clear note.

2. Hold the mouth open as wide as possible and watch the back walls of the soft palate with a mirror, holding them apart as in smiling. In this way intone sound 8 slowly down the chromatic scale from middle C to E below.

In 1866 Byron King, who himself had appeared in over two thousand public entertainments in the West, and who had conducted his own private school of elocution in Pittsburgh, warned against a "stiff, lugubrious" quality of speech and advocated a "full, clear, vibrating, musical, naturally developed voice." In order to produce this favorable quality he explains that the throat must be well open, "and the sound directed to the front of the mouth." 

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291 Ibid., 76-77.
Summary. In considering the problem of voice qualities, elocution teachers were primarily concerned in the nineteenth century with their practical aspects. In conversation a pleasant or (pure) quality was found most suitable while the orotund quality was recommended for declaiming. The portrayal of emotional effects in dramatic pieces called for an ability to master various voice qualities. Elocution teachers in their own recitals employed a variety of vocal qualities to produce dramatic effect. Students ordinarily were advised first to detect the emotional feeling in the passage to be read and then to practice the qualities pertaining to these emotional states.

Force. In much public speaking of the day there were as a rule two extremes of force. Either the speaker would be bombastic or he would not be emphatic enough. The following incident demonstrates the latter. Upon the occasion of the first commencement at Transylvania University in 1820 there was an "overflowing audience of the most respectable people in town." While the majority of the graduates satisfactorily delivered their "dissertations," a Mr. Wallace, who was a person of "considerable cultivation," drew some criticism on the poor delivery of his selection on "Imagination." According to an article in the Western Review his amount of force was not adequate enough to render the selection even audible, to say nothing of being understandable to the audience. The Reverend C. H. Hall years

later declared before another commencement audience in his address at St. James College, in Fountain Rock, Maryland, that what is wanted in American life is eloquence, which "is simple out-speaking—eloquor, to speak out." Hence, he continues, "What you have to learn is, that in this American life... we want to hear the man... we want men to speak out." On the other hand there was a common practice among speakers to become too loud in their reading, preaching, and praying. In a lecture delivered before the American Institute of Instruction at Brattleboro, Vermont, in 1861, D. B. Tower, Esquire, of St. Louis, recalled a common fault in his early days among the preachers who, he says, were far too loud in their reading of the scriptures and invariably placed the emphasis upon the wrong words.

In 1838 an editorialist stated that this bombastic style of speaking in the pulpit was an imitation of George Whitefield. Thus nineteenth century preachers would substitute violence for energy and extravagance for zeal. Eggleston reports that one's nerves would have been racked by their shouting. A similar fault was

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294 See The Lectures delivered before the American Institute of Instruction at Brattleboro, Vermont, August, 1861, Including the Journal of Proceedings and a List of Officers, (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1862), 55.


296 The Circuit Rider, 158.
common among members of the bar. For example, it was said of Charles Allen, a circuit-riding, "pistol-packing" lawyer of Missouri in the thirties who traveled two hundred miles to complete his circuit, that when making a stump speech he became so loud and violent in his declama-
tion that "it was dangerous to come within reach of him."297

Even Abby Kelley, the reformer, was in 1842 censured by the *Albany Toecin* for being overly emphatic in her extemporaneous speaking.298

Before the time of Christ a reference is made to the use of force by the great orator Cicero, who said that nothing is more useful for obtaining "power of voice," than the frequent variation of it; nothing is "more pernicious than an immoderate straining of it without intermission."299 Like Cicero, Austin in England felt that the "power of the voice" was a gift of nature. He had the belief that there could be improvement through cultivation and exercise, however the forcefulness of the voice could not "be materially changed from natural feebleness to strength, nor the reverse."300

In 1827 Bush formulated the opinion that there is an obvious propriety in the use of force. He explained that distance is a factor to be considered. With the speaker in close proximity there must


be an abatement of intensity. 301 In his specification of the term force, Rush used such words as strong, weak, feeble, loud, soft, forcible and faint. These, he says, are indefinite in their indication and without any fixed relationship in degree. 302 Furthermore, he listed as the five "functions of force" the radical, the median, the vanishing, the compound, and the thorough stress. In commenting upon them he explains that the radical consists of the abrupt and forcible emission of the voice at the beginning of the concrete movement. The median form is enforced utterance in the middle portion of the concrete movement. Vanishing stress is the opposite of the radical stress, in that it is like an abrupt termination of the word. The compound stress is the abrupt opening of the radical and the full termination of the vanishing stress. Lastly, thorough stress is the continuation of the same full body of voice throughout its whole course. 303 These forms of stress were used by a number of elocution teachers throughout the century and even by speech teachers into the twentieth. 304

In the period following Rush, elocution teachers offered a variety of theories and methods to assist their fellow countrymen relative to the use of the correct amount of emphasis in reading and

302 Ibid., 30.
303 Ibid., 328-348.
speaking. There was, for instance, John Hall who in 1836 declared that emphasis is important in speaking and reading because it is "calculated" to draw attention to that portion of a sentence which is important. 305

Comstock devised a diagram illustrating nine levels of loudness which were to be attained while reciting vowels or some literary passage. 306 As his Rhythmic Reader contained pieces particularly adapted for the tastes of ladies, in like manner his Practical Elocution was designed primarily for men. In his Gymnasium, if a voice were harsh, it was softened; boisterous speaking was toned down and refinement of speech substituted. Meanwhile Murdoch and Russell were advocating the development of force by practicing out in the open or in a large hall. 307 They argued that effusive force is derived from tranquil breathing and indicated solemnity. To them explosive force was obtained by forcible action of the abdominal muscles, and the effect was vehement declamation. Explosive force, they explained, was an instantaneous burst of voice which produced a "quick, clear, sharp and cutting effect on the ear and associated itself with intense passion." 308 These were the conventional forms of force used


308 Ibid., 101-109. These forms of force were used from Rush's "abruptness."
repeatedly by elocution teachers in both the private schools and in the classrooms of the public schools. This theory also extended well into the twentieth century.

Hugh McQueen, in 1854 advocated a conversational style of speaking. He declared it was positively wrong to address an audience too forcefully or "in a declamatory vein." However, he held that it was advisable for the student to prepare himself to speak upon a variety of occasions, with the possibility of a different mode of delivery for each gathering. Gummere, in defiance of Whately, whom he calls inconsistent in his thinking, pointed out that the degrees of force to be used in public was such a relative matter that the guidance by rules was a necessity. In direct opposition to Gummere, Holyoake, a follower of Blair and Whately, observed no need for rules and declared that "emphasis which is suggested by the sense is the best guide."

An opinion reminiscent of Sheridan was expressed in 1871 by Emma Garfield of the Busti Chautauqua Company, who wrote that whenever a new subject is presented in reading or speaking performances,

309 Hugh McQueen, The Orator's Touchstone; or Elocution Simplified, (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1854), 143-150.
311 Ibid., 24.
313 Ibid., 31.
emphasis ought to be used. "The reason for this rule is obvious," she says, for "the introduction of a new subject requires that special attention should be directed to it by making it emphatic."\(^{314}\) S. S. Hamill, a pupil of James Murdoch, who taught classes in a number of colleges and universities throughout the Middle West\(^{315}\) in the third quarter of the century and who maintained his own summer school of elocution in Chicago, in 1879,\(^{316}\) wrote that to acquire force one must "repeat each element and word at least a dozen times, beginning with the most delicate sound and gradually increase the force until the utmost power of the voice is reached."\(^{317}\) In this manner William Jennings Bryan, who studied elocution under Hamill at Illinois College, was trained in controlling his voice. He speaks of this training along with that of gesticulation as being beneficial and as "becoming a part of him."\(^{318}\) However, Trueblood contended that Hamill's mechanical methods of voice training nearly ruined his voice and that it was not until he had studied with Murdoch that it was built up again.\(^{319}\)


\(^{316}\) See Advertisement, *The Voice*, I, (December, 1879), 148.


\(^{319}\) Personal notation from Dr. Giles W. Gray's private conversation with Thomas C. Trueblood.
A strong advocate of the use of notations to illustrate emphatic words in declamations was T. Harrison of Shelbyville, Indiana, who taught elocution privately in 1874. Harrison used alphabetic characters and numbers of the nature of musical notations to illustrate the various degrees of emphasis to be applied to the selection. In the meantime F. T. Graham of Chicago noted numerous errors in emphasis among the scholars, lawyers and clergymen, whose discourses as a result were obscure and confused. He advised in 1875 that the student find the principal idea in a sentence, mark these words or the word and mentally project this important idea.

With the spread of culture and education, overemphasis was not approved by the populace. With the acquisition of more refined modes of thought and life, restraint was being advocated most often by the later elocution teachers. James J. Vance in a series of lectures on the subject of elocution delivered at the University of North Carolina in 1881 declared that judicious care must be increasingly exercised in regard to emphasis. In like manner he desired students to use the explosive and expulsive forms of force with moderation. He says:

... the dominant idea in every passage, is generally expressed in few words, sometimes in a single word. It is for such the force of the voice must be reserved and on

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320 T. Harrison, A New Mode of Illustrating Elocution With Exercises For Practice, (Shelbyville, Indiana: M. B. Robins, Publisher, 1874), 4.

such alone must it be exerted. The analysis of sentences will exhibit this fact clearly to the reader, and as the mind is always in advance of eye or tongue we easily anticipate emphatic terms. Care must be taken that whatever be the power put forth elsewhere the emphasis be not diverted from this point in the sentence where lies the leading thought or supreme intention of the writer. A strong disposition exists among experienced readers towards too frequent emphasis and explosive or expulsive forms of execution. This must be carefully avoided. . . .

In Ada, Ohio, in the same year, J. W. Rusk of Rusk's School of Elocution declared that emphasis gives prominence to a word or words in a sentence. This, of course, was the sense in which the word was used by eighteenth century writers. If the emphasis desired is light, Rusk gave the advice that one should then "suspend the voice for an instant." In his exercises for students, he italicized the important words for needed emphasis. 323

Bradley and Clabaugh, who wrote their Manual of Elocution in 1883 in Sedan, Kansas, for use in county normal institutes and graded and common schools, required their students to practice force through articulating a, e, i, o, u, in every possible manner, using effusive, explosive and explosive force, initial stress, final stress, sustained stress, compound stress, swell stress, and tremulous stress. 324

John Scorer, Principal of the Cleveland School of Elocution and Oratory in 1891, subscribed to the belief that force was related

322 James J. Vance, The Philosophy of Emphasis; One of a Course of Lectures Delivered at the University of North Carolina, (Baltimore: John B. Piet, 1881), 2.

323 J. Watson Rusk, Word Pictures and How to Paint Them, (Ada, Ohio: Published at The Rusk School of Elocution, 1881), 10.

"to the power or loudness of the voice" and classified it as either "Standard" or "Emphatic." In the case of the former, it is the amount of force given to all words and relates to the spirit of the selection. The latter refers to "distinctive ideas." 325

J. V. Coombs of Indiana, much concerned with the physical exercise of the organs of speech offered in the nineties this extreme conception of attaining vocal ability necessary for emphatic speech:

To obtain a forcible voice is not difficult. Some say: "My voice is too feeble; I can never become a speaker." Should they lie in the shade one year without exercise or sunshine, they would have feeble muscles. Practice will give any one a voice of sufficient force to be heard clearly in any hall in the land. Go to work at once and acquire a good voice. Put the voice to its severest test. In balmy weather, go out in the groves and practice on a high key. Then on a low key. Do not be alarmed should you get hoarse the first time. Try again. If a person has not been accustomed to walking, the first few hours' walk will greatly fatigue him. But let him practice walking each day and he will become accustomed to it. Occasionally the race-horse is put to his severest test. So the voice must occasionally be tested. This will give the voice flexibility and ease.

The greater part of practice should be on a conversational key, but occasional practice in shouting tones will develop the voice rapidly. Many speakers find their voices harsh and uncontrollable at the beginning of an address, but at the close the voice is in "fine condition." Much annoyance may be avoided by practicing on different pitches of the voice for a half hour. The practice may be severe. Begin lightly and increase to shouting tones. The last part of the practice should also be moderate. This should be done one or two hours before the time for delivering the address. 326

Summary. Elocution teachers were instrumental in calling the attention of the readers and speakers of the nineteenth century to the uses and abuses of vocal force. The prevailing custom of bombastic oratory was ruled out and a more restrained, natural speech was favored. To assist the student in delivering the correct emphasis some of the teachers advocated various systems of notation. Followers of Whately’s natural school, holding that the sense of the passage was the best guide, objected to this mechanistic treatment of force. Near the end of the century there appeared those elocution teachers who believed strongly in physical exercises to strengthen the force or vocal ability of the voice.

Time. Americans were usually confronted with one of two extremes in the rate of utterance. There was either the uninteresting monotony of slow speech or the irritating indistinctness resulting from the extremely rapid. In cross-examining witnesses, frontier lawyers frequently relied upon confusing the jurors by their speed of utterance. According to Partridge, Luke Horton in his quick and jerky speech used this diabolical faculty in firing questions with the speed of a corn popper. Since he was an ex-parson, it was difficult to tell in his summary of the facts whether he was addressing the Deity or the court. An anonymous writer complains that by speaking with such “railroad rapidity of movement,” the whole effect of

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the particular theme is weakened and much meaning is lost.\textsuperscript{328}

The question of timing in speech is without doubt a traditional one, as Rush indicated in his analysis of the faults in timing and Walker in his analysis of and rules for pauses.\textsuperscript{329} Credit is chiefly given to Steele for exceptional work in detailed notations of time in his principles of measure.\textsuperscript{330}

In 1825 at the time Jonathan Barber was lecturing on elocution in York, Pennsylvania, and in Washington, D. C., he wrote \textit{Exercises in Reading and Recitation Reduced to the System of Notation}. His greatest emphasis was upon timing as based upon Steele's notations. Barber's treatise, which was primarily a book of selections, is noteworthy in that all the pieces were marked in metrical cadences for "forcible and harmonic delivery of the written language" with particular attention given to pauses. It was Barber's belief that through the delivery of these marked selections a "powerful and harmonious utterance" could be made without undue exhaustion.\textsuperscript{331}

During the early 1830's Lyman Cobb, one of the great educators of the time, began a series of readers in which he included stories


\textsuperscript{329} \textit{Op. cit.}, 516-517.

\textsuperscript{330} \textit{Ibid.}, 30. See also Barber, 1832 Edition, 9.

\textsuperscript{331} Jonathan Barber, \textit{Exercises on Reading and Recitation Reduced to the System of Notation, as Explained in his Lectures on the Science and Practice of Elocution}. (Baltimore: J. D. Toy Printer, 1825), vii-x.
and information about animals to make his books more appealing to children. Although the readers contained selections by both American and English authors, Cobb greatly desired to foster patriotism and consequently stressed American authors. A prolific writer of reading texts in graded form, he wrote his most popular work The North American Reader in 1835. Unusual success of this book is noted, for by 1844 more than six million copies had been sold. An advertisement in the book itself claimed that booksellers throughout the entire country were selling the work.

Observing the poor reading of his day, Cobb blamed this deficiency upon the "unhelpfulness of the masters." In considering the subject of elocution, he was primarily of the "natural school" and opposed marking the pieces to indicate tones and cadences. Regarding pauses, Cobb described them as the total cessation of sound.

332 Nina B. Smith, American Reading Instruction, (New York: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1936), 54.


335 Ibid., xi.

336 Ibid., xiii.
The matter of pausing was given due consideration by other elocution teachers of the eighteen thirties. For instance, John Frost, who follows the views of Walker in his *The American Speaker* in 1837, states that pauses are very essential and that these should be of a sufficient length of time, but advises that they should not be so long as to break the connection between sentences.337

Von Raumer in his observation of a revival meeting in the forties noted that the sermons and prayers often continued forty evenings in succession. In a speech on everlasting damnation in one of these particular meetings, one unnamed preacher dragged out each syllable and letter to an absurd length as in (*ho-ly, glö-ry*), quavering as long as his breath could hold out, or suddenly falling into such a rapidity of utterance as to become altogether unintelligible.338 Quantity, or the timing of a note or syllable, Comstock339 believed, is directly related to rhythm. Depew noticed that Lincoln had a peculiar cadence in his speech but thought it occurred because of his emphasis upon the key-word of the sentence.340 For those who had difficulty in such rhythm, Comstock offered a system of musical notations based on Steele for the timing or beat...

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339 *A System of Elocution*, 64.

of the words of a sentence. He used various terms from music, such as adagio or allegro to indicate speed. Comstock also indicated the rate of utterance by giving a particular speed set by the metronome. "In reading, as a general rule, the time should be marked on the metronome by whole measures—in other words each measure should correspond to one tick of the instrument." 341

In Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1846 Dr. J. Weaver, a teacher of elocution who followed the principles of Rush, Barber, Walker, Steele, Porter, Comstock and Caldwell, ridiculed the "natural school" and the "decriers of artificial excellence." He denounced their reasoning that it is not natural to do well that which is likely to disturb ignorance, irregularity of will or faulty habits. 342 Weaver was convinced that in order to "fix the habit of right reading" and to obtain the "best rhythm" the selections should be scored for the students. 343

Despite the growing tendency toward elocution, followers of the "natural school" clung to their beliefs. In 1854, Worthy Putnam of New York State wrote The Science and Art of Elocution and Oratory,

341 Ibid., 66-67.

342 J. Weaver, A System of Practical Elocution and Rhetorical Gesture; Comprising All the Elements of Vocal Delivery, Both As a Science and As An Art; So Arranged And Exemplified As to Make It Easy of Acquisition For Private Learners of Communities, Schools, Academies, Seminaries, (Philadelphia: Barrett and Jones, 1846), 256.

343 Ibid., 257.
which contained a number of pieces appropriate "for the pulpit, the bar, the stage, the legislative hall and the battlefield." That nature should serve as a kind of regulator of the movements of the voice was the basis of his doctrine. Putnam merely offered for practice in timing a number of examples in poetry for "quick time," "medium time" and "slow time." 344

Barnabas Hobbs, a teacher in the Friends School in Annapolis, Indiana, in 1854 followed both the principles of McGuffey and Blair in writing the School Friend. Believing that the "natural school" and the elocutionary principles could be harmonized, he thought it advisable to read "from the feelings and sentiments of the author," and at the same time to be guided by a number of simple rules in the rate of utterance, articulation, pronunciation, tone and force. In regard to timing, Hobbs thought it advisable to pause after each line to allow the ear to appreciate the harmony of the similar sounds. 345

McGuffey, in his New Fifth Eclectic Reader in 1866, acknowledged that at the end of each line it is generally proper to pause "whatever be the grammatical construction or sense." The object of pauses, said McGuffey, is to promote melody. In addition, he recognized another important pause, the cesural pause to be employed near the


345 Barnabas C. Hobbs, School Friend, Fourth Book, Published for the use of Friends' Schools in the United States, (Annapolis, Indiana: Printed privately, 1854), 32.
middle of the sentence but to be kept subordinate to the meaning of
the words. \textsuperscript{346}

Austin B. Fletcher, a professor of oratory at Brown University
in the latter part of the seventies believes that each rate of speech
had its accompanying feeling. He says:

The rate of utterance is an outward indication of the
state of the speaker's feelings.

\textit{Rapid movement} is used to express joy, animation, excite-
ment.

\textit{Moderate movement} is used in unimpassioned discourse.

\textit{Slow movement} is used to express grief, power, vastness,
solemnity, and in great exhaustion, or in giving explicit
directions.

\textit{Very slow movement} is used in the expression of profound
reverence, adoration, deep contemplation. \textsuperscript{347}

With forty years of teaching experience in private schools in
Boston, Philadelphia, Kansas City and in numerous other cities through-
out the \textit{Mid-west} James E. Murdoch was convinced that "vocal culture
is what is most needed in the study of Elocution. . . ." He blamed
"the rapidity and carelessness of social and business habits in
speech" for a loss of grace and beauty in the language. Quantity
and quality are both sacrificed, he said, and "slovenliness of action
in the organs deprives the elements of the resonance belonging to
their full and correct utterance." \textsuperscript{348}

\textsuperscript{346} William H. McGuffey, \textit{New Fifth Eclectic Reader: Selected
and Original Exercises for Schools}, (Cincinnati: Van Antwerp, Bragg
and Company, 1866), 32.

\textsuperscript{347} Austin B. Fletcher, \textit{Advanced Readings and Recitations},
(Boston: Lee and Shepant, 1881), xix-xx.

\textsuperscript{348} James E. Murdoch, \textit{Analytic Elocution}, (New York: Van
Antwerp, Bragg, and Company, 1884), iii.
Thomas A. Hyde and William Hyde, both preachers who were graduates of Harvard University in 1871, and who claimed to have treated elocution from the entirely different standpoint of the human constitution, referred to rhythm and its beauty in the reading of prose:

Many passages in prose-literature exert an influence difficult to define, yet so powerful that they affect the emotional nature and cling to the memory. Oratory when reinforced by the potent aid of harmony captivates the mind and charms the ear. Such oratory is characterized by two things: the sound of the individual words and their arrangement with the recurrence of pauses at such intervals as shall produce a certain harmonious rise and fall of tone. These constitute rhythm in oratory. Many passages in the Bible exhibit an unrivalled beauty of rhythm.

Before the mountains were brought forth—or ever thou had'st formed the earth and the world—even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.349

Jacob Shoemaker, who gave numerous readings and lectures in various parts of the country, compiled a number of selections particularly suited for fast, medium, and slow rates of utterance in his Elocutionist's Annual, which he published annually for many years. In his Practical Elocution, Shoemaker suggests that the teacher announce a sentence like "o ye hard hearts! Ye cruel men of Rome!" to his class for practice in different varieties of pitch, force and rate. These exercises should be repeated by the student until his control of them appears effortless. Accordingly, such practice "cannot


fail to give flexibility to the voice, and the capability of a ready
adaption in response to the changes of sentiment."351

Summary. In commenting upon the faulty timing among the populace,
authors of nineteenth century elocution books gave evidence of their
dependence upon Steele. Teachers like Barber and Comstock were
strongly influenced by his notations on the musical scale to indi­
cate the rhythm and general rate of utterance. Quantity, or the
timing of the note, was believed to be directly related to the rhythm.
Pausing was held essential for the sake of understanding as well
as for the appreciation of the harmony of similar sounds. Selec­
tions from literature suitable to the various rates of utterance
were supplied by most books for the application of principles learned.

Pitch. There were numerous men and women whose speech was
ineffective and irritating because of a wearisome monotonous tone.
In relating a frontier incident, Eggleston points out a vocal charac­
teristic among the "Hardshell Baptist" preachers of the "old Western
and Southwestern states."352 Some of these preachers, who were
notorious drunkards, illiterate and often "vicious," would accord­
ing to Eggleston, "sing" their sermons out for three hours at a
stretch.353 Violations of pitch like these were not only typical

353 Ibid.
of the rural population, but were characteristic of the better educated citizenry as well. This was the case of Theodore Parker, philosopher, preacher, and author, whose sermons in the mid-century were decidedly thought-provoking in content, but whose voice was lacking in variety of tone. According to Nichols, this inflexibility in pitch is a reflection of a man's character, training, and education.

In the teaching of flexibility of pitch the methods of the nineteenth century elocution teachers were preceded by others of earlier times, for the management of the voice in this respect had been considered as early as the first century, B.C. At this time, Quintilian condemned the "singing tone" of voice as offensive and labelled it "loose singing of intoxicated persons." For familiar conversation he recommended an even tone, and for vehement feelings a rise in pitch.

Among the British elocution teachers, Mason strongly advised a modulation of the voice rather than the continuous violent vociferation in the pulpit which is shocking to the ear. Sheridan in his


Lectures complained that the disagreeable monotony prevailing in reading passages aloud "defeats every purpose of book-delivery," as the attention of the audience wearies. Pitch was also a subject of profound interest to other British writers, who have been reviewed previously.

In America during the time of the Revolution, Witherspoon advocated in reading and speaking the use of the tone and key of conversation as much as possible. Likewise, Webster in his American Selections in 1787 wrote that the most natural pitch of voice is that employed in ordinary conversation. By tones he meant the various modulations by which "emotions and passion" are vocally expressed.

In Mount Pleasant, Ohio, in 1824 Daniel Williams wrote in his The Explanatory Reader that memorizing selections exercised the memory and the judgment. Williams adhered to the philosophy of the "natural school" in his teaching of declamation and conforming to this pattern stated that the meaning of the words and of the material must be understood by the student before he could acquire a "suitable tone."


359 For example, Enfield, xvi, Steele, 66, Walker, 286-287, Cull, 6-7, Austin, 78-79.


362 Daniel Williams, The Explanatory Reader, For the Use of Schools; Containing a Selection of Easy Lessons In Prose and Verse, Adapted to the Juvenile Capacity, (Mount Pleasant, Ohio: Printed by Elisha Bates, 1824), iii-v.
Bush referred to pitch in 1827 in the sense of its "musical terms" and illustrated it by the use of a scale.\textsuperscript{363} To him every inflection followed a specific interval on the diatonic scale. He criticized the Friends particularly for the poor melody in their preaching services. Speaking of their misuse of the semitone, which he says is to be employed in the language of love, tenderness and the like, he asks this question, "Who has not heard of whining?"\textsuperscript{364} The term key, as used by Rush refers to "the proper succession of tones and semitones in the diatonic scale; . . ."\textsuperscript{365} He adds, however, that these are accompanied by several species of tones.\textsuperscript{366} These views of Rush's were adapted in various ways by the nineteenth century elocution teachers to improve the monotonous tones of voice they were attempting to overcome.

Among the followers of Rush was Barber, who also used the musical scale to illustrate pitch levels.\textsuperscript{367} John Lovell likewise based his methods of voice culture on this system of varying the tones. Henry Ward Beecher writes that the private training he received under this "estimable fellow-citizen" was to his good fortune.\textsuperscript{368}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[364] \textit{Ibid.}, 520-521.
\item[365] \textit{Ibid.}, 131.
\item[366] \textit{Ibid.}
\end{footnotes}
Even after the completion of his course in voice training he would go into a large grove with his brother Charles and others "to make the night and even the day, hideous with our voices . . . , exploding all the vowels, from the bottom to the very top of our voices." This drill was a "very manifest benefit" and made possible "the outward realization of the results of rules and regulations."369

Modulation, which Rush describes as a transition of melody and of harmonic composition from one key to another,370 was a mechanical principle which attracted the attention of rhetoricians like Whately, who had the opposing conviction that any attempt at modulating would definitely betray the speaker's intention.371

In a testimonial by Dr. John Bell, a member of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the importance of "melody of voice" in social life is mentioned. He says:

Graceful gestures in walking and dancing, and in presenting one's self in company, are thought by many to be of paramount importance; and hence, as a matter of course, the majority of young persons of both sexes are placed under the direction of a teacher of dancing. And yet, after all, what are the graces of manner compared to the melody of voice; and how imperfect the address of the otherwise accomplished gentleman or lady, without full and mellifluous speech.372

369 Ibid.


371 See Richard Whately, Elements of Rhetoric, (Boston: Third Edition Hilliard, Gray and Company, 1832), 261. See also Blair, 373.

Elocution teachers like Montgomery R. Bartlett in the late thirties, warned that in order to read with effect there should be much skill and taste in managing the tone, lest the piece be mangled or murdered and the effect be ludicrous.\textsuperscript{373} Such was the case at the "examination evenings" of the little school houses so well described by Mark Twain. Here the school children delivered their pieces with LABORED expression and punctuation. "The prevalent feature in these compositions," according to Twain, "was a nursed and petted melancholy" which together with the gush of prized words and phrases\textsuperscript{374} made for an altogether comic affair.

Henry Mandeville, who in 1829 so efficiently replaced the president of Hamilton College in teaching declamation,\textsuperscript{375} and whose Elements of Reading and Oratory was prescribed in the catalog of the University of Georgia in 1856 for use in the sophomore class,\textsuperscript{376} writes that modulation includes the consideration of key. He describes the key as pitch or "the predominating tone of reading or speaking." In explaining the varied levels of pitch he points out that the medium tone of conversation is desirable for reading and speaking:

\textsuperscript{373} Montgomery R. Bartlett, The Juvenile Orator; or, Every Scholars Book, (Philadelphia: R. Wilson Desilver, 1839), 9-11.

\textsuperscript{374} Samuel Langhorne Clemens (pseudonym, Mark Twain), The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, (Hartford, Connecticut: American Publishing Company, 1876), 168.


\textsuperscript{376} Catalog of the Officers and Students, The University of Georgia, Franklin College, 1856-1857, (Athens: Reynolds and Brother, 1857), 12.
Different voices, in consequence of organic diversity, occupy different portions of the scale of vocal sounds. Some are treble, some are tenor, and some are bass; while others can scarcely be called either treble, tenor, or bass, but occupy intermediate places in the scale. Still, whatever these organic differences may be, every human voice has its relatively high, medium and low tones, any of which may be adopted, though not with equal propriety, as the prevailing tone of delivery. It is easy to show from a variety of considerations that the medium tone, which is that of sustained and animated conversation, is the only one that can be made the key of reading or speaking, with any regard for the exactions and exigencies of protracted discourse.377

Regarding the modulation of the voice, Mr. Mandeville holds closely to Walker’s viewpoint that the "law of delivery" depends on the sense and harmony of the sentence. In 1846 Hull, who said that elocution teachers speak in a "scientific and effective manner," felt that the tones of the voice express inmost feelings and fittingly "are termed the language of the heart."378

Elocution teachers were not alone in their crusade for a better variety of tones. E. L. Magoon, a citizen of Cincinnati, in 1847 declared that "it is requisite in popular address to be harmonious in utterance, as well as perspicuous in arrangement." With reference to harmony he wrote that "a great deal of the force of eloquence depends upon the modulation of the speaker’s voice."379


Nichols in his book on How to Behave adds that "the first and highest of human accomplishment is a clear, distinct, well-modulated speech." 380

In 1853 J. A. Fowler, who followed Rush, Austin, Walker, Steele and Sheridan in the study of pitch levels, argued that "expression does not require absolute degrees of pitch." This was concluded because of the differences in the makeup of the voices. Yet, Mr. Fowler qualified his belief by stating that the pitch levels should be "comparatively the same." 381

Opposition to the use of the musical scale or any other form of elocutionary device to vary the tone was a fairly popular school of thought. In Cincinnati in 1854, E. R. Campbell in his The Scientific Reader, expressed alarm over the constant "sing-song" or unnatural tone displayed by the students in the delivery of declamatory selections. Yet in discussing the technique favorable to overcoming this habit, Campbell held the opinion that by following nature or in other words by entering into the spirit of the piece the necessary variations of tone would result. The teacher is justified, furthermore, in interrupting the student in his presentation of the selection to question him about its meaning. "Then tell him to read it so, and he will read it rightly." 382


381 J. A. Fowler, Analysis of Dramatic and Oratorical Expression, (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1853), 157.

382 E. R. Campbell, The Scientific Reader, (Cincinnati: Longley and Brother, 1854), 24-25.
What self-training took place in college and community literary societies was not always satisfactory. It is true that numerous speaking experiences were helpful to those with more natural ability, but it was evident that experience alone was inadequate. Coulter specifically declares that some of the debates at the University of Georgia in the thirties were most uninteresting and even discrediting to the institution. There is evidence that at times these debates lacked "sufficient fire and vigor," while at others they were agitated and flamboyant.383

The bewildering experience of the four men who blundered through their speeches in a debate before a community meeting in the little western town of White Oak384 is no doubt one instance in thousands of incompetence in oral expression and the principles of analysis, synthesis, evidence and logic. Owing to the popularity of debating, several debate textbooks permeated the West. These were composed of the fundamentals of debate and the methods of organizing debate societies. A few generalizations concerning the delivery of speech usually following the "natural school" of Whately were included. Of significance in debate is James N. McEligott of Chicago who wrote The American Debater in the eighteen fifties. A strong advocate of educating the youth in the practice of debate, Mc-


Elligott followed Whately's "natural manner," and opposed the student's busying himself with the probable effect of his tones or attitudes; rather he advised that the student concentrate upon sentiment and emotion upon which the delivery depends.\textsuperscript{385}

Allowing the debater to depend upon the sentiment and emotion was not altogether a satisfactory plan, however. According to MacBride some of the community debates in the Mid-west were not entirely pleasing affairs from the standpoint of delivery. Quoting from MacBride:

\begin{quote}
It must be recorded that Mr. Dennis's speech at no time lacked evidence of sincerity; his manner was sometimes energetic in the extreme. Especially notable in delivery was his indictment. The tone of his voice became defiant, louder, and more loud; his face took on unwonted pallor; his eyes flashed, his every movement proclaimed his excitement, until the closing sentence was fairly shouted, and for gesture he brought down both his fists with a vehemence that startled his audience.

But applause there was none, although one of the Moss boys is said to have started it; but the people, perhaps disapproving after all the speaker's vehemence, perhaps half-frightened, perhaps obedient to the president's request, sat silent.\textsuperscript{386}
\end{quote}

Another follower of Whately by the name of Day, who gave special lectures in Western Reserve College in Cleveland around the


\textsuperscript{386} Thomas H. MacBride, In Cabins and Sod-Houses, (Iowa City, Iowa: Published by the State Historical Society, 1928), 269.
forties and whose *The Art of Discourse* was used in Wabash College, Indiana University in the seventies and in DePauw University in the eighties, noted that a "faulty pitch" is offensive to the ear. He was inclined to believe that thoughts are indicated by the pitch of the voice, but that the writer must express himself clearly enough so that the reader may be able to discern the meaning readily.

In 1867, W. H. Fertich, who taught elocution in the Mid-west to members of the clergy as well as to laymen, considers "the dull uniformity or monotonous style in which the Scriptures . . . are read," as "not in keeping with good taste or good sense." Fertich thereby advocates a simplicity of style, for he says, "No affected manner or peculiarly holy (?) tone is suitable in reading the Scriptures. . . ."

It was in 1875 that a Reverend M. DeWitt from Tennessee engaged in a discussion on "How to secure for children the best advantages of the sanctuary service and the several meetings of the Church." Realizing the need for pleasing tones of voice he frankly

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387 North, 15.
388 Rahe, 371.
389 Ibid., 263.
390 Ibid., 95.
stated in his argument that the ministers themselves should "do away" with "long dolorous prayers." Mark Twain observed a similar erroneous pattern of speech in the sermon of a minister who, he says, "droned monotonously through an argument that made many nod." Mrs. D. M. Warren, a niece of William Russell, who taught elocution privately in Philadelphia and to students in Vassar College in the early seventies strongly recommended, as had Comstock, the method of holding declamation exercises in concert. In order to bring out the voices of the diffident, allay the droning monotone of students and encourage them to greater effort, she considered "volunteer or impromptu reading" a good plan. In a list of suggestions to teachers she mentions that dialogues and dramatic pieces are an additional asset:

Call for selected passages illustrating some principle of expression.

Let a scholar write a sentence upon the blackboard, then pronounce in a natural manner.

Dialogues and dramatic pieces tend to awaken interest, and, if judiciously selected, are of great utility as a means of imparting animation and variety of tone.

Sameness of tone arises usually from too exclusive attention to words.

From Fenno, who believed that public speaking is conversation magnified and simultaneously that a good tone of voice carries

393 The Sunday School Times, May 22, 1875.


396 Ibid.
conviction, comes the statement that "the vocal organs become inefficent through disuse, and frequent practice is necessary." Therefore, he advises the following extreme exercises to gain variety in force and pitch:

The voice should be frequently exercised outside of conversational tones. Employ extremes of force and pitch, full rising and falling slides, musical notes, etc., to give flexibility, strength and compass. Dumbbells and Indian clubs afford good exercise; but, unlike vocal practice, they do not enlarge the lungs, but merely the chest cavity.

This is an exercise somewhat similar to that which the Reverend J. M. Buckley, Editor of the Christian Advocate in the eighties had used in his youth. According to Buckley:

Many a man is born without a bass voice. I had such a voice. I used it without skill. A professor of elocution who was a master, took hold of me. He told me to get a melodeon. I did so, and every morning for half an hour I took the pitch G, and then the pitch C, and practiced speaking. Then I took a tuning fork into the pulpit and took the pitch C. I went on practicing until I can now stand before an audience and pitch my voice to meet any requirement. I then took to walking in the woods and practicing. I say this much because I wish to show you what can be done with the voice.

Elocution teachers were not hesitant in suggesting, like Fenno had not been, that one practice the changes of pitch level to develop pleasant tones instead of continuing with a monotonous or

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398 Ibid., 73.
"sing-song" delivery. Henry W. Jameson in his book, Selections for Reading, offers an illustration of modulation, or varying some of the sounds of the alphabet used by speaking up and down the scale as follows:

**DIATONIC SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>(eve)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>(urge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>(good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oo</td>
<td>(good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>(old)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oo</td>
<td>(good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>(ate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>(at)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>(father)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>(all)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These sounds but imperfectly represent the notes of a spoken scale; still they do represent a difference of pitch.

**SUGGESTION**—To break up the tendency to a "sing-song" delivery, practice upon the spoken scale, thus,—a (all), a (father), a (all), a (at), and so on. Then reverse the operation, e (eve), to a (all). See that the sounds are given only their proper length.

Such practice was no doubt intended for those who read lines as poorly as did the minister to whom Mark Twain referred previously. This same preacher's reading of hymns was done in a peculiar style; the medium key was used first, "then there was a climbing steadily to a certain point where it bore with strong emphasis upon the topmost word and then plunged down as if from a spring board."

Murdoch, in his observations concerning southern theatres of the times, was impressed, as Mark Twain had been, with the

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400 Op. cit., 16

peculiar intonation characterized by a regular rise and fall of the voice which gradually diminished at the close of the line. This pattern of continuous monotony, remarked Murdoch, resembled the effects often heard in church services.\textsuperscript{402} For this faulty mode of utterance E. N. Kirby, a teacher of elocution in Boston's Lynn High School in the eighties, advocated that one practice singing the scale promptly; also that one sing and speak the third, fifth and eighth intervals.\textsuperscript{403}

A rhetorician, John F. Genung of Amherst College, in 1885 wrote \textit{The Practical Elements of Rhetoric With Illustrative Examples} in which he followed Campbell's views on rhetoric. Concerning effective tone, Genung asserts that "it is difficult to describe it in words, though every cultured taste can feel it." In the pattern of the "natural school" he warns vaguely against falling "inadvisedly below the adopted standard."\textsuperscript{404}

Among the elocution teachers who travelled to the Far West was John Murray, who settled in Santa Barbara, California, to teach elocution in the eighties. Like Kirby, he went so far as to believe that singing would develop the tones. He said:

\begin{flushright}

\textsuperscript{403} E. N. Kirby, \textit{Vocal and Action-Language}, (Boston: Lee and Shepard, Publishers, 1885), 69.

\textsuperscript{404} John F. Genung, \textit{The Practical Elements of Rhetoric With Illustrative Examples}, (Amherst: Press of J. E. Williams, 1885), 95.
\end{flushright}
There is no better way of... producing a sonorous clear tone... than a course of singing lessons;—provided these lessons are taught by the Italian method. The whole musical world concedes that this is the proper school.\footnote{John Murray, \textit{Elocution for Advanced Pupils}, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1888), 20.}

John Swett, a student of the critical and scholarly William Russell and principal of the San Francisco Girls' High and Normal School in the eighties, wrote \textit{School Elocution}, a manual of vocal training designed especially for academies, high schools and normal schools. He writes that the small amount of time allotted to "reading and elocution" seldom exceeded one or two hours a week, hence in order to train large classes successfully, concert drill in vocal exercises dealing with such aspects as quality, force, time and pitch is invaluable.\footnote{John Swett, \textit{School Elocution}, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1886), iii.} In addition, he points to the social value of such elocutionary training in schools:

\begin{quote}
Elocutionary training should be begun in early life, because then the vocal organs are flexible. It is a serious defect in our school methods of instruction, that the expressive faculties, comprising feeling, affection, emotion, passion, imagination, fancy, association, imitation, and description, are called so little into action. Elocution, when properly taught, calls into active exercise the expressive faculties, and tends to educate the child as a social being.\footnote{Ibid., 277.}
\end{quote}

However, Swett did not intend that all children should be required to give public declamations. He sympathizes with those "... who never can become good readers and others who are so awkward and
diffident that it is cruel to force them upon the school stage . . . " and therefore exempts them from public performances. 408

Summary. Concerning the development of variation in pitch levels, a large number of elocution and rhetoric teachers held specific opinions. From various examples it is found that elocution teachers were generally agreed that considerable practice should be devoted either to reading passages in different pitch levels or to pronouncing a number of vowels on the diatonic scale to fit the student for socially acceptable performances. In some cases they insisted that singing would be of benefit to overcome a monotonous tone. Starting children early in life upon such exercises in vocal culture was thought to be most advisable. The child would then be more flexible in his voice and consequently would become more proficient in expressing his ideas to others in an intelligent and interesting manner. A significant number of rhetorical works gave opposing views on the subject. Like the elocution teachers they believed that a pleasant tone of voice would definitely be most acceptable among the people and that through variety of tone the feeling and meaning of the passage would be gained. However, there was disagreement on the method of accomplishing this skill. Instead of adhering to mechanical principles the rhetoricians recommended that the student should determine the sense of the selection and the tone of voice would automatically take care of itself.

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408 Ibid.
Breathing. In his visit to America Von Raumer noted that it was an age when seemingly endless speeches were delivered under difficult circumstances. Almost any of these sermons or orations was likely to continue "whole hours" at a time. Laveille records that in the evangelization of the West, Father De Smet was often forced to say Mass in roofless huts, with the altar exposed to heat, cold, and inclement weather. Although the task was laborious, political candidates were required by the local committees to speak at length a number of times daily. No consideration was shown the strength of the speaker's vocal cords or breathing apparatus. In general American audiences were accustomed to these three or four hour orations, and in some cases speakers were said to have held the attention for that period without wearying their listeners. Many politicians and orators, like United States Representative Daniel P. Cook of Illinois, who did not have "strong" voices were greatly concerned over this custom.

For those required to use their voices in excess, the elocution teachers conceived the erroneous idea of deep breathing

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411 Depew, My Memories of Eighty Years, 142.
413 Ford, 72.
exercises which they believed would prevent hoarseness. Among the early teachers who applied the theory of breathing to other aspects of elocution was Quintilian. He advocated breathing exercises in order that "it [the breath] may hold out as long as possible" and advised against breath sounds as hissing or coughing so as not "to sprinkle the by-stander with moisture from the mouth."\footnote{414} Enfield in England specifically states that in order to acquire a forcible manner, "inure yourself while reading . . . draw in as much air as your lungs can contain with ease, and to expel it with vehemence in uttering those sounds. . . ."\footnote{415}

Austin's attitude toward breathing was that if "it is short, it ought to be strengthened by diligent practice."\footnote{416} Among other principles he states that it is wise to regulate the voice by the proper management of the breath; he also recommends speaking in the open air.\footnote{417} James Fennel, whose system of elocution was described in Chapter II, was insistent upon using abdominal breathing exercises in his training program. This procedure was followed by his protégé\footnote{418} Lemuel White, who calling Rush's teaching "a mere theory" ignored him entirely. Rather he believed that elocution is an art, "and must be imparted by a living teacher."\footnote{418}

\footnote{415} \textit{William Enfield, Exercises in Elocution}, (London: Lake Hansard, 1804), xiv.
\footnote{416} \textit{Op. cit.}, 80-81.
\footnote{417} \textit{Ibid.}, 81.
Sometime in the late thirties, C. P. Bronson, teacher, author, and lecturer, was extensively engaged as a speaker traveling to such early frontier cities as Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Louisville, Vicksburg, Nashville, St. Louis and others. In consequence of these frequent speaking performances, "with the muscles of the throat and breath," he says he "finally broke down,—falling senseless, after speaking about an hour and a half..." During the illness which followed, Bronson claims to have "providentially discovered the Causes, and also the Remedies, of the difficulties under which he labored..." He writes that, "...by the aid of these principles, he often speaks from six to ten hours a day, without the least inconvenience...." The remedy therefore is to speak with "the effort...made from the dorsal and abdominal region." Thus in order to obtain a "healthy distribution of the vital fluids throughout the body, and a free and powerful activity of the mind" the use of the dorsal and abdominal muscles in breathing is necessary. Although some of his English predecessors had said approximately the same thing, Bronson offered a handsome reward if anyone could prove that he was not:

...the first to teach the specific use of those muscles, for a healthy breathing, and the exercise of the vocal organs, as well as blowing on wind instruments for hours together, without injury... 

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419 Ibid., 266.


421 Ibid.
To obtain strength of voice he gives this rule in paragraph number 399:

... The voice is weak, or strong, in proportion to the less, or greater, number of organs and muscles, that are brought into action. If one uses only the upper part of the chest, his voice will be weak; if he uses the whole body, as he should do, (not in the most powerful manner, of course, on common occasions,) his voice will be strong. Hence, to strengthen a weak voice, the student must practice expelling the vowel sounds, using all the abdominal and dorsal nerves and muscles; in addition to which, he should read and recite when standing or sitting, and walking on a level plain, and up hill: success will be the result of faithful practice.422

The cause of hoarseness in speech Bronson likewise attributes to thoracic breathing. His policy in regard to this problem is as follows:

... Causes of Hoarseness. Hoarseness, in speaking, is produced by the emission of more breath than is converted into sound; which may be perceived by whispering a few minutes. The reason, why the breath is not converted into sound, in thus speaking, is, that the thorax, (or lungs) is principally used; and when this is the case, there is always an expansion of the chest, and consequently, a lack of power to produce sounds in a natural manner; therefore, some of the breath, on its emission through the glottis, over the epiglottis, and through the back part of the mouth, chafes up their surfaces, producing a swelling of the muscles in those parts, and terminating in what is called hoarseness.423

In the same year Murdoch and Russell likewise advocated deep breathing and recommended "drawing in and giving out the breath very slowly, about a dozen times in succession."424 North also advocated "deep breathing" to overcome exhaustion in prolonged speaking

422 Ibid., 145.
423 Ibid., 62.
performances. He explained that if the speaker would "heave up"
the chest by taking very "deep" breaths he would suffer no fatigue.425

The strenuous political campaigning of the times wherein one
had to speak six and seven hours a day426 caused some of the can­
didates to lose their voices. As a result they were forced to return
home to seek treatment. On the other hand Depew recalls that he
was fortunate, having learned under North to use his "diaphragm
instead of his throat." These lessons in breathing, he testifies,
were of infinite benefit to him all his life,427 and he did not
suffer the consequences of misuse that many of his colleagues did.

For those like the Reverend Mr. Christian Newcomer, who
had to speak from cold pulpits in barns and other crude enclosures
as well as outdoors,428 Kidd recommended a series of breathing and
gymnastic exercises in the open air:429

Stand or sit erect; keep the head up and the chest
expanded; throw the shoulders well back place the hands upon
the hips, with the fingers pressing upon the abdomen, and
the thumbs extending backward; inhale the breath slowly,
until the lungs are fully inflated, retaining the breath
for a few moments, then breathing it out as slowly as it
was taken in.

Let the chest rise and fall freely at every inspiration,
and take care not to make the slightest aspirate sound,
in taking in or giving out the breath.

Continue to take in and throw out the breath with in­
creasing rapidity, until you can instantly inflate, and,
as suddenly, empty the lungs. Repeat this exercise
several times a day, and continue it as long as it

426 Depew, 33.
427 Ibid.
428 Newcomer, 67.
is unattended with dizziness or other unpleasant feelings.\textsuperscript{430}

In the New York City \textit{Independent} an article appeared in 1859 which bolstered the belief in the elocution teachers' theory regarding this type of training of the voice. According to this article the respiratory organs and the vocal muscles are not only as susceptible to a high degree of development as other portions of the body, but even to a higher degree. Exercising these organs and muscles is considered not only important to speech, but also to the general health of the speaker.\textsuperscript{431}

Following this line of thinking was Joseph A. Lyons, a teacher of elocution in Notre Dame University in 1871. He devised a series of exercises in "rapid and violent breathing" designed for the better expression of "ardent feeling and strong emotion" in the reading of selections among the college students of the West.\textsuperscript{432}

Lewis B. Monroe, the superintendent of physical and vocal culture in the public schools of Boston in the fifties who was indebted to Rush, Russell and A. M. Bell in voice, and who was "much applauded" for such recitations as "the Bells,"\textsuperscript{433} referred in a lecture delivered at Brattleboro, Vermont before the American Institute

\textsuperscript{430} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{431} \textit{The Independent}, June 9, 1859.


\textsuperscript{433} \textit{Lectures}, 47.
of Instruction in 1862 to the fact that his voice "had broken down"
after several years of speaking before students. Like Bronson,
he credits the breathing technique as an invention of his own. He
states that following a course in gymnastics under Dr. C. A.
Guilmette in France the thought occurred to him that if the body
is strengthened by exercise the voice might accordingly be made
stronger. Thus Monroe came to the conclusion that the intercostal
and dorsal muscles needed to be used more and the "upper muscles"
less. The success of his teaching voice culture in the Boston
Schools may be observed in these remarks made in 1895 by Alexander
Melville Bell:

When I first visited the city of Boston, in 1868, I
met our distinguished professional brother, the late
Lewis B. Monroe, who was then Superintendent of Elocu-
tion in the city schools. I was taken by Professor
Monroe on one of his rounds of visits to the schools,
and I witnessed with delight the affectionate greeting
of the various classes to their beloved instructor. As
I afterwards told Professor Monroe, I had been particular-
ly struck with the way in which his pupils spoke out.
I could not get my young lady classes in Edinburgh or
London to deliver the voice with anything like the
same energy and clearness.

Exercises employed by adherents to the breathing theory were
similar in many respects. Mitchell offered the stringent exercises
below:

First: Full breathing—Place the arms and hands as
required in the first movement: slowly draw in the breath
until the chest is fully expanded; emit it with the ut-
most slowness. (Repeat.)

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434 Ibid.. XL vi—XL vii.
435 See Address, 4.
Second: Audible Effusive breathing—Draw in the breath as in full breathing, and expire it audibly in a prolonged sound of the letter h. In this style of respiration, the breath merely effuses itself into the surrounding air.

Third: Expulsive or Forcible breathing—Draw in a very full breath as before, and send it forth with a lively expulsive force, in the sound of h, but little prolonged—as in a moderate, whispered cough. The breath is thus projected into the air.

Fourth: Explosive or Abrupt breathing—Fill the lungs, and then emit the breath suddenly and forcibly, in the manner of an abrupt and whispered cough. Thus the breath is thrown out with abrupt violence.

Fifth: Sighing—Suddenly fill the lungs with a full breath, and emit it as quickly as possible.

Sixth: Gasping—with convulsive effort, inflate the lungs; then send forth the breath more gently.

Seventh: Panting—Breathe quickly and violently, making the emission of the breath loud and forcible.

J. L. Stratsbury, Principal of the Western School of Elocution in Des Moines, Iowa, in the early eighties was one among others chiefly concerned with the size of the lungs relative to breathing:

When under good control, neither breath nor voice will be found wanting. The lungs depend for their power as a vocal organ upon the quantity of breath which they are capable of receiving. Large and capacious lungs, therefore, as commonly indicated by a broad and full chest, are of paramount importance to the public speaker, as a narrow chest and small lungs are very unfavorable.

H. M. Dickson, who in his School of Elocution, Oratory, and Dramatic Art in Chicago taught Shakespearean readings, other dramatic

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recitations and the physiology of the voice, attributed the diseases of the throat resulting from overexertion "to the wrong management of breath." His theory contends:

Speakers fail in supplying breath enough to the lungs—others pour out breath when inhaled before they speak and then endeavor to speak with the lungs nearly empty—others pour out breath with greater force than they exercise the organs of speech which act on the breath. Such defective methods of speaking, seriously injure the throat and produce the worst kind of voice. 438

Dean, in her Lessons in Elocution, prescribes breathing exercises as a preliminary drill for declamatory reading. Thus, she instructs:

Before every reading exercise the class should practice development of the chest, and control of the breath; also exercise on the elementary sounds. Pupils should be required to deliver their work properly in speaking as well as in reading. Insist on every word being heard distinctly; avoiding nasal tones caused by not raising the soft palate. 439

Hiram F. Reed, who was well known for his training of young ministers for home missionary work throughout the country in the seventies, "at the solicitation" of President Shoemaker of the National School of Elocution and Oratory in Philadelphia accepted the chair of "Bible Reading." "The simplicity and naturalness which characterized his reading impressed the students..." and generous praise was accorded him for his reading ability and his eloquent


lectures before colleges and ministerial conferences throughout the East. Reed's reputation brought many students from theological seminaries to his classes. He created great interest in Bible reading, the beneficial effects of which were palpable in many American pulpits. The popularity of his lectures, recitations and classroom teaching profoundly convinced Reed that he should establish his own elocutionary school. As a result he organized in Philadelphia in the eighties the Etonian School of Elocution.

Reed was a staunch advocate of numerous breathing exercises for his students, some of which included sobbing, gasping and panting exercises. These, he taught, would improve the voice, the general health of the vocal mechanism and the physical development of the entire body.

The prevailing interest in elocution in Missouri in the last quarter of the century led Isaac H. Brown, a prominent teacher of elocution in Columbia, to institute his own school of elocution in St. Louis in 1885. This school, of which he was principal, was called the "Inter-Ocean School of Elocution and Oratory." In Brown's text, Common School Elocution and Oratory, he specified the need for respiratory exercises which he claims are "not only beneficial

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441 Hiram F. Reed, How to Read: A Manual of Elocution and Vocal Culture; Designed as a Help to Students of Oratory; Embracing a Progressive and Symmetrical System of Instruction In all Departments of the Art of Expression; With Anatomical Descriptions and Diagrams of the Organs of Respiration and Action; and Special Exercises for their Separate and Combined Development; and For the Cure of Vocal Defects, Stammering, Lisping, Etc., (Philadelphia: H. B. Garner, 1883), 25.
in the cultivation of voice power, but are healthful and invigorating. Furthermore, Brown advocated these exercises as preliminary practice to declamation and would not countenance indifference, languor or feeble efforts in their performance. If participation were not vigorous the laggards would be excused from the drill.\textsuperscript{442}

Pinkley warned clergymen that their "sore throats" in a large majority of cases were caused "by the shock of unvocalized breath against the tender tissues of a tightly congested throat." To the members of the bar he declared that their success depended upon "body, brains, breath." He asks this question, "Why does my throat burn and ache, and my voice grow husky, before I have spoken thirty minutes?"

Many of these ills incident to teaching as well as preaching and pleading he says "are directly traceable to faulty respiration."\textsuperscript{443}

**Summary:** During the century many readers and speakers were aware that prolonged speaking caused hoarseness and other vocal discomforts. In some instances politicians carrying on a strenuous campaign were forced to return to their homes for rest or seek treatment from an elocution teacher. Among the members of the elocution profession the general doctrine prevailed that "abdominal" breathing exercises would produce a satisfactory remedy. Both teachers and students were unanimous in the belief that stringent exercises in breathing would not only increase vocal endurance, enabling the reader


or speaker to declaim for long periods without any sign of weariness, but would likewise improve the individual from the physical standpoint. Students were required to participate in these vocal exercises before being permitted to practice declaiming.

**Personal hints to Declaimers.** Occasionally there were elocution teachers who felt that special hints should be given the speaker or reader in regard to personal habits when practicing lessons in voice training or when appearing in public performances. For example, Kidd warned that stimulants were injurious to the voice. He claims:

> The public speaker or actor, who is in the habit of taking a dram or two before commencing his performance, and an occasional sip during its continuance, hardly ever gets through with what he undertakes in a creditable manner.

> The speaker excited by strong drink, usually speaks with the utmost force, at the top of his voice; the natural consequence is, his memory grows treacherous, his judgment bewildered, while the organs of the voice and throat become irritated and inflamed.

Kidd also believed that tobacco was injurious to the voice, for he says:

> The use of tobacco, in any form, has a deleterious effect upon the speaking and breathing organs. It enfeebles the nervous system and tends to make the voice dry, harsh, husky and inflexible.

> Public speakers who are votaries of the weed, if they cannot give it up entirely, ought, by all means, to refrain from the use of it for several hours previous to speaking or engaging in any public vocal exercise. For this brief season of self-denial they will be rewarded by a clearness and fullness of tone and a flexibility of voice which will surprise and delight them.

Charles Smith apparently held similar views regarding personal habits. Smith counsels,

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444 Op. cit., 87

445 Ibid.
Avoid all nostrums for "improving the voice." Many are highly injurious, containing opium or other deleterious drugs; and although they may at first appear to improve the voice, they will ultimately and permanently injure it. Exercise and temperance are the only sure strengtheners. Whatever improves the general state of the health will equally improve the vocal organs. Practice with moderation, and rest before the voice becomes fatigued. Do not load the stomach before speaking. Cravats should not be thick, as such weaken the vocal organs, nor worn so tight as to impede their action. But avoid a slovenly looseness. Snuff is very injurious to the voice.

Frobisher had a number of additional suggestions relative to the "habits of the orator," which include:

THE PUBLIC SPEAKER should bathe frequently, and after drying the body, apply a gentle friction, for a few moments, by rubbing or patting the chest to keep the lungs healthy and active. He should also take exercise in the open air.

He should stoutly resist the temptations of smoking or chewing tobacco, as decidedly injurious to the pure quality of the voice.

The excessive use of sweetmeats, nuts, and confections of any kind, has a clogging character on the vocal organs. Warm bread, pastry, rich puddings, cake, and highly-seasoned, greasy, or salt food, affect the voice through the instrumentality of the stomach. In short anything that injures the latter affects the former.

It is highly injurious to speak just after a hearty meal, for the digestive and mental powers cannot operate well at the same time. The blood is drawn to the brain and throat at such a time, when it is needed to warm the stomach to aid it in assimilating the food.

The teeth should be kept clean as an aid to distinct articulation. It is well to brush them a short time before speaking.

Have the clothing loose to allow a free circulation of the blood. Be especially careful about the neck; have the collar-band very loose, and never bandage nor muffle the throat.

The muscles of the throat become soft and unelastic when kept from the air. A speaker absolutely needs them strong and firm, or he cannot intone his syllables with accuracy and purity of sound.

Clergymen abuse their throats by winding thick cloths about them, which produces a cramped and tender condition.

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of the muscles, and induces irritation, huskiness, and "clergymen's sore throat"—the disease so prevalent among them.

A few things that tend to improve the quality of the voice for any special occasion, are figs, apples, soft-boiled eggs, oysters, raw—or, if cooked, without milk or butter—stale bread, crackers, or similar diet; no milk, tea or coffee, but plain water, and by no means, stimulants. Plain sugar clears the voice.

The ancients used onions and garlic freely, to promote the tone and purity of the voice, but the age has so advanced in some respects that we might deem them objectionable.

For hoarseness do not take troches, or similar nostrums. They contain drugs which stimulate for the moment, but eventually destroy the voice. Habit begets the necessity of using them. Instead, take simple remedies; drink cold water at night, or use plain syrup or molasses, or some other means as simple. Do not eat lemons or use acids for such a purpose just before speaking; such things only clog the stomach, inflame the throat, and, consequently cannot instantly improve, but rather injure, the voice.

If necessary to walk about much, or to any distance, before speaking, do it gently, not rapidly, so as to become fatigued and exhausted. Sit quiet, if possible, a short time before speaking.447

An anonymous author, who wrote The Young Elocutionist, submitted

"for putting the voice into good order" the following recipes:

A teaspoonful of the compound tincture of cinnamon beaten up with a raw egg.
A raw egg beaten up in a large cup of smooth-flavored tea, (not green), with good milk or cream.
For troublesome hoarseness and roughness of the throat, chew a bit of horse-radish, or take a cayenne lozenge.448

Helen Potter likewise gave numerous instructions for the care of the voice, for example, the avoidance of drugs and mild drinks such as coffee and tea. She warned that the reader "not hastily submit to surgical operations," for "some physicians have a mania for using the knife" and may trim the palate needlessly. Miss Potter indicated

further in her book that hot water compresses may aid the speaker more than powerful nostrums or drugs in filling his engagements. 449

Summary: Resorting primarily to the speeches and literature of outstanding Americans for their exercises in declamation, the teachers of American elocution hoped to imbue the students with the moral, religious and patriotic spirit, according to the period. The significance of these themes excited the imagination of both the reader and the listener. However, the mere recitation of declamatory selections proved to be an ineffective means of imparting the principles of good speech. Elocution teachers therefore insisted upon rigid preliminary exercises in voice culture. It is true that many principles dealing with voice were traceable to as distant a period as classical Greece and Rome and later to that of English elocution, but the development of a system of voice training for the benefit of the American people was left mainly to the followers of Rush.

In a period which was noticeably deficient in its speech habits, the elocution teachers in general were a direct influence in promoting distinctness of speech, providing assistance in pronunciation for foreign groups, aiding the hesitant in speech and effecting variety in the various elements of speech. While there is no doubt that these various aspects of voice were confusing even to the teachers of elocution themselves and that their systems were in a trial and error stage, a number of ministers, statesmen and scholars testified that definite results of a favorable nature had been experienced.

A predominant number of elocution teachers believed strongly in definite rules to obtain the best results in vocal expression. There were, however, those members of the rhetorical school who held the belief that while clarity and variety of expression were desirable, a comprehension of the material to be delivered would properly assure the necessary variations in attributes like rate of utterance, pitch, force and quality of voice.

To develop the voice, abdominal breathing exercises became exceedingly popular. It was felt generally that this practice, if rigidly adhered to, would enable a reader or speaker to speak for several hours without fear of hoarseness or exhaustion of the vocal cords. Moreover, by indulging in these exercises the general health of the vocal cords, the lungs and the body would be improved.

A characteristic practice of the elocution teachers was their presentation of selections in highly dramatized form before public audiences. This custom in providing unique entertainment aroused an increased interest in elocution everywhere, with the result that numerous students entered private elocution schools which were established in almost every city throughout the country. For speakers and recitalists a number of extraordinary suggestions of a personal nature regarding cleanliness and eating and drinking habits were recommended.
CHAPTER IV

Elocutionary Training In Poise And Bodily Expression

Poise, Physical Bearing and Manner. The curious mixture of peoples on the frontier, rude from the want of education and association with a more polished society, presented a picture of general awkwardness in stance, unattractive personal appearance and unbecoming manner. These outward manifestations were cause for sharp criticism among the observers of the times. Morris Birbeck, who travelled in the frontier early in the century, upon visiting Washington College in western Pennsylvania, was struck by the scrubby appearance and unrefined behavior among the students.¹ Trollope criticized the "simple" manner of living in western America as distasteful.² That this crude and unwonted behavior carried over into public speaking occasions was increasingly apparent to other critics. Von Raumer, for instance, makes special mention of the "gross violations of decorum and order that occasionally take place in Congress . . . " which he says "admit of no justification."³ Bay, in his reminiscences of the bar in Missouri, recalls the unpretentiousness and the shortcomings of men like Joseph Spaulding of St. Louis in the late twenties, whose "style of speaking" was not above mediocrity.⁴ In addition, he declares that Philip Cole, a lawyer of Potosi,

³ Frederick Von Raumer, America and the American People, (New York: J. and G. Langley, 1845), 397.
Missouri, in the same period, was so deficient in his presentation of declamation that he rarely attempted to appear before a jury. Bay places Ezra Hunt, an attorney of St. Charles, in the same category because he was "wanting in dignity." That a "low opinion" also prevailed of some of the American clergy in respect to their physical bearing and pulpit manner is revealed in an editorial in the British and Foreign Review for 1840. It says:

They (the clergy) are regarded in too degrading a light; looked upon as a sort of people between men and women, and consequently they are deprived unjustly of that influence that men exact by their individual characters and convictions.

Nottingham relates with discernment that considering the striking individualism which frontier preachers exhibited in their idiosyncrasies of habit, it was remarkable that discipline in the audience was maintained as smoothly as it was.

Refinements were creeping into the West as railroad transportation with the East increased. A number of manufactured articles from the eastern centers had been made available at community stores and the homes were utilizing more and more of these cultural advantages. Lumber was frequently being replaced by stone in the construction of private and public buildings. Self-improvement in education, behavior, and appearance was becoming a passion. Partridge observed this trait

5 Ibid., 110.
6 Ibid., 119.
in his father, whose first consideration after his admission to the bar was to clothe himself better, buy himself a beaver hat and grow a beard. In 1864, during the frenzied state Democratic Convention at Albany, Depew was particularly impressed with Governor Horatio Seymour, whose appearance in patent-leather boots, Prince Albert suit and correct collar and tie, together with his just measure of restraint, made him the idol of the wild throng. Such models of speech and manner had a pronounced effect upon the people. Ely notes this trend among the laborers of the period, who were becoming more aware of their impressions on others and of their need for learning "true politeness," grace and manners.

Among the wealthy there was almost an obsession for refinement, grace, culture, good speech, poise and a certain finesse in individual dress and manners. They were expected to bow and sit correctly, to dance well and to exhibit ease and charm among their socially elite associates. In the South, wealth and culture were particularly evident among the "mansion" class. There great emphasis was placed upon etiquette and several books on manner and social usages could be had for a dime or two. Sparks captures some of the southern culture in the following:

Living almost exclusively among themselves, their manners and feelings were homogeneous; and living, too, almost

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10 Chauncey U. Depew, My Memories of Eighty Years, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), 37.


entirely upon the products of their plantations, independent of their market-crops, they grew rich so rapidly as to mock the fable of Jonah's gourd. This wealth afforded the means of education and travel; these, cultivation and high mental attainments, and, with these, the elegances of refined life . . . . In no country are to be found women of more refined character, more beauty, or more elegance of manners, than among the planters' wives and daughters of the Mississippi coast.

Young men and women were therefore sent to private schools which offered music, dancing, declamation and other subjects to cultivate poise and to refine their tastes. Numerous private academies and seminaries, colleges and universities sprang up as a result throughout the country to meet this demand. A typical advertisement of the Frederick, Maryland, Female Seminary in 1847 stated that "parents who desire to give their daughters a liberal and refined education will find our institution with . . . a learned and efficient faculty."

Ambitious speakers in community, state and national affairs also recognized that to be of greatest effectiveness they must, in addition to acquiring the techniques of good speech, develop also the impression of poise before their audiences. In the customary lengthy and strenuous speeches and recitals, energy and skill were of primary importance. A healthy body was therefore the first ambition of the wise and ingenious performer.

Teachers of elocution were aware of this demand for training in bodily effectiveness and set about to meet the problem in various ways. Among the diverse methods of training men and women to appear

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13 W. H. Sparks, The Memories of Fifty Years, (Philadelphia: Claxton and Hoffelfinger, 1870), 247.

14 The Torch Light, September 10, 1847.
favorably before others, whether on the platform or in conversational groups, was the use of calisthenics.

The gymnastic exercises, however, were by no means originated by the nineteenth century elocution teachers. As early as the first century A.D., Quintilian included teachers of gymnastics in his training program for orators, so that the pupils might be free from rusticity and inelegance. Moreover, he referred to the desirability of training in gesture and motion under the direction of an actor.

Among the early writers on the subject of poise and ease of manner in elocution was Thomas Sheridan, who in his plans for the education of British youth in 1769, stated:

For accomplishments, I would not have the boys in school learn to dance, but they should all be taught to walk . . . to have good carriage, to bow, and all the different manners of saluting company properly, upon entering or going out of a room. They should be shown what is ungraceful in the movement of the head and arms, in order that they may avoid any bad habits.

Austin in 1806, whose work was used in such American institutions as the University of Georgia in the early part of the century, recommended physical training in his Chironomia as a conditioning exercise for declamation.

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18 Gilbert Austin, *Chironomia: or a Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery*, (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, in the Strand, 1806), 73.
In America it is worthwhile noting that in a number of treatises written on the subject of elocution by such men as Rush there is no reference to the subject of poise or manner. Others recognized the importance of this type of training, but a doubt was expressed as to the practicality of rules in this connection. For example, in 1833 Lacey admitted that the great difficulty in furnishing systematic instructions in poise or position prevented him from discussing the matter.  

Comstock, who drew his material on bodily action from Austin, in a lecture before the American Lyceum in 1837 declared that the health and strength of the body depended on gymnastics and prescribed daily athletic exercises as a part of elocutionary training. Gracefulness of movement, he believed, would also result from such a program. In the same year in his Practical Elocution he inserted engraved figures to supply his students with illustrations on how to obtain correct poise and position. In A System of Elocution he takes up the subject of the postures of the body. His approach, although extreme, may be seen in the following:

The postures of the body, with respect to vocal delivery, may be divided into favourable and unfavourable; and, the better to suit my purpose in giving their illustration, I shall first treat of the unfavourable.

The most unfavourable posture is the horizontal. If a reader or a speaker should lie prone, or supine, he would not be likely to deliver a discourse with energy and effect.

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21 Andrew Comstock, Practical Elocution, (Philadelphia: Kay and Brother, 1837), 3.
I have never known an orator to deliver a discourse in the horizontal posture; but I have known individuals to speak in public in postures almost as inappropriate.  

It was an age when people were speedily becoming aware of a need for the graceful support and carriage of the body, dealing particularly with the head, shoulders, chest, arms, limbs and feet; walking on the street; standing; sitting and the graceful conservation of nervous and physical strength in the duties of social life.

The problem of some kind of physical education to meet the unfavorable physical condition of the people attracted the attention of physicians like Dr. James Johnson, who had this to say with respect to the need for this kind of training:

The neglect of physical education has been a great practical error in our American system of education.

In the endeavor to secure intellectual culture in the most expeditious manner, due reference has not been had to the health and physical ability of the young scholar; and, as a consequence of the neglect of proper exercise and physical training, the result has unquestionably been, disease, deformity, and premature death, in no small number of instances.

The body, no less than the mind, demands the enlightened care of all guardians and teachers of youth; both require their appropriated discipline, that health, beauty, and grace, may be coincident with mental improvement, refinement, and taste.  

Among the elocution teachers, William Russell declared that the responsibility for the inferior kind of exhibitions in schools was due partly to the neglect of the "physical frame." His criticism follows:

The present course of education is to immure any person within doors, for the greater part of the day, and thus enfeeble his physical frame, and impair his natural vividness of feeling. We prescribe him mental occupations which excite a few of his intellectual faculties to excessive and too long sustained exertion. We leave his active powers dormant or

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benumbed, and thus impair the vigor of his whole mind. We then call upon him, when thus physically and mentally disabled, to declaim or recite in public, half a dozen times a year.\footnote{24}

In his school of oratory in the early forties in Boston with Russell, Murdoch taught that physical exercises would promote general muscular vigor and consequently more energetic vocal functions.\footnote{25}

In training the speakers or readers for platform appearance, or for their general posture in everyday life, positions of the feet as well as that of the entire body were stressed. Definite rules were laid down as to the correct procedures. In Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Caldwell, a strong believer in detailed principles, for example in 1845 explains the movements involved in two possible positions. He directs:

**First Position of the Right Foot.**

In this position, the right foot is firmly planted, and sustains the weight of the body. The left foot forms nearly a right angle with the other, and rests only on the ball of the great toe.—In the ground-plan of this figure, the right foot which rests firmly on the ground is deeply shaded; the part of the left which touches the ground is shaded lightly.

**Second Position of the Right Foot.**

In this position also, the right foot is advanced, while the weight of the body is on the left.—In the plan therefore, the left foot is deeply shaded; and the right, though it rests upon the ground throughout its whole extent, is shaded more faintly. In this position, the angle which the feet make with each other is but about 75 degrees.\footnote{26}


He gives perhaps one of the most detailed methods by which a bow is executed. His instructions are given below:

In the graceful bow, (1) there should be a gentle bend of the whole body; (2) the equilibrium of the body should be so adjusted as not to throw the weight of the body forward upon the ball of the foot; (3) the eyes should not be permitted to fall below those of the persons addressed; and (4) the arms should slightly incline forward and inward, as they naturally do when the body is bent, but without any apparent voluntary effort.27

Three years later, noting the growing emphasis on physical appearance, Maglathlin stressed physical culture by advocating outdoor exercises, probably because of the frequency of outdoor performances. He made use of numerous sitting and standing positions in his program to develop a favorable impression.28 Hiram Corson, who adhered to the precepts of Rush29 and took strong issue against the "natural school" of Whately,30 proclaimed in 1865 that graceful movements could not be attained unless the student first develop the functions of his body through exercises.31 Griffith in the meantime prescribed a series of physical exercises for his students, claiming them to be indispensable for the "expansion of the chest, freedom of the circulation, and general vitality of the whole system."32

27 Ibid., 259.
30 Ibid., 35.
31 Ibid., 37.
32 Allen Ayrault Griffith, A Drill Book for Practice of the Principles of Vocal Physiology, And Acquiring the Art of Elocution and Oratory, Etc., (Chicago: Adams, Blackmer and Lyon, 1868), 14.
The speaker should present himself to the audience with modesty, and without any show of self-consequence; and, at the same time, he should avoid obsequiousness, and every thing opposed to true dignity and self-respect. His countenance should be composed; he should feel the importance of the subject and of the occasion. He should not haste, nor hasten too much to begin. Be deliberate and calm, and be in possession of your self-possession.

From Griffith, 19.
Lewis B. Monroe was among the outstanding teachers in elocution to train scores of students who went into the West and Far West to teach elocution and give reading recitals and speeches. A large number of clergymen, lawyers, teachers and people from all walks of life came from many states to enroll in his school to receive instruction and improve their native abilities. A successful teacher and lecturer before various institutes, theological schools and colleges and a staunch advocate of physical culture, he was given the distinguished post of Dean in Boston University's famous School of Oratory in 1873. In this position, which he held for four years up to the time of his death in 1879, he inspired many students with his moral and spiritual force. Distinguished men like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Dr. William Rimmer, Theodore Weld, Moses True Brown, Charles Wesley Emerson and Henry Ward Beecher were among the special lecturers at the school. For his teaching staff Monroe employed equally prominent men. The faculty for this remarkable school for the first year included:

Lewis B. Monroe.—Dean, Professor of the Philosophy of Expression, Aesthetics of the Voice, Oratoric and Dramatic Action.
A. Graham Bell.—Culture of the Speaking Voice, Mechanism of Speech, Visible Speech, Methods of Instructing Deaf Mutes in Articulation.
Charles R. Treat, A. M.—Physiology and Hygiene of the Voice.
George L. Osgood, A. M.—Vocalization as Applied to Oratory.
Fales H. Newhall, D. D.—Lecturer on Literature.
James E. Latimer, D. D.—Lecturer on History. 33

Students of Monroe, according to Wilbor, heard such directions which emphasized his conviction of maintaining a healthy physique:

"You are too intellectual. You must let the affectional life grow, or you can never acquire permanent sweetness in your voice." "You must go to work and build up your physique, or there will be no basis for the growth of the mental and affectional in your tone; your voice lacks vitality." And again: "You have a good voice, but it lacks power; it lacks a certain concentration of tone which comes only through rigid self-culture. You need to study earnestly, to think for yourself, to become rich in the best thoughts of great men, before you can wield intelligent audiences."\footnote{34 Werner's Directory of Elocutionists, Readers, Lecturers and Other Public Instructors and Entertainers, Elsie M. Wilbor, Editor (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1887), 256. For his treatment of physical exercises see Lewis B. Monroe, Manual of Physical and Vocal Training, For the Use of Schools and For Private Instruction, (Philadelphia: Cowperthwait and Company, 1869).}

One of the first postures or positions for students to learn at the National School of Elocution and Oratory in Philadelphia was that which is assumed at the opening of the address. Learning to bow upon approaching the audience was considered a very important procedure because of the initial impression it gave the spectator. According to a public school teacher, Miss Emma Burtner of Keedysville, Maryland, a graduate of the National School of Elocution and Oratory "near the turn of the century," the bow was also used as a practice exercise in the acceptance of a gift, or executed to obtain more ease and flexibility.\footnote{35 Personal Interview, January 2, 1947.}

In this school, which was established in the mid-seventies, "grace of manner" was especially to be cultivated in the individual. Among its large number of students were several eminent clergymen, lawyers, actors, lecturers, readers, teachers and Sunday School teachers, many who filled important positions in a wide territory including both America and Canada.\footnote{36 See "History," Catalogue of National School of Elocution and Oratory 1899-1900, (Philadelphia: Published by the school, 1900), 9.} Their effect in regard to speech and manner upon students
and laymen everywhere was profound. The course of instruction at the school is as follows:

**Synopsis of the Course**

5. English Classics. 16. Bible and Hymn Reading.

As a general rule, the numerous graded readers which permeated the American scene during the entire period were concerned primarily with declamation and vocal expression. Among a few exceptions to this practice is observed George S. Hilliard's *The Franklin Advanced 4th or Intermediate Reader*, a book which was possibly used in the common schools in Georgia. In the treatise, Hilliard is of the opinion that "no vocal exercises can be correctly practiced without first securing the proper position and carriage of body." With the use of illustrated figures and rules, he carries out his plan for physical culture. Chosen from his list of rules are the following principles pertaining to position:

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38 *Catalogue*, 14.
39 The work may be found in the University of Georgia library.
Heels in line and touching each other.
Feet turned equally outward sixty degrees.
Knees straight.
Body erect and square in front.
Arms hanging evenly at side.
Elbows near body. Head erect...

The following year Graham of Chicago stated that "grace" could best be expressed by "relaxation" exercises. These were simple exercises dealing primarily with curved lines. In addition he offered several exercises specifically designed to make the head, eyes, hands, body and limbs more flexible and energetic. I. H. Brown, a native Ohioan and well-known reader of dialect selections, who prepared young students for oratorical contests in the University of Missouri from 1875 to 1889, claimed that training in calisthenics had changed him from a weak to a strong man.

Elocution teachers not only believed that a good physique was essential to win favorable reactions from the audience, but they felt in many cases, as did Russell Trall, that health and physical appearance were related. Trall claims that crooked bodies unbalance the muscular system, "enfeebles the breathing apparatus and impair the voice." These malpositions and spinal difficulties, he asserts, are due to the miserable benches used in the primary schools of the day. Walter K. Fobes, who took courses in articulation under Alexander Graham Bell at the Boston University School of Oratory and also "expression courses" under Dean Lewis B. Monroe in 1875, discloses that his elocutionary method...

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41 Ibid., xi-xii.
For the benefit of those who have the ordinary calisthenic apparatus, the following familiar illustrations are given:

The Indian club exercise is calculated to develop powerfully the muscles of the arms and chest. Figs. 32, 33, 34, and 35 show the principal positions so far as club exercises especially affect the respiratory system.

Weights and dumb-bells may be employed to intensify the effect of any of the exercises which are usually performed without apparatus; and in a variety of such other ways as any one, understanding the object in view, can readily extemporize. Figs. 36 and 37 are examples.

An illustration of a form of exercise used by the elocutionists to develop particularly the respiratory system, as recommended by Trall, 37.
designed partially for lawyers began first with "a series of gymnastics to give strength and elasticity to the muscles used in speaking, to expand the chest, and to get a correct position of the body . . .."

In this way he explains, "speaking may be without effort, and yet powerful." George Raymond published in Chicago two years later his The Orator's Manual, in which he stated that "wrong positions" must be avoided in society or in platform appearances for awkward movements give the undesirable impressions of extreme humility, bashfulness, shame and uncultivated bearing. To overcome these unattractive habits he offered a number of detailed exercises for the head, hands, trunk, feet and lower limbs.

Another advocate of physical culture was Dale, who in 1831 in Indiana prescribed simple hand movements, "light wand exercises" and "bending exercises" to establish correct "poses." Besides, he professed "a vigorous, healthy action to the muscles of the chest, sides and abdomen" would invigorate the "respiratory apparatus giving activity to the blood and exhilarating the entire system." In the same year Stratsbury, a private teacher of elocution in Des Moines, Iowa, likewise expressed the belief in the absolute necessity of a "graceful and dignified manner." He says:

To stand erect in an easy, graceful and dignified manner, so as to command the respect of an audience, is an important attainment. It is the position that first attracts the

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45 Walter K. Fobes, Elocution Simplified, (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1877), 15.


attention and produces an impression. If it be easy and natural, the impression will be favorable; if formal and awkward, it will be unfavorable. An easy position gives freedom to thought and smoothness to expression, while a restrained manner hinders speech and embarrasses utterance.\textsuperscript{48}

As a part of these gymnastic programs heavy German and Swedish apparatus was often used, similar to that employed at the Sargent School for Physical Education, a private school established in 1881 by Dudley A. Sargent on the campus of Harvard University.\textsuperscript{49}

The Reverend Francis Thayer Russell, son of William Russell, was a lecturer in elocution at the General Theological Seminary in New York and also taught elocution at the Berkeley Divinity School in Connecticut. Rev. Russell in the eighties believed as did his father that "the primary conditions of strength and purity of voice rest upon good physical health."\textsuperscript{50} He explains further, therefore, that "the best effects in public speaking come primarily from health. An enfeebled condition of the body is not the ideal state for one who is to communicate . . . ."\textsuperscript{51}

Bradley and Clabough of Sedan, Kansas, taught numerous poise, position and movement exercises and then endeavored to utilize these improved actions in declamation. Descriptive positions were designated for the various passages. Thus for the sentence, "There, there again! that demon's there, crouching to make a fresh attack," they suggest


\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 237.
that one of the lower limbs be advanced down stage. L. T. Remlap
of Chicago was of the opinion that grace and dignity depend much on
the position of the feet and lower limbs. In a series of illustra-
tions and exercises he demonstrated how one could obtain correct stance
and better poise. In addition he included many suggestions to over-
come annoying mannerisms like frowning and biting the lips. Chamberlain
of Ohio composed a detailed chart of physical exercises designed chiefly
for the development of the chest, the throat, the jaw, the tongue,
the oral and nasal cavities, the vocal chords, the articulatory regions
and the abdominal muscles. Pinckley, also of Ohio, in the same year
1888, observed that the customary "rocking from side to side" was an
irritating habit among numerous speakers of his time. His system of
calisthenics, he claims, would produce freedom and mobility of joints,
heighten health, secure symmetry and strength, produce pliability and
poise and give grace to the student's attitude and action. O. L. Lyon,
a teacher of elocution in the Steelville, Missouri, Normal and Business
Institute, in 1890 declared that the matter of the correct utilization
of the outward manifestations of his countrymen could not be overesti-
mated and insisted that slovenliness must be avoided. He referred to

52 James T. Bradley and Maurice Clabaugh, Manual of Elocution,

53 Loomis T. Remlap, Select Readings For Public and Private
Entertainment, (Chicago: Fairbanks and Palmer Publishing Company,
1885), 31-33.

54 William B. Chamberlain, Guide to Rhetorical Delivery; A
Study of the Properties of Thought as Related to Utterance, (Oberlin,
Ohio: Printed for the Author, 1888), 204-205.

55 Virgil Pinkley, Essentials of Elocution and Oratory, (Cin-
cinnati: Cranston and Stowe, 1888), 174.

56 Ibid., 43.
poise as "graceful carriage" and offered calisthenics as the only approach to proper body balance. One of his rules consisted of rising up slowly on the toes and simultaneously raising the chest. Lyon even indicated that the student should practice these "relaxing exercises" an entire year to accomplish the best results. In reading and speaking one would then be able to "stand as a warhorse, alert, ready in an instant to move." In public performance, however, his students were then advised to forget about the rules he had taught them.\footnote{57} J. Scott Clark, of Northwestern University, was convinced that physical exercises should not be indulged in immediately after eating nor in an atmosphere too cool or seriously vitiated.\footnote{58}

Waldo Selden Pratt, like many other elocution teachers, was of the opinion that physical training was a prerequisite to deriving any benefit from the study of elocution. In 1892 he wrote a small pamphlet entitled \textit{Outline Study-Notes in Elocution and Singing}, in which he expressed his disapproval of a variation of exercises but approved the repetition of a few as the most important factor contributing to their benefit. His aims in physical education were:

(1) That general physical education—such as is necessary to keep the body in a normal state of general efficiency—is best secured by often repeating a few well-chosen exercises, rather than by multiplying many different or varying exercises. If bodily efficiency can be cultivated by a comparatively compact routine, the chances are that it will more readily become a habit of the physical system.

\footnote{57} O. L. Lyon, \textit{Practical Work on Elocution}, (Steelville, Missouri: Crawford Mirror Print, 1890), 6-47.

than when pursued by methods that in themselves engross the mind's attention.

(2) That such physical education should aim, above all things, at establishing a true and hearty vitality. The object to be sought is not muscularity, or brisk circulation, or breathing power, or any other one department of the bodily functions, but a higher degree of life in the whole body, so that every function may be duly performed, so that the whole body may readily respond to the demands of the will, and so that the physical machinery may successfully withstand much general wear and tear.

(3) Hence, that such education should aim to maintain (or restore, if it has been lost) the normal elevated position in the trunk of the vital organs—the heart, the lungs, the stomach, and the liver—and to exercise the muscles surrounding and controlling these organs. Sedentary life always tends to lower this normal position, because it weakens the muscular supports on which the position depends. It tends to debilitate all the tissues around these organs, depriving them of "tone" and endurance. 59

Summary. In a new country, which was lacking in the proper training of physical culture, the pioneers had little access to the knowledge of correct poise and manner. Elocution teachers offered a variety of physical exercises to train them in "grace" and propriety. Designed to develop energetic vocal utterance, better health throughout the system and a socially attractive mode of bodily activity in the presence of others, these exercises contributed considerably to the refinement of society and national temper. It was a generally accepted principle that through calisthenics a speaker would be far superior in reading and speaking.

Bodily Expression. The problem of expression is a study of man—his habits, customs and peculiarities. In America during the nineteenth century there were numerous instances of unusual behavior

in expression among the people. Particularly in the display of eloquence a number of observers complained that the outward expressive agencies of innumerable readers and speakers were pitifully below par and as a result their performances were lacking in interest and were far from convincing.

William Faux records in his early Western travels his impression of the Reverend Mr. Devan, a self-taught minister in Indiana and a member of the convention to form the government of that state in 1816. His material wealth consisted of innumerable hogs and his land bore for him Indian corn. In Rev. Devan's preaching Faux observed a form of expression characteristic of many of the Baptist preachers at that time. He would take off his coat, waistcoat, and necktie, unbutton his shirt collar, and wildly throw up his arms. He made, according to the narrative, the maddest, most passionate expressions for the space of two hours "ever seen in a man professing sanity." Stuart reports "theatrical action" of a similar nature in other preachers of early America, while Hancock had seen "blustering demagogues" whose intemperate language and conduct often ended in fisticuffs during legislative debates in Congress. On the other hand, it was difficult for some to display any visible expression at all as is observed in a clipping from an


61 James Stuart, Three Years in North America, (Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 1833), II, 42.

old undated New York newspaper, *The Geneva Gazette*, reprinted in the *American Annals of Education and Instruction* for 1834. This article contained severe criticisms of the ineffective bodily expressions in the declamations of college students as revealed particularly on commencement occasions. From the clipping a striking example of the type of delivery prevalent in an unidentified college of the early century may be observed:

The compositions ranked above the ordinary character of such productions; and when examined in a purely intellectual point of view, it must be acknowledged that they were distinguished as developing minds were disciplined, careful in research, discriminating in judgment, refined in taste, deeply imbued with classic lore, and possessing highly cultivated imaginations. We are sorry, however, that we cannot award equal commendation to the delivery of those compositions. Although the subjects were admirably designed for the most splendid demonstrations of oratorical power, yet there was a coldness in their recitation that ran counter to the elevated and inspiring emotions which such pieces were so well calculated to awaken. We could discover no revelation of intense passion and spontaneous feeling in the speaker; no indignation at the cruelty of the tyrant . . . . The brow was calm and unclouded; the lips of eloquence, exhibited no concentrated expression, no mental illumination. There was some gesture, but it was neither free, nor bold, nor energetic . . . . We would merely add the question—Of what avail are arguments or persuasions which proceed from one who seems neither to feel, nor to believe what he is saying?

Henry Ward Beecher in recalling many of his experiences commented upon various speaking exhibitions he had witnessed:

... Shall I ask you to scrutinize the manner and methods that prevail in our courts—the everlasting monotone and seesaw? Shall I ask you to look at the intensity that raises itself to the highest pitch in the beginning, and that then, running in a screaming...

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monotone, wearies, if it does not affright, all that hear it... Or shall I ask you to consider the wild way in which speaking takes place in our political conflicts throughout the country—the bellowing of one, the shouting of another, the grotesqueness of a third, and the want of any given method, or any emotion, in almost all of them?  

That the art of expressing ideas was of social import there could be no doubt. The variations of habit in speakers therefore caught the attention of the elocution teachers and a diverse number of theories of bodily expression subsequently arose. Elocution teachers and speakers both realized that self-expression must possess a form that is pleasing to the audience. Whether the emotions are to be feigned, actually experienced, or entirely restrained seemed to be the question.

The ancient orators and rhetoricians in the age from Pericles to Quintilian had given much thought to the subject of moderation in emotional expression. For example, Cicero advocated "a mild manner of speaking" unless the occasion demanded "fiery oratory." Although shedding tears in the courtroom during speeches in his time was commonplace, Cicero did not endorse it.

Among the British rhetoricians and elocutionists who abound in examples, advice, and illustrations on emotional expression, is Joseph Priestley, a tutor in languages and Belles Lettres in England. In discussing the subject of bodily expression, he recognized that


65 Eleanor Gasparovich, A Study of the Treatment of Pronuntiatio by the Ancients, (M. A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, June, 1945), 57.

emotions produce belief; hence there is a need to cultivate the means of transmitting passion from one person to another. Like many of the rhetorical school he drew heavily upon Cicero for his ideas on speech and upheld the traditional doctrine that one must speak only from "real feelings" rather than cultivate or plan exercises which he believed would produce artificiality. In 1806 maintained that in speaking, "to weep on every tender emotion is a weakness." However, there were times when it could possibly be allowed, as in speeches on the subject of death, but then only sparingly.\textsuperscript{69} In the same year (1806), Sir Charles Bell of Edinburgh made one of the first attempts at a scientific analysis of expression in connection with the Fine Arts. Expression, he says, "raises affection, which dwells pleasantly or painfully on the memory."\textsuperscript{70} In his book he illustrated by pictures several forms of expression observed in man and animal.

In America a number of controversies existed in the attempt to discover a type of elocution which would have the maximum effectiveness in the social group. Henry Ware, Jr., a strong advocate of extemporaneous speaking in pulpit oratory and a follower of Whately's "natural school",\textsuperscript{71} in 1831 warned for example against

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{67} Joseph Priestley, \textit{A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism}, (London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1777), iii.
  \item \textsuperscript{68} Op. cit., 109.
  \item \textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{70} Sir Charles Bell, \textit{The Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression as Connected with the Fine Arts}, (London: New Edition, John Murray, 1847), 20.
  \item \textsuperscript{71} Henry Ware Jr., \textit{Hints on Extemporaneous Preaching}, (Boston: Third Edition, Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins, 1831), 30.
\end{itemize}
"display" in expression rather than "feeling" the thoughts. John F. Foot writing two years later stressed an opposite viewpoint by saying that a judicious speaker must master his natural motions and carefully practice those movements which arouse feelings of hatred, envy, fear, revenge and hope. These bodily expressions, he indicated, should please the eye of the spectator. Ebenezer Porter's The Rhetorical Reader, which was used by the Phi Kappa Literary Society of the University of Georgia as a reference text in 1835, maintained that intercourse of the soul is expressed unequivocally through the eye more than any other manner.

Making declamation a practical exercise rather than one of display was in the mind of the Reverend Timothy D. Stone, who in his lecture before the American Institute of Instruction in 1836 declared that:

... the object of a declamation should be distinctly explained to youthful speakers ... They ought not to feel that they declaim for display, as too many infantile orators are taught to do, for the gratification of a fond mother's vanity. Boys should be taken to public assemblies, and should be led to feel that a few more years will find them standing up and speaking in public meetings.

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72 Ibid., 95-96


74 This information may be found in the work itself which is located in the University of Georgia library. It was owned by John G. Shorter of Monticello, Georgia, who was a student according the 1834 university catalog.


For giving suggestions to students on the quality of their performances a number of methods were recommended. Stone advises, for instance, that "suitable criticism be made upon each speaker, at the close of his declamation," and that teachers illustrate the mistakes by imitation and example. In his *The Rhetorical Speaker*, he analyzes the awkwardness and embarrassment of an untrained speaker thus:

No one feels more awkwardly in a new situation than the young man who, for the first time, stands up before an audience to declaim. He generally knows that he is awkward. He is conscious that his motions are stiff, and that his whole appearance indicates to others something like affectation. Yet he knows nothing of any remedy for his embarrassment.

Other opinions on the subject of emotional expression are of interest. David Fosdick, Junior, a well-known preacher in the nineteenth century, in a speech before the American Institute of Instruction at Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1837, ventured to say that "the principal well-spring of eloquence in matter or manner is emotion." According to a contributor in *The Christian Examiner and Religious Miscellany*, in the same year (1846) it was pointed out that "the object of the elocution teacher is not to teach the student how to feign feelings, but how to make his manner more truly represent what he really feels . . . ." This anonymous writer declares it is the elocution teacher's responsibility "not (to) teach him arts, but to

77 Ibid., 140-141.
80 See *The Christian Examiner and Religious Miscellany*, XLI, (July, 1846), 49-56.
develop his powers of expression." Young ministers, and those inexperienced as public speakers, should be exceedingly careful not to contract awkward and disagreeable habits. In the pulpit, the angry look, the clenched fist, stamping with the foot, and beating the desk with the Bible, are practices "which cause the judicious to grieve."

J. C. Zachos of Cincinnati in his The New American Speaker written in 1851 adhered to a middle of the road conservative policy in the teaching of expression. Holding to the doctrine that one must surrender the mind totally to the impulse of nature, he nevertheless encouraged the teacher to direct the student in obtaining an earnest portrayal of feeling. An explaining the effective portrayal of the desired feeling he designed a number of rules and exemplified his principles with a series of simple illustrated emotional states.

Frobisher, who observed the awkwardness of expression among the people during his many years of itinerancy in the Midwest in the sixties, was confident that speakers could be trained in the propriety of expressing passion and favored the use of specific rules for such training. This was in exact opposition to William Pittenger's concepts in 1868.

81 Ibid.


While recognizing that many of the early Methodist preachers or "weeping prophets" who had little educational and oratorical training swayed the passions of the rural audiences but failed to convince men with "clear heads", he prescribed no specific rules for their instruction. His only comment was that speech is founded on thought and emotion.  

One of the foremost contributors to the study of expression was François Delsarte, a French teacher of oratory and music during the mid-century. Because he himself had left no written account of his system, his pupils were the only means of giving to posterity a knowledge of his principles, which unfortunately were subject to misinterpretation. Delsarte, according to a study by Shaver, devised a system of expression which was probably the most popular method of speech training in America during the last quarter of the century.  

Although Delsarte had accepted an invitation to visit America in 1871, he died before he could make the trip. Yet his system was skillfully explained to interested Americans in the lectures of Steele Mackaye, one of his favorite pupils. These public lectures delivered in Boston, at Harvard University and New York City were occasioned by an invitation extended from a number of representative Americans, some of whom were Henry W. Longfellow, William C. Bryant, Dr. V. A. P. Barnard, Henry W. Bellows, Dr. E. H. Chapin, the Rev. William R. Alger, Louis Agassiz, James T. Field, E. P. Whipple, Peter Cooper, J. Q. Ward, Marshall O. Roberts, Lester Wallack, John Gilbert, Lawrence Barrett,  


Walter Montgomery, John Brougham, R. S. Gifford, Vincenzo Botts, and a number of other prominent scholars and artists.

From MacKay's notes Shaver came to the conclusion that a trinity of movement is fundamental in the principles of Delsarte. The basic philosophy derived from the trinity was that all phenomena are analyzed into the vital, the mental and the moral—the body, mind and soul. The three movements represented are: (1) movement about a center called normal, which corresponds to the vital or life; (2) movement away from the center, or mental, which deals with mind; (3) movement toward the body, or moral, which deals with the soul. Price, in her study of the Alger notes, reveals that according to the Delsarte philosophy if man is to master his expressive agents, he must first have his bodily activity under control. By constant practice in pantomime and gesture the movements will be unconsciously incorporated into the being of the speaker. According to Blake, Delsarte held that physical control was more significant than mental control, "thus beginning a whole generation of hand-waving elocutionists." Shaver corroborates Blake's belief which he expresses in the following:

Thus gesture, which expresses the soul, is the highest form of expression and is more significant than inflection, the product of life, and words, the product of mind. Gesture thus becomes the hub of the Delsarte system.

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87 Wilbor, 282.
and it is in this field that the system makes its major contribution.91

Valuable light on the study of expression was disclosed in 1872 when Charles Darwin who referred a number of times to the work done by Sir Charles Ball in 1847, analyzed the outward and inward aspects of the emotions in both man and animal. To illustrate the bodily expression of emotions, he pictures man and animals in various emotional states. The three principles by which he accounted for most of these expressions are: I. The principle of serviceable associated habits, II. The principle of antithesis, III. The principle of the direct action of the nervous system on the body, independent, in large part, of habit. He further maintained that action accompanying the state of mind is recognized as expressive.92 His beliefs awakened a keen interest among some of the elocutionists and were of special significance in the scientific world. However, in the immediate years to follow, the effect of Darwin was not noticeable for the popular influence of the day in bodily expression continued to be Delsarte.

Differing from the followers of elocutionary methodology was James DeMille, who in his The Elements of Rhetoric renders his account of the best means of persuasion, which he says is through the effective use of words.93 DeMille followed somewhat Campbell's and Whately's attitudes of allowing nature to determine the course of bodily expression. Noting that the exhibition of feeling was a common occurrence


in the oratory of his times (1878), he made it clear that however strong passion of the orator may be "it should always be under control, so that after any outburst he may return to his argument, and make even his passion conduce to its enforcement." 94

In 1880 Robertson, who only partially accepted the system of Delsarte, stated that "the chief difficulty with this classification (mental, moral, and vital) lies in placing the affecational principle with the will or moral division." 95 His "decomposing exercises" whereby the individual parts of the body were "made more expressive" are as follows:

**Lower Limb Exercises**
1. Ankle freeing movement.
2. Horse pawing movement.
3. Circular movement from hip as a center.

**Hand and Wrist Freeing Exercises.**
1. Finger freeing movement.
2. Wrist freeing movement, with rising on the toes.
3. Wrist freeing movement, right, left, and in a circle.

**Upper Limb Exercises**
1. Fore arm freeing movement.
2. Shoulder freeing movement.
3. Arm swinging movement, forward and back eight times. 96

M. L'Abbe Delaumosne, a pupil of Delsarte, reflects his teacher's "aesthetic" interpretation of oratory. As a result of Delaumosne's close contact with Delsarte he naturally regards physical culture


important in the art of speaking. L'Abbe Delaumosne's interpretation reads thus:

The art of oratory, we repeat, is expressing mental phenomena by the play of the physical organs. It is the translation, the plastic form, the language of human nature. But man, the image of God, presents himself to us in three places: the sensitive, intellectual and moral.\(^7\)

H. M. Dickson of Chicago, who was also among the numerous adherents to the Delsarte system, explained that the advantage of this method of "physical culture" was the attainment of "more graceful, easy, and natural movements." Furthermore, "it aims to destroy the constriction which afflicts the large majority of men and women not only on the stage but also in social life." As for the aid of Delsarte's exercise to the mind, "it broadens and liberates the faculties of the mind, and the muscles of the body. . . ."\(^8\) Undoubtedly this bearing of the subject on social life is in large part why the system of Delsarte had wide appeal throughout America.

Paolo Mantegazza, a Florentine scientist who made the world his quarry in the search for material on the expressions of the human body, published his conclusions in his *La Physionomie et l'Expression des Sentiments* in 1835. Accepting Darwin's deductions based upon evolution, he gives in more detail, with a wealth of illustrations, the analyses of the expressive organs of the human body. In his judgment, physical expression, like language, presents many varieties of form; he further


states that bodily expression is basically a universal language which is also comprehensible among the lower animals.\textsuperscript{99} From this study much data on the outward expression, particularly of the face, were made available for the teacher of elocution.

Mantegazza's critical analysis was influential in Moses True Brown's philosophy of expression. In addition the theories of Russell, (his teacher who was a follower of Rush and Austin) Delsarte's triune philosophy and Darwin's three postulates were all inherent in Brown's conception of expression. His book, basically Delsartian in philosophy, was published in 1886 and entitled, \textit{The Synthetic Philosophy of Expression as applied to the Arts of Reading, Oratory, and Personation}. Brown, who was both the principal of the Boston School of Oratory and professor of Oratory at Tufts College, in his study chose the eye as the focal point of expression. He contends that:

\begin{quote}
The eye is the centre of expression both of the face and the body. Whatever sensation or emotion stirs the other centres, some single muscle, or group of muscles in the face, responds, and the eye becomes, as it were, the focal point toward which all the radial lines of feeling converge.\textsuperscript{100}
\end{quote}

Various exercises had been designed for the limbs and muscles of the body to make them more expressive. Like Brown, King believed that the "muscles of the eye are capable of wonderful development." He therefore formulated exercises for these organs. They were illustrated with "cuts" and are as follows:

1. Stand with face to front. Turn both eyes firmly to right as if looking at some object. Do not turn the head.


\textsuperscript{100} Moses True Brown, \textit{The Synthetic Philosophy of Expression as applied to the Arts of Reading, Oratory, and Personation}, (New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1886), 24.
Turn them to the left in like manner. Practice with counts, but allow them to keep position for some seconds each time.

2. Keeping the face still, raise the eyes as if to see some object above the head. Lower them as if to see the floor. Practice each movement several times. The following cuts will assist.\textsuperscript{101}

The wave of phrenology, which had been promulgated by such visiting lecturers as George Combe of Edinburgh, centered its philosophy on an analysis of mental character. According to this unscientific school of thought one could determine character by the shape and size of the various parts of the head, which was divided into as high as thirty-five portions. Each division was believed to relate to a feeling, sentiment or an intellectual faculty.\textsuperscript{102} The theory itself did not have any pronounced effect upon elocution. However, the Reverends Thomas A. and William Hyde did become influenced by this manner of determining the various traits of character. As a result they formulated a theory of expression in which they carefully described and separated the "elementary propensities of the human constitution." Their extraordinary concept of emotional expression which is vague and entirely impractical is in substance:

The objection may be raised against our system of oratory that it encourages emotional eloquence, or appeals to the passions rather than to the reason. In order to remove any misunderstanding on this head it ought to be remembered that we regard as emotions not only the feelings of hatred, love or revenge, but even certain states of the intellect; hence when we speak of emotions and passions we mean peculiar states

\textsuperscript{101} Byron W. King, \textit{Practice of Speech and Successful Selections}, (Pittsburgh: W. T. Nicholson, 1886), III.

of excitement of a propensity or intellectual faculty, not what are called by metaphysicians emotions and passions.  

According to a newspaper report from the *Boston Herald* probably in the seventies, five thousand students were taking elocution in Boston. Some of these were members of the discriminating social circles and were very generous patrons of elocution because of their “de-sire [sies] to appear in society.” A beautiful carriage, good speech and social ease were accomplishments to be prized.

In the training for grace, manners, appearance and poise the influence of Delsarte is again noteworthy. Evidence may be seen particularly in the teaching of Genevieve Lee Stebbins, who came from California to study under Mackay in the seventies and who became one of his most prominent students. Later she became principal of the New York School of Expression, an outstanding school for aesthetic and physical culture which proudly claimed a splendid theatre seating three thousand and a Recital Hall seating five hundred. For a time she was a teacher in the Boston School of Oratory, after which she became a special teacher and lecturer in the most prominent fashionable schools in the vicinity of New York.

Miss Genevieve Stebbins was probably one of the leading figures in the establishment of special exercises for gracefulness and health and the riddance of awkwardness among the "social" classes. In her

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104 From an undated *Boston Herald* newspaper clipping, reprinted by Edgar S. Werner in his article, "The Art of Elocution," *The Voice*, III, (October, 1881), 143.

105 Wilbor, 290.
Rage.—Rage is a more intense form of anger. The person in whose breast rage dwells seems to have his soul on edge.

**Language.**—The expression of rage is about the same as anger but more intensified. The face is purple or red with accumulated blood, and though the action of the heart is increased yet it often becomes so much impeded by great rage that the countenance becomes pale or white. The respiration is vigorously affected, the chest heaves and the dilated nostrils quiver. The gestures of the body are aggressive. The fists are clenched, the head held erect, the limbs are rigid, the arms are raised to strike the offender. All the muscles are violently strained. The eyes roll in fiery frenzy, the mouth is commonly closed with firmness, and the teeth grind together. The desire to strike sometimes becomes so uncontrollable that inanimate objects are dashed to the ground. When rage is awakened in a person who is weak or childish in intellect, it displays itself in a variety of useless gestures. Such persons roll on the ground, turning over and over, wringing and screaming, scratching, kicking, or biting everything within reach.

But sometimes the whole body is affected in a wholly different manner, especially in extreme rage. Then the body trembles, the lips are paralyzed, the voice sticks in the throat. The vocal organs quiver, stuttering sounds gurgle forth, the tones are loud, harsh, and discordant. In rapid utterance the mouth

*An illustration of the aspects of rage as described by Thomas and William Hyde, 154.*
book *Delsarte System of Dramatic Expression* she gives the following explanation of her program:

**PHYSIOLOGY** . . . . The School is fully equipped with anatomical manikins, arranged for dissection before the pupils, and a large series of costly Physiological Charts which supplement the gymnastic work.

**SWEDISH AND AESTHETIC GYMNASTICS.** Daily drills are given in each branch, the exercises being graded from the simple to complex movements, and the scientific principles of Physical and Psycho-Physical Culture thoroughly expounded.

**ARTISTIC STATUE POSEING** . . . . There is no sudden spasmodic transformation of the body. It is the natural evolution from the simple uniformed image to the most perfect representation of art. Every gradation, every motion from root to stem, branch and flower of the picture, is clearly discernible, and yet so subtle is the magnetic motion that like the prismatic glories of the rainbow, it is impossible to tell where one line ends or the next one begins.106

The complexity of her method in obtaining "expressional culture" may be deduced from her words below:

Beginning with inexpressive gymnastics for the body and singing exercises for the voice, my method has been to proceed from them to movements of grace, beauty or meaning and readings requiring thought and emotions. All the art-forms, carved, painted or seen, that possess these requirements have been adapted into my aesthetic system, which is progressive, advancing from the simple to the complex. At a certain stage of this work comes in statue-posing. Here let me quickly add that I do not mean tableaux with wigs and whitewash.

The statue-posing that I refer to is educational, leading on to pantomime and gesture. Thus you see that statue-posing occupies a transitional place. May I call your attention to the great importance of this study as the direct stepping-stone from meaningless physical training to expressional culture? The Greek gods are not expressive of individual mind but of universal ideas. They were carved to embody those splendid abstract laws of the universe—form, power, balance, rhythm, repose—in one word, beauty. In these statues we see represented the emotions of the gods. The practice of them gives ease, dignity and calm, removing all affectation. Can one affect rhythm, balance and power?

You may here ask, "Do all attain?" And I answer, "Yes, if they work and have artistic temperament and are normally built."

Again you may question, "Do they look like the statues?"
To this I answer emphatically, No! They look themselves,
obeying the laws of correspondence, repose, and rhythm. 107

In addition to the large number of students from varied professions who traveled from all parts of the country to learn grace and manner as well as bodily expression under accomplished tutors like Miss Stebbins, were the innumerable students who in turn organized their own private schools of elocution to meet the widespread demand for such training throughout the land. Popular favor for the Delsarte type of training as well as for other conventional schools of elocutionary training was overwhelming. Even as late as the early years of the current century, schools of more or less importance continued operating in smaller cities all over the country.

Among the followers of Delsarte was Mrs. W. M. Strother, whose Manual of Exercises in Elocution apparently was used as a reference text in the University of Virginia. 108 Mrs. Strother taught elocution privately in Lynchburg, Virginia, in the eighties. She agreed with a vast number of other elocution teachers of the Delsarte school that a healthy body was necessary for expression. However, she completely omitted calisthenics in her instruction and used her own version of the Delsarte exercises, as she interpreted them. Her explanation for this method of training is as follows:

The abrupt angular physical exercise, generally called calisthenics, are being laid aside, and instead of those violent, jerky movements, we have gradual, curved motions,


108 A copy may be found in the University of Virginia library.
so as to get the body into the habit of easy, graceful action.109

Edward B. Warman of New Jersey, who graduated with honors from the Boston School of Oratory and who studied Delsarte under Mackaye, became a proficient actor, reader, lecturer, author and teacher on all phases of elocution. An earnest advocate of Delsarte, displaying to his students a degree of energy seldom manifested by the teachers, he taught particularly well orthoepy and mental and physical culture. Practicing what he taught, Warman became known as outstanding in his readings and lectures, which were given with "a diversity of power".110 In teaching he believed strongly in revising and correcting improper mental and physical habits. The development of appropriate stance and position for declamations before public bodies was likewise given his careful attention.

To the ministerial students in the McCormick Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Chicago in the late eighties Warman applied Delsarte in the correction of awkwardness. This "difficulty" he said must be removed by the will. A number of pictured illustrations of good speaking postures were especially helpful in his book, Gestures and Attitudes. In his training procedure Warman required his students to stand against the wall to achieve "poise", after which he directed a number of "swaying" exercises. The use of a mirror was recommended to enable them to detect their own faults in bodily expression. Another


110 Wilbor, 291.
of his exercises was the shifting of the weight of the body alternately back and forth. 111

In addition to Warman, a number of other Delsartians filtered into the West. For example, Mrs. Katherine Westendorf organized a school of elocution in Cincinnati, in 1882 where she taught by the Delsarte plan. 112 In Denver, Ida Servin, a former lyceum artist taught Delsarte in the late eighties. In the meantime, Mrs. Edna Snell Poulson taught vocal and physical expression using his methods in her schools in both San Francisco and Oakland. Mrs. Evelyn M. Ludlum and Miss Mildred Ludlum used the Delsarte system of aesthetic expression in San Diego during the same period. 113

Among numerous other schools later in the century 114 which were influenced in whole or in part by the Delsarte methods of teaching poise and grace of movements, were Mme. Alberti's School of Expression in Boston, Minnie Swayne's private school in New York, Anne Morgan's elocution school of Chicago, the Soper School of Oratory and Delsarte in Chicago, 115 Lemaal B. C. Joseph's in New York City, Florence Adams' in Boston and Eleanor Georgen's in New York City. 116


112 See Advertisement in The Voice, IV, (December, 1882), 188.

113 See Advertisement in Wilbor, 383.

114 A number of these schools are unidentifiable as to their personnel. According to the Vindette-Reporter in Iowa City, Iowa for May 30, 1881, a Delsarte School of Expression was in operation at that time in Iowa City.


116 See Title page advertisement, Werner's Magazine, XVI, (August, 1894), 274.
Likewise the influence was noticeable in such garments as Delsarte waists, corsets and girdles which were produced by the Delsarte Manufacturing Company in New York and other similar concerns elsewhere.

Perhaps the most prolific writer of the latter part of the century to wield considerable influence and thought upon the subject of expression was a student of MacKaye, Samuel Silas Curry. Curry was a teacher, lecturer, and author of several textbooks on the subjects of expression, dramatic instinct, voice, and literary interpretation. Prior to the establishment of his own school of expression in Boston, he had the distinction in 1882 of being chosen to fill the position at Boston University left vacant by the death of Lewis B. Monroe. His new title was specifically designated "Snow Professor of Elocution and Oratory." In addition to these posts, Curry served as an instructor in elocution at Newton Theological Institution, Harvard University, Yale Divinity School, and as a teacher under Monroe in the School of Oratory. In his own School of Expression, organized in 1885, which was attended by students and teachers from all parts of the country, sixty-five courses divided into sixteen departments were offered. These departments are as follows:

I. Vocal Expression.  
II. Vocal Training.  
III. Phonology.  
IV. Organic Physical Training.  
V. Harmonic Physical Training.  
VI. Pantomimic Expression.  
VII. Literature.  
VIII. Shakespeare.  
IX. Art.  
X. Rendering.  
XI. Speaking.  
XII. Dramatic Training.  
XIII. Rhetoric and Composition.  
XIV. Philosophy of Expression.  
XV. Methods of Teaching.  
XVI. Training of Clergymen.

117 Ibid.  
119 Ibid.
As for expression, Curry repudiates the Delsartian method as being a system "artificial and untrue" which brings perversion and narrow views of nature to any one who gets within its constricting grasp.\footnote{120} Apparently his attitude departs from the teaching of outward graces and is somewhat associated with that of Whately, for according to his \textit{Foundations of Expression} "... all expression obeys the same law; it comes \textit{FROM WITHIN OUTWARD}, from the centre to the face; from a hidden source to outward manifestation."\footnote{121} Among the students who went West to teach and who were profoundly influenced by Curry was Byron King of Pittsburgh, who included the name of his instructor in his own school in 1886. King's school was known as the Curry School of Elocution and Dramatic Culture.\footnote{122} Later, however, this was supplanted by his own name. Noteworthy is the point that C. H. Woolbert in 1915 credited Curry as having been instrumental in formulating the "think the thought" school.\footnote{123}

A competitor of Curry, Charles Wesley Emerson, a physician who also claimed Monroe's mantle and who in 1889 named his school first after Monroe but later changed it to the Emerson College of Oratory, contributed a system of expressional pedagogy by which personality would be developed to its highest possibility.\footnote{124} At his school, which

\footnote{120 S. S. Curry, \textit{The Province of Expression}, A Search for Principles Underlying Adequate Methods of Developing Dramatic and Oratorical Delivery, (Boston: School of Expression, 1891), 360.}

\footnote{121 S. S. Curry, \textit{Foundations of Expression}, (Boston: The Expression Company, 1920), 10-11.}

\footnote{122 Op. cit., See Preface.}


\footnote{124 "Emerson College of Oratory," \textit{Werner's Magazine}, XVI, (April, 1894), 118.}
seemed to depart from extreme emphasis upon bodily action, it was
boasted that the main building was large enough to accommodate a
spacious office and a reception room. In addition, sixteen recita­
tion rooms and Berkeley Hall, which seated six hundred persons, were
all said to be in daily use. A large number of post-graduates, regular
students, Saturday pupils, special students and Summer students at­
tended the school, where three years were required to complete the
course and receive a diploma. Fifteen teachers, eight lecturers and
readers comprised the faculty. Nine departments were listed in the
regular three years' course:

I. Elocution.
II. Oratory.
III. Physical Culture.
IV. Dramatic Art and Criticism.
V. Rhetoric.
VI. English Literature.
VII. The Normal Department of Oratory.
VIII. The Normal Department of Singing.
IX. Vocal Physiology. 125

The "mental" philosophy of expression which Emerson practiced, as did
Carry, is explained below by Jessie Eldridge Southwick:

Dr. Emerson recognized that expression springs directly
from a concept of the mind. The expression is intensified
by the desire to communicate the thought; it is often ren­
dered dynamic by emotional concern, or by energy of purpose.
Dr. Emerson saw that dramatic expression would be greatly
enhanced by the reproduction of the natural cause or concept
and the sincere reaction in expression would carry an in­
fluence beyond the power of mere technique or imitation. 126

Summary. A variety of opinions were expressed by interested teach­
ers on the subject of bodily expression. Among the rhetoricians there

125 Ibid.

126 Jessie Eldridge Southwick, The Emerson Philosophy of Expres­
sion, (Boston: Boston Expression Company, Publishers, 1930), x.
were warnings against becoming overly emotional in speaking before public bodies, church and civic groups. Usually these teachers of rhetoric maintained that nature must be allowed to dictate the amount and kind of emotional feeling. With the elocution teachers a widespread opinion existed that inexpressive students could be taught through a number of techniques how to express themselves well through the universal language of the body. Sir Charles Bell, Darwin and Mantegazza were instrumental in analyzing and depicting emotional expression through a number of pictures. Delsarte was unquestionably a popular influence throughout the entire country, but toward the end of the century Curry repudiated his techniques and like Emerson taught the "think the thought" point of view in expression courses.

**Gesture.** The stimulus to emotional feeling may be effected by gesture, a significant function in the study of expression. Many evidences of a lack of skill in gesticulating existed in the early part of the century. Semmes, for example, recalls listening to Roger B. Taney, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who in his debates in the twenties at Annapolis, although giving a logically arranged argument, presented this visible impression:

> When Mr. Taney rose to speak, you saw a tall, square Shouldered man, flat breasted in a degree to be remarked upon, with a stoop that made his shoulders even more prominent, a face without one good feature, a mouth unusually large, in which were discolored and irregular teeth, the gums of which were visible when he smiled, dressed always in black, his clothes sitting ill upon him, his hands spare with projecting veins—in a word, a gaunt, ungainly man. His voice, too, was hollow, as the voice of one who was consumptive . . . . He used no gestures.

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In 1829 an editorialist in the *North American Review* commented somewhat upon the improper use of gesture. The reason for his remarks may be seen in the following:

... what a variety of gesture have we, from the arms, that sail about like the arms of a wind-mill, and with as little meaning, to the common sawing, and hammering, and punching, that suggest a doubt whether the man was not brought up to a different trade from that of speaking ... The countenance is dull, or distorted ... And the eye,—we refer now to the pulpit,—the eye wanders upon vacancy, or gazes strenuously upon nothing, or is fixed intently and sedulously upon the cushion, as if it were that "Velvet Cushion," which teemed with wondrous thoughts to the attentive Vicar; or the same organ, being lifted up, instantly seeks some pillar or post, on which it may conveniently rest itself.129

Bay in his historical study of the lawyers of Missouri recalls that Austin A. King, who migrated from Tennessee to Columbia, Missouri in the forties, "had a disagreeable voice, little imagination, and none of the graces of gesture ..."130

Among the actors in the South in the thirties Murdoch observed that the gestures of "measured formality called 'the old teapot style of acting,' were customary." One hand on the hip, the other extended and moving in curved lines, with a gradual descent to the side was a customary mode of gesturing.131

Despite these evidences of violations of good gesture, there were those of the rhetorical school who believed with Blair, that "it

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is not the business of a speaker to form to himself a certain set of
motions and gestures, which he thinks most becoming and agreeable
... ."132 He states positively that "... it is impossible by
means of any study to avoid their appearing stiff and forced."133
In contrast to this viewpoint by Blair there is Austin of the elocu­
tionist's school of thought in which he exerted a powerful influence
among American elocutionists, particularly in gesture. In his treatise,
he justifies his emphasis on gesture by explaining that "it is a uni­
versal language understood by those to whom language is unknown."134
It was this work of which William Russell told his student Moses T.
Brown, "here you will find the best treatment extant of the subject
of gesture."135

Among the first writers of the period of American elocutionary
training, with which this study is concerned, is Jonathan Barber, who
at Harvard in 1831 completed A Practical Treatise on Gesture. An ad­
erent of Austin, he used almost the same plates to illustrate what he
thought were good gestures as Austin had. In this small book Barber
presented a very detailed picture of what is required to perform ges­
tures properly. The philosophy he seems to follow is "that the more
perfect ... the exercise of the will is, over every part of the

132 Hugh Blair, Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres,
(Philadelphia: Published by James Kay, Jun. and Brother, 1829),
375.
133 Ibid.
135 Brown, 145.
body on which expression, as derived from gesture, depends, the more perfect will that expression be.”136

Abby Maury's *The Principles of Eloquence*, a French treatise, which was translated into English by J. N. Lake, was printed in America primarily for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In this work is shown the expediency of avoiding a theatrical performance. Moreover the book, which followed the natural school of thought, strongly urged the platform reader or speaker to refrain from striking the pulpit with the feet or hands.137

That all elocution teachers did not agree with Austin may be seen in the text of Lacey. In 1833 he pointed out the spirit and feeling of the writer should prompt and govern the action. Lacey believed that if emotion were absent in the speaker there would be no spirit, for "an orator without feeling is an object which nature abhors."138 Two years later Porter's *The Rhetorical Reader* developed the theory that gestures must be used with discrimination. Porter recommended indicating in the passage the type of gesture to use. For instance in the sentence, "The goodness of God is the source of all our blessings," Porter proposed that "when he (the declaimer) utters

136 Jonathan Barber, *A Practical Treatise on Gesture, Chiefly Abstracted from Austin's Chironomia; adapted to the Use of Students, and arranged according to the Method of Instruction in Harvard University*, (Cambridge: Hilliard and Brown, 1831), 1.

137 Abby Maury, *The Principles of Eloquence, Adapted to the Pulpit and the Bar*, Translated by J. N. Lake. (New York: Published by B. Waugh and T. Mason. For the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1833), 184.

the word *God*, (he) raises his eyes and his right hand; and when he utters the word *all*, (he) extends both hands.¹³⁹

Some elocutionists followed the middle-of-the-road policy in this matter of gesture. Epes Sargent, who adapted Knowles's *Elocutionist* "to the purposes of instruction" in the United States, made the following statement relative to the avoidance of either extreme in gesture:

> In civilized and polished countries, a profusion of gesture is to be avoided in public discourses; it should neither be minute or violent. The first is inconsistent with that absorption of thought which is supposed necessary in an intellectual address; the second is an outrage on the taste and feelings of the audience, and is apt to raise indignation and aversion.¹⁴⁰

In his *The Intermediate Standard Speaker* written in 1857 Sargent listed a number of specific rules for socially acceptable gestures and in addition included photographs of young men in various poses and gestures.¹⁴¹ He claimed that the motions of the arm must commence at the shoulders, not at the elbow; the upper arms should never come in contact with the sides of the body. Furthermore, he advocated that the right hand should be utilized more than the left in gesturing.¹⁴²

Comstock, who in his book *A System of Elocution* in 1845 had extracted the section on gesture from Austin,¹⁴³ included a large number of engraved figures with which to exemplify gestures and other bodily

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¹⁴¹ The use of illustrated figures, plates and photographs was a common device in the teaching of bodily expression.


activities. Graceful and appropriate gesture, he believed, "renders
total delivery far more pleasing and effective." A significant
point is that he used gesture in its broadest sense to mean "the various
positions and motions of the head, face, shoulders, arms, hands, fingers,
lower limbs, trunk, and of the feet." For the inexperienced readers
Comstock outlined three levels of progress to be attained. They are
defined below:

Before the student attempts to declaim, he should learn
to stand erect; to hold his book in a proper manner, and to
read correctly. He should then select some short piece, and
learn a set of gestures for its illustration by practicing
them in pantomime, after the teacher . . . . Lastly, he should
learn to combine the words and gestures, by repeating them
together, after the teacher. 

On the other hand, the consideration of the mental concept in
relation to gesture was suggested by North who, in referring to this
fundamental principle, says that it is "SIGNIFICANCE." This may be,
he said, "either of some wish or effort connected with the understand­
ing, or of some state of imagination or feeling." North in addition
advises an awkward speaker to drill privately rather than to seek the
aid of some instructor. He also was of the opinion that there
is a danger of artificiality in numerous rules and was skeptical of
this method of teaching.

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144 Ibid., 69.
145 Ibid.
146 Ibid., 184.
147 E. D. North, Practical Speaking, as Taught in Yale College,
148 Ibid., 35.
149 Ibid., 40-42.
The matter of various idiosyncrasies and vehemence in gesture caught the attention of Charles Dickens on his tour of America. He recalled a Reverend Taylor in Boston who during this time preached in a little chapel along the water front. His style of speaking was characterized by climactic gesturing as described in the following incident:

He handled his text in all kinds of ways, and twisted it into all manner of shapes; but always ingeniously, and with a rude eloquence, well adapted to the comprehension of his hearers. Sometimes, when much excited with his subject, he had an odd way of taking his great quart. Bible under his arm and pacing up and down the pulpit with it. . . . raising his hand higher, and higher at every repetition of the word so that he stood with it at last stretched above his head, regarding them in a strange, rapt manner, and pressing the book triumphantly to his breast, . . . .

Many elocution teachers advised against this practice of peculiar gesticulation. The Rev. Francis Russell, considered this form of gesturing a disagreeable fault and states that complete unrestraint in this connection "takes away all manly dignity." William H. Gilder indicated that numerous contemporary speakers were guilty of this breach of delivery. Thus he writes:

Many modern speakers offend by the vehemence of their gesticulation; indeed, the instruction which is given on gesture should often be occupied in reducing within the limits of grace, extravagant positions and movements. Robert Kidd, who lectured in the Mid-west after the mid-century at a number of teachers' institutes on the subject of elocution, like

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150 Charles Dickens, American Notes and Pictures from Italy, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), 50-51.
Boss inspired many to become teachers of elocution in the frontier. He used passages which were marked with italicized words to indicate the possibilities of gesture and suggested that the eye glance at the object prior to the execution of a gesture. Another practice Kidd described is the pronunciation of nearby objects while simultaneously extending the arm and pointing to those respectively named.

In the field of rhetoric the Reverend E. O. Haven, president of the University of Michigan in the eighteen sixties did not subscribe to the extreme reliance upon rules nor could he agree with Whately on his rigid stand against elocution. Like North he holds that students could achieve superior results by self practice. In the opinion of Haven the orator then would definitely not be trammelled by awkward habits. Yet he stated that no explanation was necessary for such gestures as pointing, looking upward or downward, striking with the hand or stamping with the foot.

Walter C. Lyman, who had come with the hordes of settlers into the west to teach elocution privately in Keokuk, Iowa, in 1846, was another of innumerable examples of itinerant elocution teachers who attracted a following by their remarkable command of voice and bodily

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153 Wilbor, 287.


156 Ibid., 365.

157 Wilbor, 281.
action. When but eighteen years of age he was induced by an elocution
class made up chiefly of clergymen and lawyers of Keokuk to give an
exhibition of his talent in a formal literary entertainment. The large
and critical audience was so enthusiastic that other performances were
requested throughout the state of Iowa. A number of engagements to
teach the students of Iowa schools followed, and Lyman became eminently
successful in winning both popularity and pecuniary gain. Prior to
the war he was called to teach elocution at Asbury University (Depauw).
From here he went into the Army as a volunteer. Following the Civil
War he resumed his professional teaching in elocution in St. Louis,
New York City and Chicago. 158

Lyman ascribed awkwardness in gesticulating to the lack of
natural grace in the individual and accordingly recommended "suitable
practice." He said:

... the arms and hands, in assuming and executing these
movements, will be graceful or awkward in proportion to
the natural grace or awkwardness of the gesticulator, and
in proportion to the character and amount of practice be­
stowed on improvement of gesture. It can be safely af­
irmed, that the person naturally most graceful, may be
made more graceful by proper practice; and the person
naturally most awkward, vastly improved by the same means. 159

Noting that many of his friends had doubted whether gesture could be
taught effectively, by way of a retort he published a second article
in the American Educational Monthly in which he offered a highly
mechanical exercise in gesture training. Lyman recommended that
getting the hands up and using them from the first would contribute
to ease, force, and grace. Afterwards it would be advisable, he says,

158 Ibid.
159 Walter C. Lyman, "Hints on the Education and Use of Gesture,"
to writhe the hands and fingers and "try to throw the fingers from the hands by strong and rapid shakings . . . ." "The object of the foregoing exercise is to give strength and pliability to the muscles and joints of the arms and hands." 160

Further examples of mechanical exercises are to be observed in the teaching of Allen A. Griffith. Griffith contends that much good is derived from practicing gesture in a class situation and suggests that the teacher act as a leader with the class following directions from a visual approach. "The ungraceful should be corrected and encouraged," he says. Following the principles of Comstock, he advocates gesture exercises to be executed in concert and repeated daily, until all the elementary principles have been mastered. Thereafter, the whole class would with profit "repeat after the teacher a whole selection, like the 'Charge of the Light Brigade,' . . . with appropriate gestures." To make certain that this instruction results in a natural performance, "the teacher will discourage all mannerism, affectation, or strutting." 161 Awkwardness of gesture can, in the belief of Griffith, be prevented. Thus he feels, as did Lyman, that,

The prevention of awkwardness, and a security of expressiveness and grace, may greatly depend on the natural and agreeable positions of the hands and fingers. Everyone knows that we can, with the hand, call or dismiss, invite or repel, threaten or supplicate, ask or deny, encourage or discourage, show joy or sorrow, detestation or


161 Allen Ayrault Griffith, Lessons in Elocution and Drill Book for Practice of the Principles of Vocal Physiology, and for Acquiring the Art of Elocution and Oratory, Comprising all the Essential Elements of Vocal Delivery and Gesture, for Schools, Colleges, the Pulpit, and Private Learners, (Chicago: Adams, Blackmer, and Lyon Publishing Company, 1872), 11.
fear, admiration or respect, and how much farther their power of expression may be extended is difficult to say.

Joseph A. Lyons of Notre Dame University, where at this time a special fee was being charged by the administration for a course in elocution, followed somewhat the principles of Griffith. He lists fourteen "functions of the hand" which are:

1. To define or indicate.
2. To affirm or deny.
3. To mould or detect.
4. To conceal or reveal.
5. To surrender or hold.
6. To accept or reject.
7. To inquire or acquire.
8. To support or protect.
9. To caress or assist.
10. To invite or repel.
11. To distribute or inclose.
12. To entreat or repel.
13. To picture or form a spiral.
14. To deny impatiently.

In directing platform speakers or artists, elocution teachers attached great importance to the coordination of the general outward movements of the body with what was the spoken word. Albert U. Bacon, who migrated from New England to the West to teach elocution in DePauw University in 1873 and subsequently in Chicago, believed the term gesture in its general sense meant "the various postures and motions of the body; as the head, shoulders, and trunk; the arms, hands and fingers; the lower limbs and feet."

However, in its specific sense, gesture


locution teachers referred to the term as dealing chiefly with arms and hands. In his system of gesture, which is basically Austin's, notations were used to illustrate in chart form the action of the gesture in relation to the entire body. Bacon upheld his methods with conviction:

It may appear to some that so much attention to the details of gesture as is recommended in this treatise is unnecessary or impracticable; that it will hinder the freedom of action, or interfere with the fluency of speech, or draw the mind of the speaker from his subject matter, or allure him from the main purpose of his discourse, or cause the hearer to observe the manner more than the matter. It may be well to remind those who imagine all or any of these objections, that the same attention is necessary in acquisition of every other branch pertaining to public speaking; that the orator is expected to frame his arguments with reference to the established rules of logic, arrange his thoughts according to the laws of rhetoric, construct his sentences with due regard to their grammatical government and agreement, give to every word its just pronunciation, and even to each letter its proper sound and full value; and that all these details are attended to during the most rapid utterance, and even in the vehemence of impassioned delivery . . . . And why should not the rules of elocution, including both voice and gesture, be added to the list, and observed in the same manner?166

Dale of Chicago in 1877, like Epes Sargent, explained in his small pamphlet that movement should proceed principally from the shoulders. He insisted moreover that one cultivate flexibility of the wrist joints since all the vitality of gestures is, he felt, imparted by a "graceful, natural motion of the wrist."167

On the west coast Chauvin declared emphatically that gestures should only be used when absolutely necessary. Very much a believer in good manners, he was of the opinion that grace of manner and

166 Ibid.
CHAPTER III.

NOTATION OF GESTURE.

The lines of gesture take three general directions—descending, horizontal, and ascending. Each of these has four subdivisions—front, oblique, lateral, and oblique backwards. The descending gestures carry the hand forty-five degrees below the horizontal line; the ascending, forty-five above. The points designated by the four subdivisions are also forty-five degrees apart. This entire system is represented in fig. 5. The vertical lines nearest the speaker (1, 1) are lines in front; the next lines—forty-five degrees to the right and left of these (2, 2) are the oblique; forty-five degrees farther are the lateral (3, 3); and back of these the same distance, the dotted lines (4, 4) are

Bason's mechanical notation of gesture derived from Austin, see Bacon, 40.
conviction always distinguish those who possess them. Likewise an agreeable impression and refinement of movement contribute greatly to the success of readers and speakers. Chauvin constantly emphasized to his students of the Far West that good breeding reflects in manner and speech and "that it is very easy to discern the gentleman in the speaker." 168

In the following year Remlap of Chicago declared that forceful gestures such as the fist or "sledge-hammer" motion "should be used in the expression of the most earnest, powerful, moving sentiments, where strong arguments are to be brought out . . . . " He added that "this gesture was a favorite one with Daniel Webster in those memorable debates with Haynes in the . . Senate . . . ." In the opinion of Remlap, "sledge-hammer" gestures were thus very appropriate and justified "in arguments with force." 169

In San Francisco Ross' concept of gesticulation was that "True gesture is largely the spontaneous outgrowth of the thought and feeling" and "is the first department of expression to which the attention of the student should be called." Ross ascribed to the theory that artificial and awkward movements of the arms signify that "flexibility of the muscles," is lacking. 170 To develop gesture, posture and movement he recommended a number of exercises and notations very similar

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168 Frank Lee Chauvin, Self Instructor in Reading and Public Speaking, (San Francisco: Cubery and Company, Steam Book and Job Printers, 1884), 53-54.


to Austin's and Comstock's. He also described specific gestures for the expression of various emotional states. 171

Summary. In directing the physical training of the body it may be observed that from the social standpoint much good was accomplished in overcoming awkwardness and ill manners. It must be remembered that physical education was largely absent in the schools of the day, and that the elocution teachers provided somewhat for this necessary part of the educational program during the century. The influence of elocutionary training in bodily expression in nineteenth century American life can by no means be adequately appraised. In the widespread rural districts and the smaller cities itinerant elocution teachers organized schools of elocution so that all might have the opportunity for the benefits of an expressive and healthy body.

A number of elocution teachers, emphasizing that visible action is a universal language which must meet with the entire approval of the existing social order, devised various systems of training the expressive agencies of the body. In so doing they primarily adapted schools of thought which had been formulated abroad. The methods used to develop the body were in many instances far too mechanical and artificially interpreted. Some elocution teachers believed that expression should be associated with the mental concept or the inward impulse. Among the teachers of elocution there appear to be a number of prominent ones who precisely stated that all socially unattractive gestures must be eliminated. As a result of their teachings the listening public was more favorably stimulated and subjected to less objectional exhibitions.

171 Ibid., 38-43.
CHAPTER V

The Decline of Elocution

The Grandiloquent Style. Throughout the ages when man has appeared before audiences often, like a showman, he has provided the spectators with an extravagant display of passion at the expense of true knowledge and dignity. Quintilian, for example, blamed many of the orators of his day for seeking to revel in the voluptuous style "in which everything is designed to charm the ears of the uneducated majority."¹ Caplan notes in the Latin panegyrics of the Empire the actual fostering of an ornamental style, excessive emphasis on display and the straining for reaction in the listener. This type of speaking was widely acclaimed in the eulogizing of living individuals in the festivals of Rome. The same tendency had existed in Greece, where the custom of praising the mighty deeds of the ancestors was received with intense interest during the national games and festivals.² Bevan blamed the Asiatics, who were particularly vain and ostentatious, for displaying a "showy" kind of eloquence rather than the more restrained style of oratory.³ The rhetorician Blair complained that there were instances in England of those who disgraced oratory and debased it below

¹ Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, H. E. Butler, Translator, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1933), Book X, 1. 43, 27.


its true standard in order to disguise or supply the want of matter and
to court the applause of the ignorant.4

America, being largely rural in its setting, was ideal for "a
profusion of flowery bombast."5 Those people of a rustic nature were
particularly easy victims of exploitation. The innumerable assemblages
of the pioneers showed unmistakable signs of being impressionable,
gullible and an easy prey for such "fiercely vehement" orators as George
McDuffie, "the pride of South Carolina," who could make "the bench, the
Bar, the jury, and the audience" weep during his court room speeches.6
It was the discriminating minority, upon observing such scenes as an
orator clouting the table, a preacher exhorting on some emotional theme
or a reader passionately reciting a selection, who objected to their
noise and fury. Scholars, like Rush, declared that this type of florid
elocution consisted of a melody other than that of the diatonic and
that it was founded on ignorance and passion of the unadulterated mind.7

Not only were violations of taste attributed to many members of
the bar and clergy, but in addition the legislators of Congress in the
early century were in an overwhelming majority of the "old-fashioned"
vehement type. Dickens in his visit to Congress in the forties asserted
positively in the following that the legislators were of this character:

4 Hugh Blair, Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, (Philadelphia: James Kay, Jr., and Brother, 1829), 10-11.


Did I see among them, the intelligence and refinement; the true, honest, patriotic heart of America? Here and there, were drops of its blood and life, but they scarcely coloured the stream of desperate adventurers which sets that way for profit and for pay. It is the game of these men, and of their profligate organs, to make the strife of politics so fierce and brutal, and so destructive of all self-respect in worthy men, that sensitive and delicateminded persons shall be kept aloof, and they, and such as they, be left to battle out their selfish views unchecked. And thus this lowest of all scrambling fights goes on, and they who in other countries would, from their intelligence and station, most aspire to make the laws, do here recoil the farthest from that degradation.8

A writer in The New Yorker magazine in 1841 observed that the violators of humility and restraint in speaking were often incompetent persons who lectured on trifling subjects, making superficial statements and wild theories.9 A professor of law in the Cincinnati School of Law in 1844 complained that he had heard jurors addressed as if they had neither feelings nor common sense, and were not sitting under the solemnity of an oath. He writes that he had also heard the adversaries personally assailed with vituperation instead of arguments as though the character of the counsel were the matter to be tried.10

That the grandiose manner was even characteristic of some educated ministers is evident in the delivery of one Joseph Cook, who after graduation from Yale in 1858 and after having received a doctor's degree in divinity at Andover, lectured in brilliant social circles in Boston and other cultural centers. He drew magnificent audiences as large as three

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8 Charles Dickens, American Notes and Pictures from Italy, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), 101.


thousand, in which were numbers of professors, ministers, lawyers, doctors, and authors -- all apparently appreciative and eager for his views on the relationship of religion, science and philosophy.11 After travelling over ten thousand miles giving lectures in this country, Cook went abroad where he received a warm welcome in Great Britain.

His manner of delivery is reported by Wilbor:

When he steps upon the platform to address an audience, his first gesture is to throw his arms out and take up his sleeves, as if he were going to pitch into his audience as well as into his subject. He has a habit of elevating his shaggy eyebrows and showing the whites of his mild blue eyes in a very fierce way. Soon a smile lightens his features and a salient thrust at some social abuse is sharpened by poignant humor. To emphasize a point, he will stamp the floor with telling effect. His nervous temperament comes into full play, and all the weight of his ponderous body is thrown into the controversial combat. The intensity of his statements is irresistible, and he carries his audience to the finish and dismisses them amid a whirlwind of applause. With a robust nature, exalted purpose, indomitable will, and vigorous speech, he has proved the mightiest champion that Christianity has had on the lecture platform.12

The fact that such exhibitions continued is no doubt an indication that the level of American taste was low, that the average man craved excitement and that repose was his aversion.

On the stage extravagance and rant were frequently found to be better passports to popular favor than the more legitimate qualifications. Schoonover illustrates this condition by recounting how on the west coast in the fifties entertainment-hungry gold-diggers would pay any average-looking woman a hundred dollars a month to perform "fairly well."13


12 Ibid.

Farnham adds that even entertainment at its worst was given to full if not the most appreciative audiences in California in 1856. Hancock relates that some English actors have sought and found in America the appreciation they had failed to meet at home. He states further that "bad" actors are so much in the majority that one of merely average merit stands a fair chance of becoming a star of the first magnitude. According to a New York newspaper of the times, the theaters were so crowded every night that one was hardly able to secure a seat. People were hungry for entertainment and did not even look to see or read the bill, but marched blindly in, content to take whatever entertainment there was in store for them.

In the opinion of Pond this taste for entertainment, particularly after the Civil War, resulted in a change in the type of lyceum programs. Instead of the traditional informative lectures, speakers were compelled to illustrate their speeches with pictures. Hurlbut substantiates this trend by stating that when lectures were accompanied by illustrated drawings the performances inclined toward the theatrical. Early in the seventies Farquhar also observed this change in the lyceum exercises:

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16 Ibid., 206
17 Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, January 21, 1865.
According to Hoeltje, the lecture system, which had been Iowa's method of obtaining culture, was dwindling in importance. Approximately beginning in the seventies, serious discussion was giving way to increasing concessions of entertainment. Pond gives evidence that people were liberal in their patronage of the new lyceum and chautauquas. However, the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan rendered the first hard blow to the lecturers. Following in the musical trend were the innumerable concerts by current artists among whom were Ole Bull, Mme. Camilla Urso, Adelaide Phillips and Tom Karl. Although the entertainment field was supplanting many of the lecturers and readers it did not by any means entirely take their place. Rather it placed new demands on their proficiency. Professor Thomas Skinner, a professor of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology in the Union Theological Seminary in New York and teacher of elocution in Andover Theological Seminary near the end of the century, noted that changing social conditions required a new style of preaching. The substance of his observation is:


The mode of preaching which prevailed at the beginning of the nineteenth century could not have been retained entirely unchanged; the renovating power, which has been changing all things in science, in art, in the physical, social and civil life of man, has, of necessity, been felt by the pulpit, the central instrumentality in human history. Preaching, on the whole, has consequently been advancing, together with the general progress of society.23

The practice of restraint to maintain church attendance was commented upon in 1888 by a physician whose name was G. D. Stahley:

To interest does not mean to entertain. "Smartness," so-called, is nowhere so out of place as in the pulpit. Eloquency eccentricities, theatrical postures, gymnastic contortions, the odd, the ludicrous, the sensational, all these things, though it make the unskillful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve.24

As the country developed, communications improved, towns grew, public schools increased and the pattern of living became less exclusively rural, the popular taste in preaching became, according to Nottingham, more "sophisticated." She pointed to the founding of Indiana Asbury, now DePauw University, by the Methodists in 1837 as one of the many institutions instrumental in meeting the new demands for better educated ministers. The gulf between the "old-style" ministers and the "new-style" therefore became intensified.25

Summary. The grandiloquent style characterized much of the public speaking of the time. Although it is to be expected that those whose knowledge was limited would indulge in showmanship to attract attention, some of the more educated and prominent likewise chose a

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grandiose and extravagant delivery. The public accepted such oratory and also the exaggerated acting and entertainment in the theatre. As people experienced the influences of education and culture, however, their tastes became more refined. In order to please a more discriminating people, public speakers and entertainers learned they could not substitute display for ability.

**Criticisms Concerning Elocution Techniques.** In the training of speakers and readers there were a number of teachers who opposed the effusive style. However, it was unfortunate that within the ranks of the elocution teachers themselves ample signs of artificial display were noticeable. The scholars in the profession as well as the rhetoricians violently objected to these inferior methods of teaching.

As early as the time of Christ or even before there have been evidences of inferior teachers, who have done much harm to the other members of their profession as well as to the field itself. Quintilian, taking note of this circumstance, was of the opinion that training speakers was not a matter of a small number of lessons set apart from other courses of instruction. To him it involved a lifetime of education. In his opinion declamation had degenerated because the teachers had allowed corruption to develop in oratory through their own extravagance and ignorance of method. Following this ancient period were fifteen centuries of teaching the rhetoric of embellishment. Even the classical revival of the seventeenth century did not entirely abolish such practices. Whately, in 1828, was extremely bitter over the attempt of teachers to supply the students with rules and ventured to say

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27 William Phillips Sandford, *English Theories of Public Address, 1520-1838*, (Columbus, Ohio: Published by H. L. Hedrick, 1938), 70.
that those pupils who were subjected to this form of training would be "spoiled."  

Rush, in America, was indignant over the inadequate preparation of teachers and the inferior training methods in elocution. Kirkham in 1835 also blamed the poor elocution of the students of his day on the "lamentable" deficiency of the teachers' knowledge of the subject. North at Yale complained that the teaching load was too heavy for adequate work and that short and hurried lessons were the result. Gummere declared that a number of itinerant elocution teachers of his day were too ignorant to teach the subject.

Another basic reason for the decline of the popularity of elocutionary training was without doubt the misinterpretation and mechanization of the theories of Rush, Delsarte and others whose views were never intended as the basis of a mechanical system.

Some, on the other hand, blamed the whole difficulty of the failures of elocution upon the detailed systems and advocated simplifying the rules. One adherent to this policy was Fertich, who decries the elaborate methods in the following passage:

The writer is aware that there is much that can be said about the theory of elocution, that is not in this book; but

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it was not the intention to confuse the student with a system of hair-splitting dissertations which would avail him nothing in practice. Hence, allusions to such matters as "single falling wave," "double rising wave," "semi-tonic melody," "single and double antithesis," "expulsive radical stress," etc., have been purposely omitted.33

According to an anonymous editorialist in The Nation in 1878 the tones and gestures had been cultivated too deliberately by the students in the interstate oratorical contest held in St. Louis of that year. As a result of these overly mechanized performances the subject matter, which was not of a contemporary nature, seemed thin and commonplace.34

It was such training bearing the ill-advised and questionable form of elocution that brought upon the profession a great deal of rebuke and sharp criticism. Stratsbury in the following quotation complains, as did Fertich, that those elocution books which contained numerous rules and detailed instructions were the chief responsibility for a lack of interest in the subject in the schools. He observes:

The subject has been too long neglected in our public schools, and it is partly owing to the fact that in most books which treat of the subject of elocution now before the public, there is such a wearisome minuteness of detail, and multiplication of rules, that it is hardly possible to remember them much less put them to any practical use.35

Robertson detects weakness in the way elocution was taught. He says:

The subject of elocution has been taught in such an unscientific, mechanical, and imitative manner by many of its exponents, that it has not fully commended itself to the thoughtful consideration of the educated classes of society.36

33 W. H. Fertich, An Instructive Elocution: Designed especially for teachers and private learners, (Muncie, Indiana: Published by the author, 1876), 4.


Moses True Brown, trying to clarify the prevailing attitude toward elocution, stated in a lecture that "those many thinking and reasonable persons who reproach elocution in the person of some roaring and gesticulating public reader," have in mind not the elocutionist, but the "yelling elocutionist,"—one who sends out a very small message with a big voice." He accused elocution teachers of continually copying the methods of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century English elocutionists, instead of developing new principles in their field. Actually, in his letter to Miss Hamlin in 1896, he apparently overlooks the influence of Whately and Delsarte, whom he himself followed. In his opinion:

And this is how elocution stands to-day in America! Ninety-nine out of one hundred of the professional teachers of elocution are busy with the threadbare technique of the English elocutionists. There is no American book on elocution or gesture to-day that is not a weakened transcript of Steele, Sheridan, or Walker; Vandenhoff or Bell for vocal treatment; and of Austin for gesture. The only departure, for these more than one hundred years from the English rout, was that made by James E. Murdoch, who, forty years ago, then a young elocutionist, carried the torch lighted with new fire by Dr. James Rush of Philadelphia . . .

A number of elocutionary teachers were guilty of actually aiding and abetting excesses in expression and utterly disregarding logical appeal. This was true for example in the instruction of Charles Wiley, who held the opinion that "the student should always have his mind so wrought up to the proper pitch in which the passion should be rendered, that he may . . . deliver it (the piece) correctly." He indicated that it took students several hours to overcome the reactions from these

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emotions. J. Madison Watson in 1878, who spoke of expression as being "the soul of elocution," also adhered to the use of extreme emotional effect to arouse the dormant passions by the "magic and irresistible power" of elocution.

Evidences to indicate however that not all elocutionary teachers were exponents of emotional display is observed in the remarks of Vertich, who said one must "avoid mistaking rant and roar for good elocution." Illustrating his contention he firmly declares:

Some professional elocutionists make a special hobby of such passages as express anger, excitement, command, horror, etc.; and by their example and teaching lead the student to suppose that the more noise he makes, the better he is succeeding. It is important to know, in the beginning, that there is a vast difference between noise and good expression. A peculiarly coarse and thundering tone of voice is not essential in good elocution.

That a lack of restraint was practiced in the recitations of some professional teachers of elocution themselves before students is evident in the case of a Professor Booth who was illustrating "expression" before a law class at the State University of Iowa in 1883. According to the student newspaper, The Vidette-Reporter:

Last Tuesday the second division of the class in elocution had a pleasant and rare treat by Professor Booth in a rendition of Anthony's closing remarks over Caesar's dead body. After the usual exercises and criticisms, simply as illustrating a particular sentiment, he read that selection, and so thoroughly did he enter into the spirit of Anthony in voice and feeling that copious tears flowed down his cheeks, while the effect on the class was surprising.

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42 The Vidette-Reporter, March 3, 1883.
The scholarly work of Alexander Melville Bell was a valuable force in the attainment of recognition for elocution. Holding strongly to the fact that elocution should fill a place "in the curriculum of education," he stated that the chief source of its neglect in higher institutions of learning was a misunderstanding of the study caused by the number of unworthy books on the subject. Bell also cited the practice of too many teachers making "an idle display in Recitation the chief, if not the only, end of their instruction."\(^{43}\)

Wilber reports that Helen Potter, an itinerant reader and teacher of elocution in New England, the South, the Mid-West and the Far West, had "sudden changes and transitions, bell-like tones, and all kinds of ventriloquial effects."\(^{44}\) Her extreme manifestations, although interesting, were too exaggerated to be in good taste.

Robert I. Fulton was one among many elocutionists who deplored the low level of some performers who called themselves elocutionists. In an address before the First National Association of Elocutionists held in New York in 1892, he describes the new school of action to which elocution was lowering itself thus:

... let us look into its characteristics and peculiarities. It contains a large amount of burnt cork-ism, startling effects, and "cyclonic" realism. Its representatives never lose an opportunity to make a gesture, a striking attitude, or a harrowing facial contortion. They personate everything from the merest description to legitimate personation, and then they "let slip the dogs of war" and overact that personation to a degree that is painful to the audience. They leave nothing to the imagination. If they speak of anyone's eyes, or mouth, or nose or hair, or heart, they make gestures


referring to these parts of their physical organism. If they casually speak of Hercules they must needs strike an attitude of strength. They go further and carry this vice into vocal expression and buzz like a bee, moan like the wind, howl like a dog, and roar like the ocean. It might seem that these statements are exaggerated, but many of you teachers will testify that they are true; for similar cases to those I shall use for illustration have come under your own observation.45

To illustrate his point further, Fulton cited a performer in a church recital in Springfield, Illinois, that he had attended in 1878:

Fifteen years ago I went some twenty miles to hear a lady, who has since become one of our leading actresses, give a recital in a church in Springfield, Illinois. Among other things she recited a selection which we may call the "Sweet Violets" of elocution, a selection familiar to all of us, "Curfew Must Not Ring To-night." When she came to the words, "As she springe and grasps it finely," I think she must have jumped two feet above the rostrum, and grasped at an imaginary bell clapper. She came down in good shape, without disarranging her long train which the fashion imposed upon ladies at that time. As a piece of expression it was too realistic for truth, but as a gymnastic performance it was very fine.46

George B. Rynson explains his impression of the customary elocution performer in the following:

He holds forth in country towns and people go to see him as they do to see the bearded lady. He imitates ducks, geese, the sawing of boards, etc. People will pay to see an exhibition of personal deformities; they wish to be startled, to see something out of common; he supplies the means.

The elocutionist is doing everything at the present day to bring himself before the public and to eke out an existence. He lectures on psychology, art and literature. He teaches physical culture, extempore speaking and argumentation. He reads Shakespeare if it is desired, if not he regales his hearers with "The Face on the Barroom Floor." In fact, few have positions so assured as to enable them to do what their tastes dictate. A reader of wide reputation in certain districts, after an evening of trash, said to me:

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46 Ibid.
"I'm sick of the whole business."
"You can read fine literature," said I, "for I heard you years ago."
"Ah! I tried that for years, but they didn't want to hear me; they let me starve. Now they pay me $50 a night, and just listen to their applause!"

Numerous other elocution teachers made relevant comments on the current disrepute of elocution. John Murray was among a number in the profession who advocated a change in the name, "elocution," and said "it would be well if the word 'elocution' could be blotted from the dictionaries . . . because it is so persistently misunderstood."  

Reverend J. M. Buckley, editor of the New York Christian Advocate, in a lecture before the Chautauqua Assembly in July 1889, declared that the profession had been lowered in the estimation of the people "because most of the teachers of elocution have the secret opinion . . . that they alone, understood the true principles of elocution." Buckley also observed that some elocution teachers did "not hesitate to say when they become familiar with their most proficient pupils, that there is an element of quackery in all except themselves."  

A protest against certain private school procedures was made by F. Townsend Southwick, principal of the New York School of Expression in the latter part of the century. His objection concerned the granting of degrees by "certain unnamed schools" in elocution and oratory for a small number of lessons whose total price was low. He relates the following personal experience:  

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I received the other day a circular from a school of which I knew absolutely nothing, of whose pupils I have never heard aught that was either good, bad or indifferent, which kindly offers to give to graduates of other schools of like standing the degree of "Bachelor of Oratory," on condition that 50 private lessons are taken at the school presumably of the principal. The cost of said lessons is $100, a mere bagatelle, of course, when we consider the commercial value of so exalted a dignity. 50

Catherine B. LeRow blamed the ineffectiveness of the current methods upon the early lack of training. She writes that,

... almost all elocutionary training is undertaken too late in the pupil's life for its results, many times, to be otherwise than artificial, and, consequently, mechanical, disagreeable, and suggestive of false, exaggerated and distorted art. True elocutionary training begins with the child's enunciation of the words of his first simple reading-lesson, or, in fact, of any other lesson. It is during the first half-dozen years of his school life that he forms either the right or the wrong habit of sitting, standing, articulating, singing, reciting, reading. 51

In an "indignation meeting" held in Metzerott Hall in the mid-nineties, pupils and alumni of the Martyn College of Oratory in Washington presented their grievances regarding the school's practices. A list of caustic questions were drawn up and sent to the faculty. Among them were the following which point clearly to irregularities in the operation of this private school:

1. Why has the college so many names?
2. Why was a summer course in elocution advertised over the country and then not held?
3. Why are two catalogues published, one for circulation in Washington and one for out-of-town circulation?
4. Why are out-of-town catalogues different from city catalogues?
5. Why are the names of the faculty given in the out-of-town catalogue and not in the catalogue for Washington?


6. Why are the names of people placed in the catalogue as members of the faculty without the knowledge or consent of such persons; especially when such persons positively decline to be in any way connected with the college?

7. Why did the eighty entertainments, lectures, etc., promised as a part of the course for 1893-94 never take place? Why did the promised pamphlets fail to materialize? Why a great many other things promised in the course but not fulfilled?

8. Is Webster Edgerly's standing in the dramatic profession such as to enable him to assist meritorious pupils in securing positions in the profession? Has his influence ever been instrumental in securing positions for any of his pupils either as teachers or on the stage?

9. Why does Webster Edgerly (Everett Ralston), in his circulars advertising his Health Club, "positively guarantee" to permanently cure diseases which the medical profession have pronounced incurable?

10. Why were diplomas refused the senior class?

11. Why was no explanation offered for such refusal?

12. Why did the commencement notice in the Washington Post lead the public to believe that all the pupils participating in the entertainment were graduates? Who wrote the notice?

Carolyn Moody Gerrish in an article published in Werner's Magazine, in 1894, wrote that the disrespect for the subject of elocution was strictly a fault of the elocution teachers themselves and that through them "alone must come amendment of the wrong belief." From Henry G. Hawn comes the accusation that the lyceum bureaus were enrolling many inferior performers who were "nothing more than entertainers, story tellers, jesters." Some of these, according to Mr. Hawn, were illiterate and without culture. He reported that the ill-feeling toward the term elocution caused elocution schools to look for other nomenclatures


for their profession and cites therefore such words as "Expression,"
"Dramatic Art," and "Aesthetic Criticism" as names which were substi­
tuted for "elocution."\footnote{Ibid.}

A. H. Coar blames the French school begun by Delsarte for
artificiality, insincerity, and exhibitionism in the training of
preachers. This method of instruction, he says, is of a low level.
Yet when students condemn elocution, he concludes it is because they
have known only the wrong kind.\footnote{A. H. Coar, "Elocution in Theological Schools," \textit{Expression}, IV, (December, 1897), 17-22.}
Mme. Ida Serven, who had taught
Delsarte in Denver, stated that she "hoped Delsarte as taught in this
country will die . . . ."\footnote{"St. Louis Convention of Elocutionists," \textit{Werner's Magazine}, XXV, (August, 1900), 534-550.}

Alfred Ayres, in his study concerning the lack of respect for
elocution, not only ventured to say that the reason for this unfavorable
impression was the inferior methods used, but he also calls attention
to "the self-called teachers of elocution, nineteen out of twenty of
them, who are worse than their methods."\footnote{Alfred Ayres (J. Z. Osmun), \textit{The Essentials of Elocution}. (New York: New Edition, Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1897), 56.} Upon witnessing the generous
applause given to "a young woman from the West, who gave . . . a broadly
humorous sketch . . . scarcely within the province of elocutionary art
. . ." by elocution teachers at the National Association of Elocutionists
in 1892, he concludes that "elocutionists, taken as we find them, do
not know good reading from bad." He further singles out Murdoch, whom
he refers to as a "chanter", and says that his school of elocution "has
done infinite harm" because of too much emphasis upon the cultivation of tones.\(^5^9\)  

S. H. Clark, who was an outstanding reader before numerous audiences of the latter part of the century and early twentieth, had a great deal to say about the ills of the profession. He was primarily convinced that the wrong emphasis was used by many teachers, the mistake being that "manner" was placed before "matter." As a result, in the "old elocution" the parts of the body were treated as such and not coordinated into the whole study of man.\(^6^0\)  

From a speech delivered by Clark at the National Association of Elocutionists in 1897, he reached a further conclusion in regard to faulty methods. The speaker, he says, does not have as close a relationship to music as had previously been thought. "The melody, the increase and decrease in the volume of the voice, are largely instinctive manifestations of the speaker's mind." His question is: "Why, then, does the speaker need to be trained as the singer must be?"\(^6^1\) In addition he directs his remarks to the exponents of Delsarte, some of whom were in his mind incorrect interpreters of the latter's philosophy of expression. Thereupon he observes:  

I desire to insist on this point: Most teachers of so-called "Delsarte" are a great deal more mechanical than those whose teaching of Rush and Austin they laugh at so loudly. They make exactly the same mistake as do those who, failing to understand that Rush and Austin did not pretend to invent a method of teaching, but to present the science side of expression, have reduced their science

\(^{5^9}\) Ibid., 68-71.  


to a question of mere mechanics. I firmly believe that the mechanical teachers of gesture have done more harm by their silly spirals in a few years, than all the mechanical voice-culturists have done in a century. Remember, I don't mean that all teachers of Delsarte do this. In fact, no one who really understands Delsarte's philosophy can possibly teach in a mechanical fashion. I refer here to those who think that all of Delsarte is summed up in a lot of posing and gesturing exercises.\textsuperscript{62}

In a third article Clark points sharply to other weaknesses in some of the prevailing methods of elocution. His arguments are as follows:

Another survival of the pioneer days of elocution is the method of teaching diaphragmatic breathing. Pupils are found practicing with all their might to ruin their breath-control by protruding the stomach to its utmost extent. This is a serious error. . . . The present method among so many elocution teachers creates a hollow, pompous, affected, soulless, meaningless quality, which is the laughing-stock of cultured audiences.

Furthermore, pupils should know that troches, lemons, eggs, and other agents for clearing the voice are well-nigh useless. They do not reach the cords, and serve at best only to moisten the lips, palate, and tongue . . . .

Last of all, I would have the student test carefully the time-worn admonition, to avoid eating before reading. It is certainly inadvisable to indulge in a hearty meal immediately before using the voice; but my own experience with that of many readers and singers with whom I have discussed the problem teach plainly that the best work can not be expected unless there is food in the stomach. I think that a hearty, plain meal, finished within ninety minutes, or even less, of the opening of the program, is absolutely necessary for one who is to give an evening of readings.\textsuperscript{63}

Finally, regarding the "so-called elocution" teacher he points out unreservedly:

The most severe criticism that can be brought against the average teacher of so-called elocution is that he teaches all that is really valuable in his method in six months (to say nothing of the bad teaching he mixes with it), and after that, he confines his attention to teaching

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{63} S. H. Clark, "Elocutionary Derelicts," Werner's Magazine, XXV, (June, 1900), 378-380.
the pupil "pieces." He may, if he is adroit, succeed in attenuating his knowledge, and manage to spread it out over a year, but the bright student soon perceives the flimsiness of this instruction, and starts out in search of better tuition, while the duller pupil contents himself in spending another year, so as to get his diploma by means of which he can foist himself upon backwoods audiences.64

Dan Millikin recognized as did so many others that the numerous ignorant methods produced objectionable results. He noted that elocutionists "train out all that is good and physiological and artistic . . . ." Accordingly, Millikin emphasizes that "there can not be anything more odious" than a method which "intensifies the speaker's self-consciousness by prescribing set gaits, poses, gestures and tones."65

More criticism was hurled at the Delsartian followers by Ely, who found that their elocutionary methods were not closely associated with the "mental relations." The methods in elocution, Ely declared, cannot be scientific without a coordination of the laws of the sciences in the study of voice and body.66 Francis Joseph Brown and Miriam Williams Brown, teachers of elocution in the Southern Normal School of Oratory in Hamilton College, Lexington, Kentucky, like Hynson accused many performers of resorting to mediocre performances and "of being affected, of posing and striking attitudes on the platform." Such elocutionists were desirous of attracting attention to gesture just as they would display "a pretty arm or pretty rings." To these exhibitionists "a beautiful dress is more important than a beautiful

64 Ibid.


thought." In other words, numerous performers simply attempted to "display their charms." 67

Summary. Whenever speaking and reading have been taught, the most discriminating have complained of inefficient teaching methods. Many American elocution teachers discerned various causes for the frequent failures of elocutionary instruction. It was claimed that too many teachers were unqualified and unprepared to teach the subject. They therefore could not distinguish a good from a bad performance. In addition, methods and books were censured for being too detailed, too mechanical or too involved. In some instances it was charged that Rush, Austin and Delsarte had been misunderstood and therefore misapplied. At the same time the questionable monetary practices of many of the private schools came in for their share of criticism.

In the midst of all this disparaging testimony among the elocutionists themselves, a few possessed insight enough to recognize that the study of elocution was worthy and could be taught by teachers possessing the necessary qualifications and employing better methods, rather than merely using exhibitory techniques.

The National Association of Elocutionists. Even though the methods of a number of elocution teachers and their students were being heavily criticized by scholars in the field, the matter did not rest at that point. A growing realization that drastic measures had to be taken in order to salvage the study of elocution from complete obliteration caused various responsible teachers to seek a means of sharing their viewpoints and affiliating with educational institutions.

An important step forward in the coordination of plans and principles was taken when the elocution teachers decided to organize on a national scale. Through the initial appeal of Kate S. Hamlin of Troy, New York, in a letter published in The Voice Magazine in 1882, an effort was started. The following excerpt from her letter indicates the benefits which could be derived from such a move if the elocutionists would unite:

I have experienced a hunger for nourishment in order to facilitate my own growth. Many of us are apart from others of our profession, and, during the working year, we are obliged to remain so. It has occurred to me that the teachers of elocution might do something to increase their usefulness, by enlarging their views, and thereby gradually elevating the standard of their work in the communities wherein their lots are cast. Could a convention be called in which the leading elocutionists should take part, for a week in the summer, where should be given lectures in the various departments of oratory, or a regular school be opened in some central locality for two, three, or four weeks in the summer. Would it not be an excellent thing?  

According to an editorial on the subject, the matter of organization was debated among elocutionists for a period of nearly ten years. A large number of letters were published in Werner's Magazine favoring the plan to unite on a national basis. Alexander M. Bell was in favor of the elocutionists meeting but not for declamatory display. He desired a discussion devoted to the theory of elocution and the science of elocutionary training. Griffith admitted that he had been teaching many things imperfectly in gesture, voice and action and would receive benefit from an association. Mrs. Julia Hardenburgh wrote that

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"the benefits would be unprecedented." Fulton detected that "a quack would be out of his element at this convention" and suggested the Mid-West as a meeting place. E. Knowlton of San Francisco recommended Cincinnati or Chicago as possible sites for the national meetings. Ross declared that an association would enable members to get acquainted, exchange ideas, move out of their deep worn ruts and discuss disputed points. In his belief there were too many erroneous ideas and too much charlatanism at large.

The elocution teachers set to work in earnest in the preparation for the first meeting, which had been retarded by the petty and unwarranted jealousy of a number of teachers of the professional schools. Early in 1892 Hannibal A. Williams took hold of the organizational work in a thorough and energetic manner. In the February issue of Werner's Magazine he issued a circular to the elocutionists of New York and vicinity inviting "all persons . . . in the professions of elocution and of public reading . . . to attend a meeting to be held in New York City from June 27 to July 2, next." It was Williams, therefore, who took "the initial steps for the actual realizing of the hopes that have been so long entertained by many elocutionists and public readers . . . ."

In the first national convention, which met according to proposed plans in New York from June 27 to July 2, 1892, Edgar S. Werner made the

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70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
motion to establish an organization and to call it the National Association of Elocutionists. The original plan of Mr. Werner was to establish permanent headquarters in a building in New York city, where the secretary should reside. This move, however, was not sanctioned. He also submitted these aims for the consideration of his colleagues:

1. The establishing of a code of ethics, by which the profession is to be governed.
2. The fixing of the standard of attainment necessary for every person to reach before he shall be entitled to be considered a professional.
3. The holding of annual or semi-annual examinations, the passing of which shall entitle candidates to certificates or diplomas.
4. The purifying of the English language and the establishing of uniformity in pronunciation.
5. The adopting of a scientific and uniform terminology and nomenclature, so that one person may know what another person's language means, thereby making discussion profitable.

In addition to the exchange of ideas in teaching techniques, sociability and entertainment were enjoyed by the members of the association through the innumerable reading recitals at the annual conventions. At the third meeting, which was held in Chicago in 1894, Elsie M. Wilbor thus reports:

A noticeable feature of the convention was the spirit of sociability manifested in every way and on every occasion. The members seemed glad to renew old acquaintances and eager to form new ones. Tired as all were with the three daily sessions, they gathered in the hotel parlors after the evening entertainments and talked and recited and criticized until midnight sat heavily upon them. Everybody wanted to hear everybody else recite, until the week became a veritable jubilee of recitations. "Recitations to right of you, recitations to left of you, recitations behind you volleyed and thundered." Yet they served their purpose, for everyone learned what his neighbor could do when it came to the actual point of doing, and all theory or assumption of theory was laid aside for the moment.

76 Ibid.
The list of elocutionists who did much to elevate the profession through reading recitals, lecturing, teaching, writing books and organizational work would not be complete without the name of Thomas C. Trueblood, a farm boy from Salem, Indiana. From his gifted teacher at Blue River Academy, who was a native of New England, Trueblood had learned early in life to recite well-selected passages from literary poets and authors. At Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, he was active in debate, oratory and twice was chosen to represent the Ionia Literary Society in declamation at its annual public meetings. At Illinois College he studied privately under Professor S. S. Hamill and later took advanced private instruction under James E. Murdoch. While studying with Hamill at Illinois College, Mr. Trueblood met Robert I. Fulton of Leesburg, Virginia, and the two toured extensively through the Mid-west, inspiring many to study elocution in their school of oratory in Kansas City in 1879. Here Murdoch was also among those who taught voice, dramatics and gymnastics. Press notices indicated enthusiastic audiences at the lectures and recitals of Fulton and Trueblood.

The Louisville Commercial for instance commented:

Professor Trueblood is one of the most finished and pleasing readers in the country. In the recital of "Hamlet" he gave all the most interesting scenes, and held the audience spellbound by the beauty of his conception and the histrionic power with which the lines were rendered.

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78 Werner's Directory, 278.
79 Ibid.
82 Quoted from Werner's Directory, 278.
The effort toward the standardization of principles in the National Association was given impetus by Fulton and Trueblood, who were the first to attempt to formulate a harmonious system of elocution based on both Rush and Delsarte. In their book entitled *Practical Elocution* they clarify their endeavors in the Preface:

Following the trend of thought so recently crystallized in the organization of the National Association of Elocutionists, we have endeavored to harmonize the so-called systems of elocution. In all we have found valuable truths which must have a common basis and should meet on common ground. While this volume is a recall to the old truths recorded by Engle, Austin, and Dr. Rush, it presents them in the newer garb and more recent philosophy of Mantegazza and Delsarte. The student of to-day is not satisfied with the mere statement, of facts, he seeks the underlying principles or laws governing a world of facts.83

In an address at the eighth annual convention of the National Association of Elocutionists held at Chautauqua, New York, in June, 1899, Trueblood explained some of the possible intellectual gains in the study of expression. First, he recognized that a knowledge of "the underlying principles of elocution is a mental development equal to and quite as useful as that offered by any of the literal sciences." Secondly, he cited the study of literature as educational and contended that the work of "our fathers" must be pursued not by accidental means but by a correct philosophical approach. Thirdly, the study of oratory, Mr. Trueblood felt, involved a knowledge of historical events of value to the education of the student. Much, therefore, could be learned by examining the context, structure and style of these speeches.84

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According to an advance press notice, taken from the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, of the proceedings of the ninth annual meeting in St. Louis in 1900, it is clear that the standard of public reading had been raised through the organization of elocutionists and that there was an improvement in the general attitude toward elocution. The notice reads:

It is generally conceded that the National Association of Elocutionists has elevated the standard of public reading in this country. It has been the means also of extending the acquaintance and establishing a feeling of good fellowship among the members. Each year the number in attendance is larger than the year before. Those who are interested in the matter expect much from the St. Louis convention, not alone in the benefit which will come from the discussions, but also, because of the impetus which the convention will give to the study of elocution in St. Louis and the surrounding district.85

As a result of such organizing, some standardization in the teaching of elocution was established. At the St. Louis convention the Committee on Terminology consisting of F. Townsend Southwick, Mrs. M. Riley and Austin H. Merrill reported their agreement upon numerous terms in elocution. The Association, in making this information public, commended the members for their excellent report and "the great progress made . . . ."86

At the same convention the problem of gaining further recognition in colleges and universities arose. According to the editorial, "St. Louis Convention of Elocutionists," several teachers reported favorable progress in this direction. In one of the discussion groups one elocution teacher declared, however, that the faculty of an unnamed institution "refused to give credit to students for elocution,

85 See "St. Louis Convention of Elocutionists," op. cit.

on the ground that 'no mental work was done'. Trueblood advised that "a practical way to influence universities was through the students." He continued, "Let the teacher of elocution form classes outside regular college work, and when its value is made apparent to them they will demand it."  

That this student demand for elocutionary training had existed throughout the entire period is observed in the experience of Lucy Stone, the great woman suffragist. In the forties Miss Stone formed a secret debating society for practice in delivery in direct opposition to the Ladies' Board at Oberlin. Accordingly she said:

We shall leave this college with the reputation of a thorough collegiate course. Yet not one of us has received any rhetorical or elocutionary training . . . For this reason I have proposed the formation of this association.  

It is significant to note that the literary and debating societies often had their own student critics to give an estimate of their elocution, or hired at their own expense itinerant elocution teachers to coach them in order to win contests. The failure of the State University of Iowa to win in interstate contests provoked frequent requests for a university instructor in elocution. According to the student newspaper in 1880, The Vidette:

No lack in our University is more apparent than that of a teacher of elocution . . . The work of such a

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88 Ibid.
90 T. A. Wanerus, History of the Zetagathian Society of the State University of Iowa, (Iowa City: Published privately, 1911), 145.
teacher cannot be satisfactorily executed by the most competent teacher in an occasional two or three week's work.\footnote{91} This request met with success at Iowa, for two years later Edwin M. Booth was hired as the first instructor of elocution. Cowperthwaite asserts that he was an influence in the promotion of elocution at Iowa.\footnote{92} A final example of student demand for elocutionary instruction may be seen in the case of Robert M. Cumnock, whose own private school of oratory in 1878 on the campus at Evanston, Illinois,\footnote{93} developed into the well known Northwestern University School of Speech. Cumnock "was widely sought by lecture committees as a public reader and was for many years in charge of the Summer Courses in Public Speaking at Chautauqua, New York."\footnote{94} Trueblood remarked that "this gave him an enviable reputation and brought many students to Evanston to be trained by him."\footnote{95} Cumnock's reputation as a reader and speaker was as excellent as those of his predecessors in the nineteenth century. Dr. George W. Crane of the Department of Psychology at Northwestern in the Foreword of Cumnock's Choice Readings makes this impressive comment:

Never have I listened to a man whose speech was so perfect. Even the most commonplace word seemed to leave his lips with a caress. As an undergraduate at Northwestern University, where he was so long Dean of the School of Speech, I have listened to him read and lecture, often forgetting the content of his sentences because of my admiration

\footnote{91} The Vidette, April, 1880.\footnote{92} Lowery LeRoy Cowperthwaite, A History of Intercollegiate Forensics at the State University of Iowa 1874-1946, (Unpublished M. A. thesis, State University of Iowa, August 1946), 61-62.\footnote{93} Ralph Dennis, "Robert McLean Cumnock," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XV, (February, 1929), 157.\footnote{94} "A Chapter on the Organization of College Courses in Public Speaking," op. cit.\footnote{95} Ibid.
for his perfect diction. He could have spoken in an unknown tongue but still have held his audience because of his excellent enunciation and musical phrases.96

The realization of the benefits derived from the National Association gave impetus to the formation of numerous state and regional organizations, of which the Southern Association of Elocutionists is but one example. In their meetings, the programs consisted of readings, lectures and discussions of elocution problems, as well as selections by singers. An excerpt from the program of the second annual convention of the Southern Association of Elocutionists held at the Universalist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, December 26, 27, and 28, 1901, gives an interesting account of some of these sessions:

... the meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. C. Breckinridge Wilmer. The address of welcome on behalf of the city was extended by the Honorable James L. Mason, the Mayor being confined to his room by sickness. This address was most felicitous and called forth the heartiest applause. The response by President Peaks was happy. The singing by Mrs. Deming and T. H. Weaver, two prominent vocalists, elicited many expressions of approval. The readers of the hour were Mrs. William Calvin Chilton and Mr. Lucius Perry Hills.

Friday was a busy day. Among the papers read may be mentioned one on the "Intellectual Benefits of Elocution," by Lucius Perry Hills; another on the "Spiritual Benefits of Elocution," by Miss Ada Evelyn Lewis. Miss Genevieve Beright spoke of "Helps to the Art of Expression." She also recited Tennyson's "Guinevere" for criticism. These exercises called forth animated discussion, which was participated in by nearly every member, a feature not only of interest but of lasting benefit.97

Summary. Those elocution teachers with genuine interest in their work, having been made aware of the public appraisal of elocution, were convinced that to elevate their profession they should consolidate their information and affiliate themselves with recognized academic institutions.

Kate Hamlin was the first publicly to voice the desire to meet with others in her field for mutual benefit. Ten years later Williams succeeded in bringing about a meeting for organization. At this gathering Werner proposed the formation of an organization and submitted aims for its operation. In subsequent meetings of the National Association of Elocutionists, ideas were exchanged and discussed and readings were offered for the appreciation and enlightenment of the members. Fulton and Trueblood formulated a harmonious system of elocution—an idea to which the association subscribed. The benefits of national organization were noted by independent editorialists, who observed a marked improvement in the readings. Recognition in the colleges was another of the basic aims discussed and promoted by this academic minded group. The successful and profitable operation of the national organization furnished the initiative for the establishment of regional associations which operated much like their predecessor.

The Development into Public Speaking. In the recognition of the subject by the school authorities, slow and steady progress in the earliest part of the nineteenth century was observable. The pioneering efforts of leading eastern schools like Harvard, Andover Seminary and Yale had led the way; Rush in Philadelphia had created an additional impulse in the field. Typical of the sentiments of these men regarding institutional recognition is a statement made by North, who firmly declared that "attempts at private instruction without the assistance of the discipline of an institution, are generally attended with very unsatisfactory success." Believing similarly, Hamill, while teaching at Illinois Wesleyan College, wrote:

\[98 \text{ Op. cit.}, 19.\]
When Elocution shall be studied in our colleges and universities as a science, its principles known and practiced, then, and not till then, will good speaking be the rule, and not, as now, the rare exception.99

While elocution and rhetoric were gradually evolving into courses called extemporaneous speaking,100 considerable progress was taking place in the development of speech instruction in the textbooks. It is apparent in the nineteenth century that the audience and the occasion were being recognized more and more as determiners of the type of delivery. For example, Governor Thomas Ford of Illinois had implied in 1854 that varied types of delivery were needed to suit the different tastes of the people. The educated minister of the town with his "subdued style of eloquence" could not, he said, win the responses ordinarily in the country, where "the unlearned, rough and boisterous speaker" held forth.101

Henry Coppee, a professor of English literature at the University of Pennsylvania, who was an advocate of Aristotle, Campbell and Whately, strongly urged that the performances in speaking be natural and recommended that extemporaneous address be employed. Additionally he taught that the audience must be given more consideration in the public speaking


100 Thomas E. Coulton, Trends in Speech Education in American Colleges, 1835-1935, (Unpublished Ph.D thesis, New York University, 1935), 89-90. Here he cites courses in Extemporaneous speaking as first being offered in 1860 at Birmingham Southern College and another at the University of Delaware in 1861. In the following decade of 1870 he notes such courses also at Amherst, the University of North Carolina, and Knox College in Illinois. Extemporaneous speaking was also taught at Hanover College in Indiana in 1872. See also Herbert E. Rake, The History of Speech Education in Ten Indiana Colleges, 1820-1938, (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1939), 210.

situation. In keeping with this attitude he submitted four aims of discourse; to enlighten the understanding, address the imagination of the hearers, touch the passions and influence the will.102

The application of psychology marked another improvement in the technique of public speaking. In 1860 Gustav Theodor Fechner of Germany was the first to perform with scientific rigor the experiments which were the basis for the new psychology.103 His Elemente der Psychophysie in 1860 placed psychology on a solid scientific foundation and his experimental techniques have been fundamental in psychological research since that time.104

George P. Quackenbos, a principal of the Collegiate Institute School in New York, and a follower of Blair, was one of the first to include psychological methodology in his rhetorical teachings. In his Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric, which was used at Indiana University in 1861,105 he held that emotions were aroused through the imagination, not by "mere impressions on the external senses."106 A few years later Alexander Bain, a professor of Logic in the University of Aberdeen wrote his English Composition and Rhetoric. This work


104 Ibid., 270-271.

105 Bahe, 263.

published in 1867 followed, in addition to some psychological principles, the teachings of Blair, Campbell and also of Whately. According to Bain, persuasion is the influence of men's conduct and belief through the agency of spoken or written words. He advised the student to deepen the social regard of men, know the persons addressed, appeal to the beliefs of the auditors, have a thorough acquaintance with the subject, and employ argument, reasoning and proof.\textsuperscript{107} Bain also wrote a textbook in psychology entitled \textit{Mental Science} in which he explained the senses, instincts, intellect, association, perception, belief and desires. The epitome of his philosophy regarding belief is, "What we believe in we act upon."\textsuperscript{108}

\textbf{The influence of Quackenbos and Bain was far reaching, Rahe reveals that Quackenbos' rhetoric was used at Indiana University in 1861, and according to the catalog of the University of Georgia in 1868, both Quackenbos and Bain were recommended textbooks, together with Blair, in the regular course work in the newly established department of rhetoric and oratory under the direction of Charles Morris.}\textsuperscript{110} Here elocution was taught in special lectures by Morris, who instituted the granting of gold medals to outstanding sophomore declaimers.\textsuperscript{111} At Louisiana State University in 1883, Bain's composition and rhetoric was

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Op. cit.}, 263.
\item See Catalog of the University of Georgia, 1868-1869 (Atlanta: The Constitution Book and Job Printing, 1868).
\item \textit{Ibid.}, 43.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
taught by Thomas D. Boyd. Two separate rooms were reserved at this time for the Addisonian and Eulipian literary societies so that practice in oratory might flourish.\textsuperscript{112}

Of interest is the accomplishment of Haven at the University of Michigan, who at this time fairly successfully combined rhetoric and elocution into a system of extemporaneous speaking. He urged this form of address\textsuperscript{113} and gave a number of suggestions for both delivery and composition.

Another rhetorician who accepted the views of Whately and Campbell and who same under the influence of psychology was John Bascom, both a teacher and preacher in the East and the Mid-west in the seventies. In his \textit{Philosophy of Rhetoric} published in 1872 in Chicago, he subscribed to the theory of the will to believe or that "emotion is conditioned on apprehension, volition on emotion." In other words "we first see, then feel, and afterward act."\textsuperscript{114} In teaching persuasiveness instead of the "graces" emphasized in the private schools, he advocated appealing to the intellect by employing wit, humor and ridicule. Moreover he declared that arguments and facts are a safe basis and guide to action.\textsuperscript{115}

M. Bautian of France, whose \textit{The Art of Extempore Speaking} was used privately in America by such eminent men as Richard T. Ely, the noted political economist who taught at Johns Hopkins University in 1881 and

\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Catalog of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Session 1882- '83.} (Baton Rouge: Capitolian Advocate Steam Job Print, 1883), 29.

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Op. cit.}, 372.


\textsuperscript{115} \textit{Ibid.}, 63.
at Northwestern University in 1892, expressed the following idea:

... An extemporized address, ... is more effective, and more impressive, than a recited discourse. It smacks less of art, and the voice vibrating and responsive to what the speaker feels at the moment, finds naturally the tone most proper, the true inflexions, and genuine expression.117

Henry N. Day, the author of the Art of Discourse which was used in the teaching of J. P. Elmore, a teacher of Composition and Declamation in the History and English Literature department at Louisiana State University in 1871, also became interested in psychology and wrote in 1876 Elements of Psychology. Therein he explained a number of basic characteristics in the human being capable of stimulation by readers or speakers. Desires, imagination, affections, emotion, sensations, perception, the attention factors, curiosity and will were all included in his discussion.119

Another rhetorician to interest himself in the application of psychology to speaking was David G. Hill, whose The Science of Rhetoric was published in 1877. Hill's work supplanted Lyons at Notre Dame University in the late seventies and was used at DePauw University120


118 Official Register of the Louisiana State University (New Orleans: James A. Gresham, Bookseller and Stationer, 1871), 38.


120 Rahe, 267.

121 Ibid., 95.
In the early eighties and at Louisiana State University in 1887. Hill acknowledged that rhetoric texts took a one-sided view of speech training and recommended that one go beyond Whately who, he said, merely compared feeling to the involuntary organs and processes of the body. Hill maintained that the reader could stimulate or excite the listeners' emotions through the psychological approach. Much information was given on imagination, attention, belief, conviction, persuasion, language and emotion. He then endeavored to show that readers or speakers must so present their ideas as to fulfill these conditions of mental action. Hill considered elocution a separate subject requiring a "peculiar" type of training; a field entirely by itself dealing with voice and action.

Brainerd Kellogg, a teacher of rhetoric in Brooklyn College in the eighties who favored Whately, dealt primarily with the rhetorical principles of logic, argument and the burden of proof. In the matter of delivery, however, he strongly advised a "conversational pattern of speaking."

At this time in the early eighties, training in public speaking was given an additional impetus by Nathan Sheppard, of Baltimore,

122 See Catalog of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, Session 1887-88. (Baton Rouge: The Advocate Book and Job Print, 1888).


124 Ibid., 54.

125 Ibid., 55.

126 Ibid., 39.

Maryland, who distinguished himself as a lecturer, writer and teacher. He taught at Alleghany College in Meadville, Pennsylvania, at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, the University of Chicago, and Chautauqua University. During the Civil War Sheppard was a war correspondent and an editorial contributor to a number of leading newspapers and magazines. According to Wilbor his book entitled Before An Audience "made a profound impression" on the American people and had "an immense sale." It was used in Shepherd College in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, as a guidebook for the delivery of speeches.

Sheppard did not endorse elocutionary training in delivery because to him it meant rendering another man's orations. He preferred the student rather to cultivate his will, his ear for elocution and his eye for his audience. Bitterly against singing lessons for speech students, imitative drill and "quack remedies," he took pride in claiming that he taught public speaking. Not only did Sheppard give adverse criticism to faulty methods of elocutionary training, but he was violently opposed as well to Whately and his view that delivery could be left to nature. The truth is, he explained, that the most earnest are often the most ineffective due to their indistinct and slovenly speech. Moreover he cited an unnamed contemporary of Whately who testified that he (Whately) was himself clumsy, indistinct and inanimate in public speaking.

Sheppard combined a number of principles

\[\text{\textit{Werner's Directory}, 294.}\]

\[\text{\textit{Ibid.}}\]

\[\text{No date is given in the book or in the catalog, but the copy is in the library of Shepherd College.}\]

\[\text{Nathan Sheppard, Before An Audience: or, The Use of the Will in Public Speaking, (New York: Funk and Wagnall's Company, 1886), 61-72.}\]
of psychology, rhetoric and elocution and directed his students in extemporaneous speaking to observe such basic rules as thinking about what to say, considering the tastes of the audience and directly gazing at the listeners.

Luther T. Townsend, an adherent of Sheppard, Whately and Bain and who was a teacher of oratory in Boston University and later Dean of the Chautauqua School of Theology, believed strongly in logical discourse based on the rules of argument including definition of terms, evidence and the like.\(^{132}\) In persuasive speech he cautioned against such measures as "tenderness of voice," a "tear in the eye," and vehemence.\(^{133}\)

Alexander Melville Bell made it clear in 1886 that the manner of expression was dependent upon the type of speaking performed. He explained several different styles in their appropriate setting:

> With reference to the characteristics of delivery appropriate to different classes of speakers, a few observations may not be superfluous. A lawyer's or a merchant's clerk reading a conveyance or an invoice, for the purpose of comparison with a duplicate, will do all that is requisite if his pronunciation is distinct, and his voice free from any offensive quality. He is not expected to comment on what he reads, by tone or emphasis. His function is purely mechanical; and he does not require even to appreciate the sense, if he but deliver the words intelligibly.

> A lecturer must add to this a perfect acquaintance with the sense, and vocal ability to communicate it without ambiguity; together with such an amount of adaptability of manner as may secure the attention and interest of his hearers. He does not require a high degree of eloquence; his gesture may be of the simplest kind, and he will be most effective when he is most familiar and conversational in style.

> A platform speaker demands larger powers of oratory. His audience is a mixed one, and more impressible by

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133 Ibid., 227.
declamation. He must present himself and his subject in a pleasing manner, and use every art to convert his hearers into his partisans. His pictures must be strongly painted to be seen at a distance; his voice must, therefore, be vigorous and his action animated. He must sometimes tickle the unwilling ear to listen, and flatter by a show of deference in order to gain authority.\(^{134}\)

In the following year Taylor advocated the consideration of the audience in the manner of delivery. Eloquence, he explained, "is not a thing which an orator carries about with him, as a reader carries his recitation, . . ." Taylor moreover advocated studying elocution in order to master the principles of delivery until they become natural or a part of himself.\(^{135}\)

In 1888 a trend in the direction of the oral interpretation of literary selections was noticeable in Bery Hathaway's *The Acme Declamation Book*. He was extremely pleased with having carefully chosen for his students a list of recitations without "one silly or nonsensical piece" in the entire book.\(^{136}\) Dr. Charles Wesley Emerson the next year made the statement that the time had now come when the mind of the pupil should be directed to the "thought in its details." He indicated that students should attempt to impart the purpose of the author, to concentrate the mind on composition and "to arouse imagination and activity."\(^{137}\)


Of significance is the influence of psychology to facilitate memorisation. This may be perceived in the work of E. G. Jennings, who in an article, "Hints for Memorizing Recitations," gives these rules which embrace sense perception:

First, read the selection over carefully to yourself and get its general drift; then, read it once or twice aloud; then, get some one to read it to you, and then listen attentively; then, write it out; finally, endeavor to realize it;—that is, to imagine you see the whole thing acted out before you. If there is anything mentioned that can be tasted, imagine you smell it, etc. You will thus get an impression on the mind through the medium of sight, of hearing, of touch, of taste and of smell. As a final process, pick out certain words in the selection and link them together by a chain of association.138

John W. Churchill, a teacher under Monroe in the Boston University School of Oratory in 1873 and a special lecturer on elocution, who gave a series of lectures at Johns Hopkins University February tenth to the nineteenth in 1879,139 wrote an article entitled "The Decline of Academical Oratory," which he published in Werner's Voice Magazine in 1889. He made the observation that a sign of the times was the lack of interest of the people in the old fashioned type of oratory. Besides a demand for more "social entertainment," he noted that the majority were less inclined toward the ornate, hence the demand for simplicity, directness and conclusive argument. "This is vanishing the formal, ornate, pretentious type of oratory."140 Like Churchill, Curry also detected in elocution as in all forms of art during the latter part of the nineteenth century the initial inclination toward

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139 Johns Hopkins University Circular, Number 1, (Baltimore: no publisher, December 1879), 1.
This trend toward restraint in voice and manner was then basically in direct conflict with any form of ostentatiousness, emotionalism, flamboyance, or bombastically uttered discourses.

The Reverend J. P. Sandlands writing in The Christian Advocate newspaper in 1890 forcefully stated that no man should copy another and blamed many members of the elocution profession "for not guiding the students." One should "draw out the man" in expression and teach "word grouping" of ideas when interpreting from an author.  

The nineteenth century put forth a strenuous effort to escape from its profusion of unscientific conceptions of life and the world. American psychologists like William James, Josiah Royce, E. B. Titchener, and others made significant contributions in their field. James began psychology in America with his recognition of the new experimental physiological psychology of Germany." Moreover "... he introduced experimentalism to America, and he put upon the new psychology the seal of America by emphasizing the functional meaning of mind." In 1890 he published, after twelve years of laborious work interrupted by much ill health, his The Principles of Psychology in two volumes. Together with Darwin this work was a step in the direction of analyzing man as a behaving organism. Pragmatic in his philosophy, James well deserves the title of the pioneer of American psychology. He departed

141 S. S. Curry, "The Change Toward Simplicity," Expression, VII, (Summer, 1901), 75-82.
142 The Christian Advocate, (July 3, 1890.)
143 Boring, 493.
144 Ibid., 495.
from the misconceived notions of those who went too far in depicting
feeling by a mere display of outward expressions through the medium
of physical culture and opposed Mantegazza's detailed description of
emotion labelling it "merely descriptive literature." James held
that mental activity and not the grosser bodily manifestations is the
significant aspect of expression. He asserted that attention is the
possession by the mind, in clear vivid form of one out of what seem
several simultaneously possible objects or trains of thought. His
own theory of emotions, which was simultaneously developed by C. Lange
of Copenhagen, was briefly that emotion was the result and not the
cause of bodily changes. Thus we lose our fortunes, are sorry and
weep. Bodily changes accordingly follow directly the perception
of some exciting fact. Our feeling of these changes as they occur
in James' mind is the "emotion." The effect of these principles
in the field of public speaking in America was unparalleled. References
to his viewpoints were repeatedly made in the textbooks following
1890 and up to the present decade.

In 1891 Brainerd Gardner Smith's Reading and Speaking, which
approximated Sheppard's ideas, displayed a combination of elocutionary
principles and rhetorical aspects. Smith's work was used in DePauw
in 1892, where a recognized department had existed for eight years

\[146\] Ibid., II, 448-449.
\[147\] Ibid., I, 403-404.
\[148\] Ibid., II, 448-449.
\[149\] Ibid.
\[150\] Baha, 95.
under the supervision of Professor Carhart. In matters pertaining to the principles of delivery Smith made it clear that young men in public performances should be "natural, comfortable, manly, and forceful." The manner in which a sentence should be read, in the opinion of Smith, is largely a matter of judgment or of taste. His objective was not to create dramatic readers, reciters, or declaimers, but rather to instill a "conversational manner" in a speaking or reading performance. Smith admonished the uses of complicated and elaborate gestures, but advocated that one master the rules of better speaking to such a degree that it would be unnecessary to think about them.

The untiring efforts of both Fulton and Trueblood, who with humanitarian zeal gave up their School of Oratory in Kansas City to teach short courses and lecture at lower incomes in the universities of Michigan, Missouri, Kansas, Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio Wesleyan University, the University of Denver, Wabash College, DePauw University, Washburn College, Park College, William Jewel College, and "three colleges in Lexington, Missouri," are evidence of their


Ibid., 43.

Ibid., 25.

Ibid., 102.

Ibid., 108.

Werner's Directory, 279.

ambition to foster public speaking courses in colleges and universities. It was customary for students to pay extra tuition for such courses, but through the petitioning of the law students for free tuition in these studies at the University of Michigan, the subject was placed on an even footing with other disciplines. Trueblood's success as a teacher was evidenced by his advance to an instructorship in Oratory in the English Department teaching short courses. Furthermore "in 1889 I (Trueblood) received a full time appointment at Ann Arbor, and three years later a professorship and a separate department."\textsuperscript{159} According to Rahe, this instituting of a distinct department separate from English in 1892 represented the first instance of an institution of higher learning granting credit for courses in speech.\textsuperscript{160} In view of the numerous instances of departments having been established in other institutions prior to 1892, it is doubtful if this claim can be substantiated.

From Trueblood's distinguished student, Arthur Vandenberg, is offered the following testimony to his success:

\begin{quote}
I am very glad to tell you that I studied for one year in the classes of Professor Trueblood at the University of Michigan . . . . Professor Trueblood was not only a successful teacher but also a very fine character which left its imprint upon all of his pupils . . . .\textsuperscript{161}
\end{quote}

Fulton, like Trueblood, discontinued his short courses at the University of Missouri and Ohio State University to accept a position as a full-time professor at Ohio Wesleyan University. He had privately

\textsuperscript{159} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Personal letter}, September 29, 1947.
trained such men as Charles E. Jefferson, James Whitcomb Riley, Dr. Gunsaulus, and Woodrow Wilson. 162

With the development of scientific and psychological principles in matters pertaining to the utterance of the spoken word and the juxtaposition of composition and delivery, the study of elocution underwent further noticeable changes. Through "the influence of college contests" in debate and oratory, progressive denominational schools like DePauw University, Knox College and Beloit College, students experienced much improvement in the study of vocal expression.

Although the name "elocution" had attracted a commendable amount of scholarly respect through the pioneering efforts of the academic-minded men of the field, it finally had to be completely discarded. To many people the term had come to refer to a mechanical, grossly exaggerated and highly artificial type of performance by teachers, students, and speakers which could no longer be endured. As a result, the twentieth century textbooks began to use the term public speaking to supplant the terms "elocution," "oratory," "expression," "vocal culture," and similar names. Daggy's account of the changes from elocution to speech are as follows:

The early period in the evolution of the speech curriculum was marked by the introduction of courses in "Elocution" and "Expression," sometimes of doubtful content and frequently taught by those whose only training had been obtained in the School of Experience. It was during this period that several eastern institutions including the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin, Ohio Wesleyan University, DePauw University, and on the Pacific Coast, the University of Washington, expanded the number and improved the quality of their speech courses, ... This represented a distinct advance, a notable raising of the standards and finally

led to the policy which has firmly established the department of speech in many institutions on a coordinate basis with other departments.\footnote{Maynard Lee Daggy, "The Undergraduate Curriculum in Speech," in \textit{Cultural and Scientific Speech Education Today}. Edited by Arthur Cable, (Boston: Expression Company, 1930), 39-47.}

It was found desirable to change the name of the National Association of Elocutionists to the National Speech Arts Association, which consisted of members representing both the professional or private schools and the academic institutions. Another group of academic teachers who were associated with English departments affiliated themselves with the National Council of Teachers of English.

In direct opposition to Trueblood's view that the elocutionists' association could be converted into a national organization for the teachers of speech, seventeen academic public speaking teachers insisted that such a merger could never operate satisfactorily. They reasoned that the elocutionists' association, being dominated by the professional teachers who were in a number of instances affiliated with private elocution schools, would never be in harmony with the interests of the academic institutions.\footnote{This information was derived from a personal note relative to the conferences held on this subject between Dr. Giles W. Gray and both J. S. Gaylord and T. C. Trueblood held at St. Petersburg and Bradenton, Florida in March, 1941.} Hence it was that the members of the academic group met together in 1914 to form the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, which absorbed a number of the members of the National Speech Arts Association. This organization with its new faces like J. M. O'Neill, C. D. Hardy, Lew Sarett, Frank M. Harig, and Charles H. Woolbert developed into The
National Association of Teachers of Speech, currently known as The Speech Association of America.

Summary. From the evidence of those who witnessed the various forms of irrational behavior on the nineteenth century platform, it may be pointed out that as long as widespread ignorance prevailed throughout America an inferior level of performance was allowable if not welcomed. The lack of scholarly instruction in speaking or reading is a factor to be considered in the crude performances of numerous pioneer declaimers. However, the advance of civilization and culture was a powerful factor in the elevation of taste beyond the previous level.

The shameful ignorance of numerous private teachers was also observed to be a cause for the inferior performances among themselves and their students. The inexcusable failure of these teachers to scrutinize closely the findings of contemporary scholars, who in all periods were opposed to "outward display," or to attend their courses of instruction, is an added indictment. Furthermore, numerous teachers were guilty of actually promoting artificial and mechanical teaching methods. Other elocutionists were known to have exhibited extreme emotional feeling in their own performances before students and laymen alike. Although the classicists, the rhetoricians, and the scholarly-minded in the field of elocution warned against such spectacles, no real combined action was taken by the teachers as a whole until the latter part of the century. At that time through the organization of the elocution teachers into a national body, unified measures were made possible.

With the arrival of experimental psychology on the American scene, attention became fixed on the audience and the psychological techniques of stimulating it. Detailed rules and involved exercises were no longer deemed necessary. The trend toward public speaking as a nomenclature embracing both composition and delivery was noticeable in numerous books late in the century. Finally, by the action of seventeen academic teachers of speech there occurred a cleavage from the private teachers and the subsequent rise in academic status plus a rapid expansion of speech training.
The extensive development of elocution in nineteenth century America contributed much to the elevation of the standards of communicative ability among a people who eagerly sought intellectual, spiritual, political, social and personal growth. It is apparent in this study that the American teachers of speech from 1642 to 1827 relied heavily upon a number of sources from abroad, namely, the continental rhetoricians, the classicists and the British rhetoricians and elocutionists. Many of these predecessors were of an impressive intellectual stature in political, educational and religious life. They had in many instances become increasingly aware of the need for a system of elocutionary instruction to meet the demands of the people. On the other hand there were those members of the rhetorical school who frowned upon the use of rules and notations in the study of delivery.

The American phase of the elocutionary movement was originated by James Rush, a physician in Philadelphia. His comprehensive system was clarified somewhat by scholarly gentlemen like Dr. Jonathan Barber, who in 1830 while at Yale made Rush's work usable to the American public. Throughout the remainder of the century and for some time thereafter authors and teachers interested in the wide range of problems connected with the study of voice training referred to Rush's system of elocution as their authoritative source of information. Based on Rush's Philosophy, stringent practice in the use of a variety of difficult exercises to develop the vocal elements was the American elocutionists' answer to socially unattractive habits, the most common of which were faulty articulation, mispronunciations, stuttering, obnoxious voice qualities and the various abuses of force, rate and pitch...
in both public speaking and conversational speech. Among these vocal attributes a careful articulation was regarded the most essential acquisition and was therefore assiduously cultivated. The discoveries and useful methods of such scholars as Alexander Melville Bell, Andrew Comstock and William Holmes McGuffey did much to promote good articulation throughout the country. The first two of the above mentioned personalities were also outstanding, among numerous others, in the giving of assistance to speech defectives and the thousands of immigrants in the frontier.

The practice of employing various unique breathing exercises in order that the orator might speak more forcibly was an extraordinary method, which had been popularized chiefly through the efforts of Bronson. This procedure was believed to enable a speaker to talk for prolonged periods without the fear of hoarseness or undue fatigue. There was also the prevailing opinion that through the breathing exercise lung diseases would be alleviated. Gymnastic drills, which were for the most part absent in the schools of the day, were promulgated by the elocution teachers as an exercise which would promote health, strengthen the vocal chords, stimulate free bodily movements and develop an impressive and poised body.

With respect to matters of bodily action, most nineteenth century elocutionists derived much of their theory and practice from the Reverend Gilbert Austin, the English author in 1806 of Chironomia. After the return of Steele MacKaye to America in 1871, the effect of the expressional theory of Delsarte as taught by Mackaye and others of his disciples was particularly far reaching. His primary objectives were widely misinterpreted and greatly distorted like numerous other methods mentioned above. Out of his system came innumerable aesthetic
exercises for graceful gestures, poses and movements supposedly based on the triune nature of man. Thorough and frequent drills upon these exercises in addition to those on voice, breathing and gymnastics was the substance of many of the current methods of elocution.

Focusing their attention upon the delivery of famous orations and poetical works, the elocutionists spent much time in directing their worthy rendition. The memorization of these moral, religious, patriotic and humorous selections was required. Declamations offered a fine opportunity for notations in gestures and vocal elements. In this way the teachers could determine the results of their instructions in vocal and bodily expression.

Although many of the elocutionists used extremely mechanistic means, artificial effects were never intended. Throughout their writings it is clearly evident that for the most part they proposed above all a natural product. Upon graduation from elocution classes, students were, generally speaking, advised that the rules were meant to be only a means to an end.

Contrary to the widespread prevailing opinions among twentieth century teachers of speech that elocution teachers consisted entirely of a relatively small number of individuals who merely believed in artificial display of feeling, there is an abundance of evidence to show that there was a tremendous number of teachers of this subject throughout the country, many of whom were scholars who definitely frowned upon the practice of display. Among those who made elocution reputable were men who held prominent positions in education, medicine, religion and law. Testimonials point to the undeniable fact that the elocutionists were of much influence in the lives of the American people, specifically in their social intercourse with others. It was
Furthermore pointed out by distinguished citizens and patriots that not only was the proper study of elocution profitable, but that it was a social necessity in a country where the people were finding it a duty to be the voice of the government. Among some of the prominent individuals who attested to this fact were Horace Mann, Chauncey M. Depew, Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher, Edward Everett, William Jennings Bryan and Arthur Vandenberg.

There were those unqualified teachers who of course greatly distorted the study of elocution through their own ignorance of the subject and through their selfish monetary motives. Although many private schools were to a considerable degree successful in training their students to speak and behave more effectively, there were many instances when other professional schools misused the subject and victimized the public. Many of this caliber simply allowed the call of the times to dictate a low level of taste in emotional expression. This display of passion brought about a serious degradation of the subject particularly in the eyes of the cultured. As a result of extremely artificial teachings among many in the profession, the academic teachers of elocution could no longer tolerate the name of elocution and vices for which it stood. A determined group of conscientious teachers therefore organized the National Association of Elocutionists to discuss plans for placing the subject on a legitimate and sound basis, recognizable in academic circles.

Through the singular efforts by men like Fulton and Trueblood, who did much to standardize elocutionary concepts, and through the application of experimental psychology in the teachings of both rhetoricians and elocutionists in extemporaneous address, a new and important trend was gradually taking shape. With the establishment of public
speaking courses in colleges, academic recognition was attained and private elocutionary instruction was left for the most part to the unqualified instructors who had no academic standing.

We owe much to the elocutionists. At a time when America was in its adolescent stage, the study and practice of elocution played its part in the cultural growth of the wilderness. Besides acquainting the people with great American literature and instilling in them an appreciation of their inheritance in the new republic, elocution brought distinct and pleasing speech to the lips of the pioneer. The backward were assisted in the development of poise, bodily movement and the precise amount of restraint necessary to meet the tastes of the people whom they were addressing. From the great American elocution movement emerged the foundation of our present day speech training, particularly in the matter of delivery. In truth, a conspicuous background is clearly evident in the widespread demand for the subject during the period. Fundamentals of speech, phonetics, voice and diction, dramatics, oral interpretation, public speaking and principles of speech pathology are basically evident in its teachings.
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Candidate: Milton J. Wiksell

Major Field: Speech

Title of Thesis: Social Aspects of Nineteenth Century American Elocution

Approved:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination: July 24, 1948

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]