New books

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NEW BOOKS

A List of Plays for High School and College Production. Prepared by the Committee on Plays for Secondary Schools and Colleges of the Drama League of America, and the Committee on Plays for Schools and Colleges of the National Council of Teachers of English. Chicago: The Drama League of America, 1916. Pp. 41. Paper, \$0.25.

The Drama League's *List of Plays* may be admitted, without argument, to be the most practical and convenient selection of plays suitable for amateurs. Other lists may aid, and expand or re-emphasize the value of its judgments, but it remains the aid least dispensable to directors of amateur dramatics. This year's list is substantially that arranged for the League in 1915 by John M. Clapp, acting with the League's committee, and a number of desirable plays have been added, and some rearrangement for convenience of reference has been attempted. The introductory note on choosing plays, on organization, on elements of training, on copyright and royalty, is good—though some excellent material from the 1915 pamphlet seems to be missing. The descriptive comment under play titles is ample and analytical—though not always well proportioned. The classification of plays listed is fuller and more helpful than before. Praise and appreciation of the value of the list is easy.

The shifting of emphasis to the plays more suitable for high-school work is quite noticeable, and the make-up of the committee of selection makes this perhaps inevitable. Doubtless this high-school field is the large one, but one misses an increased or even ample list of that type of plays which college amateurs not only can, but do, present—more difficult and more ambitious plays, even plays more elaborate than many school organizations care to risk, but the type of play that will most certainly raise standards of taste and properly test the energies and abilities of well-tried organizations. Some excellent plays of this class—by modern British and continental writers—even some that found place in the Drama League's earliest list—are wanting here. Very desirable is a fairly comprehensive list of the usable plays of Shaw, Pinero, Jones, Galsworthy, Ibsen, Björnson, Fulda, Hauptmann, Becque, Giacosa,

Gogol, Bergstrom, Lavedan, Strindberg, Curel, Sudermann, Tchekhov, and others. Some plays of these writers are noted, but others come to mind offhand, as Giacosa's *Like Falling Leaves*, Jones's *The Rogue's Comedy*, Björnson's *The Bankrupt*, Sudermann's *Fritzchen*, Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, Stevenson and Henley's *Macaire*, Gogol's *Revizor*, etc. Ought not the production of such plays to be encouraged by some attention to a really adequate list covering this field?

The "Bibliography on Plays and Acting for Mature Readers"—so long as pretense is made at one—surely could be made more complete and much more useful. How such excellent aids as H. K. Moderwell's *The Theatre To-Day*, Constance Mackaye's *Costumes and Scenery for Amateurs*, and Lewé's classic *On Actors and the Art of Acting* fail of inclusion in such a list is curious. One might add now—published since the list—Emerson Taylor's brief, but really good, *Practical Stage Directing for Amateurs*.

And while we are offering suggestions, might not a list of some of the other less valuable but still contributory bibliographies of plays be noted? And as the *List* is frankly an advertisement of the best and most usable goods, would not a reference list of approved costumers and scenery houses, and suggestions as to valuable catalogues in this field, be usable?

In short, could not the *List* be easily made a more useful volume for directors of amateurs by the addition of the several sorts of information that the beginner in this work needs so badly? But to return, from suggestive criticism to praise, the *List* is the most adequate for its purposes that we know, and a copy of it should be a first comfort to all interested in choosing plays for amateurs; and it is even of no little interest and value to those having a mere reading business with dramatic literature.

A. M. D.

Teaching Literature in the Grammar Grades and High School. By EMMA MILLER BOLENIUS, A.M. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1915. Pp. 337. \$1.25.

Of this new volume in the Riverside Textbooks in Education series many good things may easily be urged. It may be admitted to be excellent of its kind, or even best of its kind, and still leave undecided the value of the kind itself. The writer of this book speaks from an evidently rich and intelligent teaching experience. The mass of material and suggestion here compiled represents a task in itself. Here are suggested methods of studying each "type" of literature; here are suggestive

questions and answers for teacher and pupil; here are really good lists of poems and parallel readings; here are rather good little bibliographies for the teacher's further reading; here are suggestive "diagrams" for mapping every turn of plot and action; here are collected an able teacher's experience in doing the things—probably in doing them very well. And one can surely say that this book has a suggestion for everyone; that it might well be placed on all our shelves; in short, that it is the sort of thing often done, but within its limitations done unusually well in this case. This should be enough to encourage all to form an independent opinion of the book, and thus get value from it.

But to return to the kind: Is this sort of handbook what qualified teachers of English need to inspire them to more power in teaching their subject? Is not this a short-cut method that, on the whole, leads only to efficient mediocrity? Is it the kind of stimulus the teacher really needs? Does it tend to that sound training and inspiration of the teacher which alone is the secret of success? Is there anything here which is not better found in any of the real books which, of course, stand on any self-respecting teacher's shelves, or which is not as easily found in any usable editions of the texts for study? Or is there any fundamental discussion of the essence of the subject as contrasted with the study of a particular type of writing?

One feels that it all falls across the fence. If it is for grammar-school teachers, it is not for high-school teachers, and vice versa. Judged by preparation, are these not two fairly distinct classes? Even when this is decided, the whole approach too often seems clearly on the plane of the pupil rather than of the teacher. Of this more.

The book is planned to be useful to "teachers of elementary- and high-school English," as a text "particularly useful" in "normal schools and colleges and in teachers' reading circles . . . as well as [to] mothers and all others interested in child training" and "to the general reader interested in literary lines!" Poobah! We submit that to the end of this too-wide appeal the method of treatment is no proper means.

Can "What is literature?" be answered with two definitions from Webster and three lines from Henry van Dyke? Is "Elizabethan London and the Theatre" to be dismissed in a page and a quarter—for *teachers*? Or is "Shakespeare as an Actor" covered by Hamlet's advice to the players? Better than such scraps would be a reference to an adequate book. And this treatment is unfortunately typical. The proposed purpose of the book makes such treatment almost inevitable.

But to summarize our judgment: the book attempts—and all its kind attempt—too much. As a compilation of suggestions or methods which one teacher found good, it does very well. But to add to this generic criticism, outlines of literary history, etc., blunt the effect, and insure a very inadequate and scrappy treatment of all this aspect of the subject.

The assumption of a lamentable ignorance in teachers results in unfortunate effects in both matter and style. Of course, if this ignorance exists, it surely should be corrected; but we believe that teachers, at least high-school teachers, know more than the writer gives them credit for. If not, more than this handbook is needed to overcome lack of training. The attempt to do too much in too little robs the book of the stamp of originality, and emphasizes—undeservedly, one feels—its compilatory features. One finishes it longing for just a breath of, say, George Herbert Palmer.

But despite the moot question as to whether such practical suggestions on practice are of much value to anyone except the originator, we believe that for those who find such material valuable—and surely all can find it suggestive—this book is perhaps the completest of its kind.

In closing, however, the teacher of public speaking or those interested in oral English will be glad to note the insistence on reading and expression and oral recitation as an effective, perhaps the most effective, means of “vitalizing” literature. The section devoted to “The Oration” is more than ordinarily adequate in its appreciation of this form of address. And the plans for the study of the conciliation speech seem effective.

There is so much that is good in *Teaching Literature* that one regrets the duty of pointing out its deficiencies, so many of which arise from the very nature of the task assumed.

A. M. D.

Practical Stage Directing for Amateurs. By EMERSON TAYLOR.
New York: Walton & Co., 1915. Pp. 193. \$1.00.

This little handbook for amateur managers and actors is the best thing of its kind and within its scope that we have read. It is refreshingly better written than the run of such manuals, and better balanced in its viewpoint. It might well be more complete, but its advice on “Do’s and Don’ts,” organization, rehearsing, and the elements of acting, and the sane standard set for amateur work, combine to give it a stamp of happy sanity.

All directors of amateurs need aid. They need more than this little book can give, but they ought not to miss this help. The amateur actor will find it valuable, of course. And it's all so well written and selected that the casual reader, and especially the theatergoer, will find it worth while. It has our approval.

A. M. D.

The Natural Method of Voice Production in Speech and Song. By FLOYD S. MUCKEY, M.D.C.M., New York: Scribner, 1915. Cloth, pp. 149. \$1.00.

The discovery of the *Natural Method of Voice Production*, the author tells us, was the result of experiments carried on in collaboration with the late William Hallock, professor of physics at Columbia University. The author's own words will best show the scope and purpose of his book: "A strictly impartial scientific investigation of the action of the vocal mechanism from the standpoint of anatomy (structure of the mechanism), and physics (laws which regulate its action)" (p. 4); and later: "Finished speech and song involve two things, correct voice production and interpretation. . . . This book deals with voice production and not with interpretation" (pp. 13 f.).

A few sentences from the Preface will show very well the estimate the author puts on his own work, and on the work of other investigators. He says: "At the very beginning they [Dr. Muckey and Professor Hallock] had a *full knowledge of the fundamental facts*¹ bearing on voice production. . . . That this problem has remained unsolved till now is evidenced by the fact that there are no singers singing today without interference: *Previous works on voice fail to show any evidence of a knowledge of the fundamental facts* or the use of the necessary scientific apparatus for its proper application. For the foregoing reasons, the author claims to be the first to present the natural method of voice production" (pp. viii f.).

The besetting sin of writers on voice-training, song and speech, which Dr. Muckey has not entirely escaped from, seems to be a proneness to "discover" facts and to promulgate theories that have been known and published possibly for decades, without giving due credit, evidently feeling that such a procedure would lessen the value of the work. Of course there are many notable exceptions. Many of us are looking forward to the time when someone will publish all the known facts in this field

¹ Italics mine.

and at the same time give due credit to the many thousands of earnest investigators of the subject.

Considerations such as this, however, should not blind one to real merit, and real merit Dr. Muckey's work has.

The two ideas that are given greatest prominence, and justly, are: (1) the value of resonance and (2) the evils of interference by activity of extrinsic muscles. It would be difficult to emphasize these two points too much. "Correct voice production, or the action of the mechanism which produces the perfect vocal tone, consists in the free vibration of the vocal cords, the free motion of the cartilages and muscles of the larynx, and the full use of the resonance space" (p. 145).

Nevertheless, opinion may vary as to the qualities of a "free vocal tone." In discussing resonance the author says: "We found that the raising of the soft palate shut off the cavities of the upper pharynx and nose and diminished by more than one-half the resonance capabilities of the voice mechanism. This action of the soft palate resulted in the loss of more than one-half of the voice itself, as shown by our photographic analyses" (p. 6). See Dr. Blanton's comment on this statement in the *Quarterly* for January, 1916, p. 94. Other authorities might be quoted to the same effect. "Producing a nasal tone or twang [is] always a fault."¹ "The nasal cavity and its tributary sinuses take part in the formative process of the nasal consonants *M*, *N*, *NG*, in all of which the passage through the mouth is entirely obstructed and the sound passes through the nose, but they also take part in the important function of adding to the sonority of the whole voice."² "The passage through the nose during *M* must be carefully watched when opening onto a vowel, and the same applies to the other nasal sound *N*. In both cases the nasal sound must disappear entirely at the beginning of the vowel sound."³ One looks in vain for evidence to support the theory that "*The so-called 'nasal' quality is due entirely to this cause* [false-cord interference]. In fact any roughness or hardness in the tone is a sure indication of false-cord interference" (p. 73).⁴ Surely the statement of a theory so at variance with ideas so long accepted should be worthy of some support in justification.

¹ *Voice Production in Singing and Speaking*, by Wesley Mills, M.A., M.D., F.R.S.C. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1906, p. 146.

² *The Voice*, by W. A. Aikin, M.D. London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1910, p. 122.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁴ Italics mine.

Again, we are told that "any sliding up to pitch means false-cord interference" (p. 85). Is not this condition due to a failure of the intrinsic muscles of the larynx to adjust themselves properly, due either to a "poor" ear, or the inability of the cords themselves to respond to the dictates of the ear, rather than to false-cord action? How can the false cords control the pitch of the tone, since "the pitch of the voice is determined by the length, weight, and tension of the vocal cords" (p. 144)?

In discussing the nature of the vocal mechanism, Dr. Muckey tells us that "among the most important of these¹ [discoveries] was the fact that the voice mechanism is a stringed instrument." He then proceeds to argue that whatever is true of the vibrations of a stringed instrument, in which the strings are fixed at either end, is true of the vocal cords, which are attached, not only at either end, but also along one entire side to the comparatively heavy thyro-arytenoid muscles. This, and similar analogies between mechanical instruments and the vocal mechanism, has been made so often and pushed so far that it may be well for us to remind ourselves that the function of an analogy is to make clear, and that it is dangerous to force such a figure "to go on all fours." Dr. Mills has put the matter thus: "Much discussion has taken place from time to time as to the nature of the larynx as a muscular instrument, some being inclined to regard it as most closely allied to a stringed instrument, others to a wind instrument. It has obviously points of resemblance to both, but the most recent researches make it clearer than ever that it is neither one nor the other, strictly speaking, but that it stands in a class by itself."²

Few will agree with the author's treatment of breathing in its relation to voice-training. For he says that the only function of the breath in voice production is to vibrate the vocal cords, which alone originate all of the air waves composing the voice. . . . *It is therefore a secondary and not a direct cause in voice production* (p. 98).³ Granted that the function of the breath in voice production is to vibrate the vocal cords, it is only with a sufficient quantity of air in the lungs and a well-regulated pressure against the vocal cords that we are enabled to meet the demands of good speech and song. Very little actual teaching of the typical college student is needed to convince one of the need of breathing exercises.

¹ Cf. *Voice, Song and Speech*, by Browne and Behnke. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1883, pp. 70 ff.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

³ Italics mine.

"Breath itself will not vibrate the vocal cords. It must have power applied to it by the energized chest walls and lung substance before it is compressed sufficiently to vibrate the cords. It is the *breath pressure* furnished by the motive power of the respiratory muscles which is the effective agent in vibrating the vocal cords" (p. 105). True; therefore train the muscles to regulate this "breath pressure." Surely the author would not argue that the bowing-arm of the violinist is a "secondary cause," and that therefore it needs no training. Says Dr. Aikin in this connection, "Pressure of the breath . . . is directly responsible for the sound of the voice."¹ "The sole responsibility of the breath for the onset, continuity, and cessation of the vocal note is a first principle of phonology."²

After discussing the scientific phase of the subject Dr. Muckey presents his Natural Method, which is based on the theory that all voice-training should begin with the sound of *M*,³ followed by the combination of *ME*, and so on through the whole range of vowel and consonant combinations, as opposed to the more generally accepted theory that all training should begin with the broad vowel *ah*. Why begin with either to the exclusion of the other? Should the instructor not be governed in his choice of exercises by the needs of the pupil? Sometimes one will be more efficacious, sometimes the other.

One of the most valuable chapters in the book is that on "Standardization of Vocal Terminology." Possibly there is no branch of learning about which there is so much disagreement, not only as to the so-called facts, but also as to their interpretation. One needs only to pick up a book at random, almost, to find examples of false statements and the incorrect use of terms. A certain amount of disagreement is without doubt a good sign, but nothing will be so beneficial to our work as a clearing away of the débris of pseudo-scientific facts and theories.

Special attention should also be directed to Appendix II on "Standards of Voice Production." These fundamental principles of voice production, formulated by Dr. Muckey, were submitted by the National Association of Teachers of Singing to the New York State Music Teachers' Convention and adopted by it June, 1915. This statement of principles is well worth the study of anyone interested in the subject.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

² *Ibid.*, p. 92.

³ Cf. *The Tone Line*, by Albert Baker Cheney. Boston, 1896, p. 37.

In spite of all that may be pointed out against it, the book contains many valuable discussions and a number of good illustrations. It will doubtless aid in a better understanding of our problems. It is a book, however, for the professional; hardly for the untrained teacher who wishes to give only a little training in speech or song in connection with other work, such as English in the high school. This is true, if for no other reason, because in such cases, possibly in all cases, teaching of tone production should go hand in hand with training in interpretation, whether of speech or song.

GUY B. MUCHMORE

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Public Speaking. By JAMES ALBERT WINANS. Ithaca, N.Y.: Sewell Publishing Co., 1915. Cloth, pp. xlii+476. \$1.50.

The scope of this book is best stated in the author's words, for this happens to be a book in which the purpose the author gives in the preface seems really to have been kept in mind and carried out in the text. "I treat here of practical public speaking, and consider within the scope of this book whatever pertains to preparing and delivering one's own speech. Whatever in this text pertains to interpretation is introduced chiefly for its bearing upon the training of practical public speakers; and I have taken a broad view of what does bear upon such training." This, then, is a book attuned to the problems to be met in presenting one's own ideas to audiences through the medium of public speech.

Some will perhaps regret that a more restricted title was not used. Since no one has as yet proposed for our departments a title that has gained general acceptance over the common one of "Public Speaking," some will question the desirability of calling a single volume by this name. To them it seems like calling a book "Mathematics" rather than "Algebra" or "Geometry." On the other hand this book deals with the problem of speaking in public or "public speaking" in perhaps the most legitimate meaning of that term. The difficulty probably lies in our inadequate departmental title, which covers much that is not "speaking" and a great deal that is not "public." But Winans' textbook is our subject here.

Its first excellence is its definiteness of aim faithfully lived up to. It was not designed to cover the whole field in detail from debate to dramatic impersonation, from voice-training and speech defects to interpretation. It was not planned as a satisfactory text for all students from grammar grades to university Seniors and graduates—nor for all

who "would perfect themselves in the noblest of the arts" from prize orators to ambitious business men. It was planned as a *textbook* for college and university students. While this has been its aim and plan, it is, of course, true that any mature person of intelligence, who has opportunities to practice, can be helped much by this book. It is too fundamental to be other than useful to anyone—college student or otherwise—who wishes to know the fundamental things in regard to presenting his thoughts to an audience through the medium of public speech.

The style of this volume is a treat. It is interesting, refreshing, human. It is free from cant and trite pomposity. Some of its epigrams ought to help in bringing sanity and sincerity to the classrooms of those who are working with good intentions, rather than accurate knowledge and thorough training, as the foundations of their teaching.

This book seems to be quite free from the faults which are so often justly pointed out in books in this field. It is not superficial. It is deep, thorough, scholarly. It is the result, not only of "years of practical teaching in the classroom" (which seems to be the very inadequate basis for so many textbooks), but is the result also of years of thorough, devoted, scholarly study. No other book dealing with the problems of speaking has ever presented the results of so much and such accurate study in psychology. With "attention" as the "keyword," Winans has written a book at once sound psychologically, free from the common, external, mechanical approach to specific problems, and at the same time clear, simple, interesting. This book is probably not the last word on the psychology of public speaking. Its author neither claims nor desires it to be. But it is, it seems to me, the most authoritative word that has ever been spoken on this subject.

Another particular in which this book differs from so many in the field of public speaking is that it is not unduly padded with "selections." Winans presents us a discussion—a text—thoroughly illustrated, enriched with numerous apt quotations, and *all carefully documented*. He has properly drawn on the findings of a great many writers who have gone before him; and he has, apparently without exception, acknowledged in specific terms his obligations. This is a book that the whole profession may be proud of.

The plan of the book will doubtless seem strange to some teachers. But the author's suggestions for different plans of going through the text, the *fundamental* nature of the various discussions presented, and the completeness of the different chapters (they are chapters, not lessons),

make it easy for a teacher to follow any course that seems best. This thoroughgoing nature of the individual chapters is testified to by the interesting fact that the course in journalism in the University of Wisconsin is using the chapters on "Influencing Conduct" and "Persuasion and Belief" in teaching persuasive editorial writing.

What is the relation of this book to the rest of the field? In my opinion, to change the figure somewhat, it leads the field. It is an advance over all other books dealing with "whatever pertains to preparing and delivering one's own speech." It brings the subject down to date. What others have done before has been adapted, co-ordinated, related, used as building material. In regard to the exact place in which to use it, I would say that it will undoubtedly find its greatest place in college, university, and normal-school classes. It is probably somewhat "over the heads" of most high-school and preparatory-school students (which is more than can be said of many books in this department). No teacher, however, who has to do with the teaching of original speaking, in any grade, under any circumstances, by whatsoever methods, should omit a careful study of this book.

J. M. O'N.

Practical Argumentation. By GEORGE A. PATTEE. New York: Century Co., 1915.

A revised edition of *Practical Argumentation and Debate*, by Pattee, has appeared, bearing the date 1915. As its title indicates, it is a restatement of the book of the same title bearing the date 1909. According to the author's statement, "The revised edition . . . is the result of a constant demand on the part of teachers of argumentation and debate for new supplementary material with which to work." A review of the book must concern itself chiefly with the success of the author in achieving the result promised. Comment as to the principles and theories of argumentation and debate is superfluous and out of place, for the reason that the changes in the text are so few as to be entirely negligible. Those who have taken to the book will find the same discussion they have liked before, while those who have not found the text to their liking will discover no new reason why they should be drawn to it. The addition of a chapter on parliamentary law leaves little to add and nothing to detract.

The change in the exercises is valuable as a change. It seems apparent that the author, in getting out the new edition, desires chiefly

to relieve teachers of the tedium of going over the same exercises again and again. Incidentally, students using the new book will not be bored by penciled comment on the margins of the exercises. In fact, one suspects that the chief reason for the issuance of a new edition is to allow the student the privilege of working out his exercises for himself.

The book adds nothing to the literature of conviction and persuasion, the text remaining the same. To those addicted to the Pattee way of stating the case for argumentation and debate, it will be of benefit for practical classroom use; to others it will appeal hardly any more than the edition of 1909.

C. H. W.

Oral English. By JOHN M. BREWER. New York: Ginn & Co., 1916. Cloth, pp. 396. \$1.00.

This book presents mainly two kinds of material—the obvious and the erroneous. The author has something to say on every phase of oral work: oral narration, description, exposition, argumentation, debate, dramatics, reading, extempore speaking, oratory, conversation, voice, gesture, posture, “control of the feet,” and “the management of face and eyes”! The obvious portions of the book have to do with elementary suggestions and exercises in the constructive side of work in the different forms of composition. Even a very inadequately trained teacher ought to be able to dictate as good a text and as helpful exercises without much premeditation. These portions of the book are entirely harmless, and might even prove helpful to a busy teacher who wanted ready-made lists of things to do.

Those parts of this volume that are particularly concerned with oral work might, by great charity, be labeled simply erroneous and useless, and so passed by with little attention. But there are a number of factors that seem to justify a somewhat extended consideration of this latest word on oral English. In the first place, the book is capable of doing so much harm in so many ways that a detailed exposure of its offenses seems to be a professional duty. Nor is this warning uncalled for; bad as the book is, we cannot depend upon it to be its own indictment. We must remember in this connection that hundreds of teachers in the high schools and grades in the United States are, through no fault of their own, required to teach, coach, or supervise oral work in some form without any training whatever for this work, without any knowledge of either facts or methods in this field. In the second place, the book appears just at a time when there is much discussion of oral English, is

very attractive in type and make-up, is published by one of the leading publishing houses of the country, and is so filled with crutches, thumb-rules, exercises, and glib advice that it might well deceive the uninitiated.

Direct quotations from various parts of the book, with brief comments on them, will probably best exhibit the character of this volume.

"A successful singer" (note the careful documenting of this authority) "has said that while singing he has the feeling that his chest is extended forward and upward. This position gives erectness and freedom" (p. 45). This is the author's definite suggestion for "standing positions" before an audience. Could anything be worse as a model for school children? The puerility of the following sentences on "controlling the feet and hands" is characteristic of the author's grasp of bodily poise and control, and of the use of the body in general as an expressive agent. "Poor control of the feet spoils many speeches. . . . To recover from these habits one must remember that there is no sense or reason in such awkwardness; the feet behave at other times, and there is no need for misplaced activities now" (p. 46). Consider these two bits of instruction in regard to gesture: "Another tiresome habit is that of representing ideas by gestures; for example, a rainbow by a sweep through the air, generosity by the open hand, or an expression like 'His schooling was cut off' by a chopping-like motion. Such gesturing should be entirely avoided" (p. 50). What Mr. Brewer is evidently getting so confused about here is the old rule of elocution to the effect that literal action should not be used with figurative language. The following questionable advice is given in closing: "Study the use of the hands made by successful speakers, and learn what to avoid and what to cultivate" (p. 50).

I doubt if there can be found in the writings of the most artificial of the mechanical elocutionists of the last century any more vicious passage than the following (*italics mine*):

The facial expression.—If the speaker presents a dignified and natural appearance to the audience, his speech receives a more favorable hearing than it would otherwise. *A sincere, pleasant countenance and a direct look also help to make a talk more attractive. The student must therefore study the management of face and eyes* so that both as he walks up to take his place before the audience and as he begins his speech, he may help to create an atmosphere of good will.

Manifesting self-control.—*The speaker's mental poise should be manifest in his expression.* His face may show confidence, pleasure, and earnestness, for all these qualities will appeal to an audience. *The feelings must be under such control*, however, that confidence does not become conceit, nor pleasure silliness,

nor earnestness vehemence. *Any sign of self-esteem, self-consciousness, carelessness, foolishness, disappointment, peevishness, disrespect, ridicule, scorn, or anger is sure to interfere with what the speaker is trying to say, and with the meaning he wishes to convey to the hearers.*

Suppose, for example, that a student is speaking in favor of adopting a system of self-government in his school, and an opponent has intimated that the only persons who advocate the proposed plan are those who have had difficulties with their teachers. *What shall be the expression on the speaker's face as he rises to answer?* It is evident that a careless laugh, a sneer, or a scowl might lead the audience to think that the statement were true of the speaker himself. *The reply would better be accompanied by a pleasant smile, if it is intended to show that the accusations are not true, or by a look of serious determination if it is to be admitted that there is dissatisfaction with some of the rules of the school but that such dissatisfaction may be avoided by the plan advocated.* Thus the debater would *have his thoughts under good control*, and would inspire confidence in his hearers [pp. 51-52].

It is all utterly wooden, artificial, mechanical, external, put on from the outside. This artificiality dominates the whole book. It is the old mechanical elocution at its worst, apparently with no appreciation whatever of the significance or proper use of the old elocution at its best. Read the following *exercises* (italics mine) and try to keep your temper "under control":

1. Come to class prepared to give a short talk upon a subject of your own choosing. In giving the speech, *pay particular attention to making your facial expression pleasing.* 2. Come to class prepared to give a short argument, expressing great earnestness, with strong disapproval of opposing ideas. *Make the facial expression earnest*, but do not scowl or frown. 3. Select an argumentative subject about which untrue and perhaps unfair statements might be made. Select one such statement to answer. Tell the audience what it is and proceed to reply to it. Assume no vindictiveness of manner or of visage, but *calmly and pleasantly* show that the opinion is based upon a misapprehension of the facts [p. 55].

On voice and breathing Mr. Brewer writes as follows (italics not in the original): "Experienced speakers" (another carefully documented authority) "tell us that no organs reflect nervousness more quickly and obviously than do the organs of speech. *We must banish, therefore, all the wandering thoughts that suggest fear and failure. We must summon to our aid all the qualities of mind that produce quietness, confidence, alertness, enthusiasm*" (p. 163). Easy, isn't it? Yet this seems to be the whole theory of "mind and voice" set forth in this remarkable volume. The difficulties and mysteries of psychology, physiology, and such trifling

sciences have no terrors for its author. For a *natural* method of breath control the following ought to win first prize (at any county fair):

The Control of the Breath. Let the throat and the breath do their work *naturally*. The *speaking tubes* must not be made tense, for a hard, harsh sound would be the result. *The voice should be round and open in shape—if one can imagine it having shape*—rather than flat and small. This applies to all tones high or low. *To breathe correctly while speaking, the student must assume an active standing position; that is he should feel the same strength and readiness of body that he would feel if preparing to lift a heavy weight, or to strike a heavy blow* [pp. 163–64].

The following exercises (*italics mine*) are given for voice and breathing:

1. Practice reading a short selection at home, *striving for calmness of mind and ease in using the throat. Try to make the tones as smooth as possible, eliminating all nasal quality and harshness.*

2. *Assume the standing position described above, and practice deep breathing. As the air is inhaled and exhaled, the body immediately above the waist line should expand and contract. After practicing faithfully, read a selection, using the same position and manner of breathing. Study the selection so that you can make groupings of words which will allow you to use natural pauses for inhaling. It may be well to mark these places.* Read the selection in class [p. 164].

Now suppose we bring together the definite suggestions we have found so far, and see what the “assembled” product looks like. Imagine a student standing in the pugilistic position above described, “his chest extended forward and upward,” practicing deep breathing (this may tax your imagination, but never mind), his “speaking tubes not made tense,” “his feelings under control,” “his thoughts under good control,” his “mental poise made manifest in his expression,” his “feet behaving,” the “tiresome habit of representing ideas by gestures” entirely banished, along with “all wandering thoughts that suggest fear or failure.” Now he is all set. Thus made ready, he “summons to his aid all the qualities of mind that produce quietness, confidence, alertness, enthusiasm”; he decides the question, what shall be the expression on his face, in favor of “a sincere pleasant countenance”; and, adopting a “quiet, earnest manner, such as the principal of the school would assume in telling the students about the value of thinking about their life-careers” (p. 175), he generates “oral English” according to the latest specifications!

Space will not permit a detailed discussion of the faults of this volume in the sections devoted to argumentation and debate, but the care with which the author has apparently avoided any authoritative information

in these branches may be illustrated by one or two citations. On p. 228 there is much confusion because seemingly the author is unfamiliar with the elementary principle that propositions for debate should be so worded that the burden of proof falls on the affirmative. This principle, which is universally true, should be used instead of the thumb rules about negative statements and the word "not." These rules are true only under certain circumstances, and are wholly untrustworthy guides. Again, on p. 247, Mr. Brewer gives as "the kinds of reasoning": induction, deduction, example, sign, and analogy. Such a list of five co-ordinate kinds of reasoning, with the definitions and discussions given, shows an innocence of logic and rhetoric that may perhaps be revered for its virginal purity; but I submit that this particular kind of innocence must in the nature of things be sacrificed by one who presumes to bring forth an intelligent discussion of argumentation and debate.

Such is "oral English" in 1916, according to the last book off the press. And all this was written by a man who claims in his preface "several years of fortunate experience in a school which pioneered in developing courses in oral English." From the title-page I infer that the Los Angeles High School is meant. Poor pioneer! Better work than this was done in what he is pleased to call oral English, before Los Angeles schools ever had courses for the teaching of English, oral or otherwise. He seems to have pioneered himself *back* into the poorest positions held by the elocutionists of the last century—not a strange nor inappropriate fate for one who pioneers in the darkness.

J. M. O'N.