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TO WHAT EXTENT CANDOR?

IN LAST November's issue of the *Review* Professor Woolbert writes interestingly on "The Ethics of Public Address." That a paper should set the reader thinking even in mild form is, of course, complimentary to the writer. The bill of indictment is sufficiently inclusive, and not many of the items are such that anyone who has given attention to the problem could in fairness protest. Speech quackery is altogether too common and deserves consignment to a climate too warm for the thriving of the germ. As we read, however, a few questions kept rising in our minds. To transcribe these questions on paper may indicate a condition that is either imbecile or dishonest or both. Albeit, for the sake of the cause we are going to risk martyrdom.

Whether we speak to an audience of one or many shall we make an ethical distinction? Shall we have one standard for conversation and another for public address? Is the language of diplomacy, of polite speech, to be wholly ruled out? Are we going to insist that the preacher shall tell his parishioners what he knows to be true of them? Shall the editor, instead of dwelling on the beauty of the bride, frankly tell how homely he knows her to be? Must we play the Puritan and tell the mother how dull and unattractive to us seems the child in which she sees the embodiment of perfection? Shall we state frankly to the kind hostess our unfavorable impression of the dinner? Shall we substitute volcanic eruptions for a peaceful and tolerable condition of society?

And that old Quaker who, when he met the Indian in pursuit of the child just where the path forked, told the Indian a lie to save the child's life—to what extent was the Quaker unethical? Before beginning one of the most inspiring addresses to which the writer ever listened, Booker T. Washington, a number of years ago, indulged in a few preliminary remarks. He felt that he was about to address the best-looking outdoor audience he had met that summer. Shall we say that the remark was dishonest or improper? At any rate, he took the audience captive and held it throughout. Possibly he did not repeat the compliment wherever he went.

In the introductory remarks of his Liverpool speech was Henry Ward Beecher sincere in all he said? "Now personally it is a

matter of very little consequence to me whether I speak here tonight or not." Did he not go to England for the sole purpose of speaking in behalf of the Union? And didn't his great hissing audience give the lie to that honeyed phrase about the "tone and temper of Englishmen"?

Without a doubt, too, poor old Mark Antony said a few things which exclude him from the "cherry-tree class." But supposing that the best interest of Rome, in the opinion of Antony, demanded the expulsion of the conspirators, just as in the opinion of Beecher, that in England demanded that the Plymouth preacher be heard, are we going to conclude that these valiant knights of the forum should have remained "rational of speech" while their cause perished?

Apparently there are no lack of instances from both ancient and modern sources, not in all respects dissimilar to the above, where a worthy end has called for, if indeed it has not entirely justified, an otherwise questionable course. In fact should we set out to form an Oratorical Ananias Club on the ground indicated in this instance by Professor Woolbert, I fear we should have so many old and honored members that those on the outside would feel mighty lonesome. That the Antony speech makes a poor model of reasoning for a textbook on argumentation we very cheerfully concede. That the author, on the other hand, intended the speech to be "nothing but the work of a demagogue" we are not so certain. If Shakespere were only here. But, alas!

At one other point Professor Woolbert's interesting paper impresses us as being not in all respects tenable, not in this instance because he takes ethical ground that is too high. How often have we heard Senator Douglas condemned on the ground of inexpediency. His course has been sharply criticized on innumerable occasions because his policy indicated "shortsightedness," because he chose to make sure of the senatorship, while Lincoln in the next breath has been commended from all sides because he took the "long view" as if to make sure of the presidency. If expediency is expediency, we fail to get the ethical distinction.

It is far from our purpose even to hint that there was no ethical difference as between the diverse positions which these stalwart

champions chose to take in those great debates. Unquestionably Douglas does not begin to measure up to Lincoln in this regard. But as between the *short-sighted* view for the sake of *pay* and that of him who "looked into the future" for the greater *pay*, wherein lies a choice, ethically speaking?

In the days when the writer was perhaps more ethical than at present he was taught to believe in this sentiment: "The children of this world are wiser in their day and generation than the children of light." Are we now to learn how to serve God and Mammon simultaneously, how to commercialize Christianity? Are we to leave off the biblical version and insert instead such sentiments as, Honesty is the best policy, We should be good that we may prosper, or, It pays to take the long view? Suppose we raise the incentive a notch or two.

But again we are back to the question with which we set out. Won't someone be good enough to come along and tell us to what extent we should employ candor?

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AN INTERESTING experiment is in progress in one of the high schools of New England, for the furtherance of oral training in connection with the study of English. In the city of Manchester, New Hampshire, all the public-school teachers, about two hundred and twenty under the direction of Superintendent C. W. Bickford, attend a course of lectures given by Professor I. L. Winter, of Harvard University. Assisting instructors meet these teachers at other times, in small groups, for personal training in speaking and reading. This is to be carried on for two or three years, and it is expected that all teachers by example and precept will do something for better English and better speech.

HENRIETTA CROSMAN ON VOICE

MISS CROSMAN'S "colorful" little article "Voice and the Actor" (*Century Magazine*, May, 1915) should come under that expressive old news heading "Interesting—If True." And