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Basil, M DCC L XXXIX [1789]

Universitätsbibliothek Basel

Shelf Mark: UBH AO IV 63, 63a, 63b

Persistent Link: <https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-87759>

Lecture XXV. Eloquence, or Public Speaking. - History of Eloquence.-Grecian Eloquence. - Demosthenes.

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LECTURE XXV.

ELOQUENCE, OR PUBLIC SPEAKING.—HISTORY OF ELOQUENCE.
—GRECIAN ELOQUENCE. — DEMOSTHENES.

HAVING finished that part of the Course LECT. XXV.
which relates to Language and Style, we are now to ascend a step higher, and to examine the subjects upon which Style is employed. I begin with what is properly called Eloquence, or Public Speaking. In treating of this, I am to consider the different kinds and subjects of Public Speaking; the manner suited to each; the proper distribution and management of all the parts of a discourse; and the proper pronunciation or delivery of it. But before entering on any of these heads, it may be proper to take a view of the nature of Eloquence in general, and of the state in which it has subsisted in different ages and countries. This will lead into some detail; but I hope an useful one, as in every art it is of great consequence to have a just idea of the

LECT. perfection of the art, of the end at which it
XXV. aims, and of the progress which it has made
among mankind.

OF Eloquence, in particular, it is the more necessary to ascertain the proper notion, because there is not any thing concerning which false notions have been more prevalent. Hence, it has been so often, and is still at this day, in disrepute with many. When you speak to a plain man of Eloquence, or in praise of it, he is apt to hear you with very little attention. He conceives Eloquence to signify a certain trick of Speech; the art of varnishing weak arguments plausibly; or of speaking so as to please and tickle the ear. "Give me good sense," says he, "and keep your Eloquence for boys." He is in the right, if Eloquence were what he conceives it to be. It would be then a very contemptible art indeed, below the study of any wise or good man. But nothing can be more remote from truth. To be truly eloquent, is to speak to the purpose. For the best definition which, I think, can be given of Eloquence, is, the Art of Speaking in such a manner as to attain the end for which we speak. Whenever a man speaks or writes, he is supposed, as a rational being, to have some end in view; either to inform, or to amuse, or to persuade; or, in some way or other, to act upon his fellow-creatures. He who speaks, or writes, in such a manner as to adapt all his words most effectually to that end, is the most eloquent man. Whatever then the subject

be, there is room for Eloquence; in history, or even in philosophy, as well as in orations. The definition which I have given of Eloquence, comprehends all the different kinds of it; whether calculated to instruct, to persuade, or to please. But, as the most important subject of discourse is Action, or Conduct, the power of Eloquence chiefly appears when it is employed to influence Conduct, and persuade to Action. As it is principally, with reference to this end, that it becomes the object of Art, Eloquence may, under this view of it, be defined, The Art of Persuasion.

THIS being once established, certain consequences immediately follow, which point out the fundamental maxims of the Art. It follows clearly, that, in order to persuade, the most essential requisites are, solid argument, clear method, a character of probity appearing in the Speaker, joined with such graces of Style and utterance, as shall draw our attention to what he says. Good sense is the foundation of all. No man can be truly eloquent without it; for fools can persuade none but fools. In order to persuade a man offense, you must first convince him; which is only to be done, by satisfying his understanding of the reasonableness of what you propose to him.

THIS leads me to observe, that convincing and persuading, though they are sometimes confounded, import, notwithstanding, different things, which it is necessary for us, at present, to distinguish from each other. Conviction affects

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L E C T. the understanding only; persuasion, the will and
XXV. the practice. It is the business of the philosopher to convince me of truth; it is the business of the orator to persuade me to act agreeably to it, by engaging my affections on its side. Conviction, and persuasion, do not always go together. They *ought*, indeed, to go together; and *would* do so, if our inclination regularly followed the dictates of our understanding. But as our nature is constituted, I may be convinced, that virtue, justice, or public spirit, are laudable, while, at the same time, I am not persuaded to act according to them. The inclination may revolt, though the understanding be satisfied: the passions may prevail against the judgment. Conviction is, however, always one avenue to the inclination, or heart; and it is that which an Orator must first bend his strength to gain: for no persuasion is likely to be stable, which is not founded on conviction. But, in order to persuade, the Orator must go farther than merely producing conviction; he must consider man as a creature moved by many different springs, and must act upon them all. He must address himself to the passions; he must paint to the fancy, and touch the heart; and, hence besides solid argument, and clear method, all the conciliating and interesting arts, both of Composition and Pronunciation, enter into the idea of eloquence.

AN objection may, perhaps hence be formed against Eloquence; as an Art which may be

employed for persuading to ill, as well as to good. There is no doubt that it may; and so reasoning may also be, and too often is employed, for leading men into error. But who would think of forming an argument from this against the cultivation of our reasoning powers? Reason, Eloquence, and every Art which ever has been studied among mankind, may be abused, and may prove dangerous in the hands of bad men; but it were perfectly childish to contend, that, upon this account, they ought to be abrogated. Give truth and virtue the same arms which you give vice and falsehood, and the former are likely to prevail. Eloquence is no invention of the schools. Nature teaches every man to be eloquent, when he is much in earnest. Place him in some critical situation; let him have some great interest at stake, and you will see him lay hold of the most effectual means of persuasion. The Art of Oratory proposes nothing more than to follow out that track which Nature has first pointed out to men. And the more exactly that this track is pursued, the more that Eloquence is properly studied, the more shall we be guarded against the abuse which bad men make of it, and enabled the better to distinguish between true Eloquence and the tricks of Sophistry.

WE may distinguish three kinds, or degrees of Eloquence. The first, and lowest, is that which aims only at pleasing the hearers. Such, generally, is the Eloquence of panegyrics, inaugural orations, addresses to great men, and other har-

LECT. angues of this sort. This ornamental sort of composition is not altogether to be rejected. It may innocently amuse and entertain the mind ; and it may be mixed, at the same time, with very useful sentiments. But it must be confessed, that where the Speaker has no farther aim than merely to shine and to please, there is great danger of Art. being strained into ostentation, and of the composition becoming tiresome and languid.

A SECOND and a higher degree of Eloquence is, when the Speaker aims not merely to please, but also to inform, to instruct, to convince: when his Art is exerted, in removing prejudices against himself and his cause, in chusing the most proper arguments, stating them with the greatest force, arranging them in the best order, expressing and delivering them with propriety and beauty; and thereby disposing us to pass that judgment, or embrace that side of the cause, to which he seeks to bring us. Within this compass chiefly, is employed the Eloquence of the bar.

BUT there is a third, and still higher degree of Eloquence, wherein a greater power is exerted over the human mind ; by which we are not only convinced, but are interested, agitated, and carried along with the Speaker; our passions are made to rise together with his; we enter into all his emotions ; we love, we detest, we resent, according as he inspires us; and are prompted to resolve, or to act, with vigour and warmth.

Debate

Debate, in popular assemblies, opens the most illustrious field to this species of Eloquence; and the pulpit, also, admits it.

I AM here to observe, and the observation is of consequence, that the high Eloquence which I have last mentioned, is always the offspring of passion. By passion, I mean that state of the mind in which it is agitated, and fired, by some object it has in view. A man may convince, and even persuade others to act, by mere reason and argument. But that degree of Eloquence which gains the admiration of mankind, and properly denominates one an Orator, is never found without warmth or passion. Passion, when in such a degree as to rouse and kindle the mind, without throwing it out of the possession of itself, is universally found to exalt all the human powers. It renders the mind infinitely more enlightened, more penetrating, more vigorous and masterly, than it is in its calm moments. A man, actuated by a strong passion, becomes much greater than he is at other times. He is conscious of more strength and force; he utters greater sentiments, conceives higher designs, and executes them with a boldness and a felicity, of which, on other occasions, he could not think himself capable. But chiefly, with respect to persuasion, is the power of passion felt. Almost every man, in passion, is eloquent. Then, he is at no loss for words and arguments. He transmits to others, by a sort of contagious sympathy, the warm sentiments which he feels; his looks and

LECT. gestures are all persuasive; and Nature here shows
 XXV. herself infinitely more powerful than all art.
 This is the foundation of that just and noted
 rule: "Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum
 " ipse tibi.

THIS principle being once admitted, that all high Eloquence flows from passion, several consequences follow, which deserve to be attended to; and the mention of which will serve to confirm the principle itself. For hence, the universally acknowledged effect of enthusiasm, or warmth of any kind, in public speakers, for affecting their audience. Hence all laboured declamation, and affected ornaments of Style, which show the mind to be cool and unmoved, are so inconsistent with persuasive Eloquence. Hence all studied pretinences, in gesture or pronunciation, detract so greatly from the weight of a Speaker. Hence a discourse that is read, moves us less than one that is spoken, as having less the appearance of coming warm from the heart. Hence, to call a man cold, is the same thing as to say, that he is not eloquent. Hence a sceptical man, who is always in suspense, and feels nothing strongly; or a cunning mercenary man, who is suspected rather to assume the appearance of passion than to feel it; have so little power over men in Public Speaking. Hence, in fine, the necessity of being, and being believed to be, disinterested, and in earnest, in order to persuade.

THESE are some of the capital ideas which have occurred to me, concerning Eloquence in

general; and with which I have thought proper to begin, as the foundation of much of what I am afterwards to suggest. From what I have already said, it is evident that Eloquence is a high talent, and of great importance in society; and that it requires both natural genius, and much improvement from Art. Viewed as the Art of Persuasion, it requires, in its lowest state, soundness of understanding, and considerable acquaintance with human nature; and, in its higher degrees, it requires, moreover, strong sensibility of mind, a warm and lively imagination, joined with correctness of judgment, and an extensive command of the power of Language; to which must also be added, the graces of Pronunciation and Delivery. — Let us next proceed, to consider in what state Eloquence has subsisted in different ages and nations.

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It is an observation made by several writers, that Eloquence is to be looked for only in free states. Longinus, in particular, at the end of his treatise on the Sublime, when assigning the reason why so little sublimity of genius appeared in the age wherein he lived, illustrates this observation with a great deal of beauty. Liberty, he remarks, is the nurse of true genius; it animates the spirit, and invigorates the hopes of men; excites honourable emulation, and a desire of excelling in every Art. All other qualifications, he says, you may find among those who are deprived of liberty; but never did a slave become an orator; he can only be a pompous flatterer.

LECT. XXV. Now, though this reasoning be, in the main true; it must, however, be understood with some limitations. For, under arbitrary governments, if they be of the civilised kind, and give encouragement to the arts, ornamental Eloquence may flourish remarkably. Witness France at this day, where, ever since the reign of Louis XIV. more of what may justly be called Eloquence, within a certain sphere, is to be found, than, perhaps, in any other nation of Europe; though freedom be enjoyed by some of them in a much greater degree. Their sermons and orations pronounced on publick occasions, are not only polite and elegant harangues, but several of them are uncommonly spirited, animated with bold figures, and rise to a degree of the Sublime. Their Eloquence, however, in general, must be confessed to be of the flowery, rather than the vigorous kind; calculated more to please and soothe, than to convince and persuade. High, manly and forcible Eloquence is, indeed to be looked for only, or chiefly, in the regions of freedom. Under arbitrary governments, besides the general turn of softness and effeminacy which such governments may be justly supposed to give to the spirit of a nation, the art of speaking cannot be such an instrument of ambition, business, and power as it is in more democratical states. It is confined within a narrower range; it can be exerted only in the pulpit, or at the bar; but is excluded from those great scenes of public business, where the spirits of men have the freest

play; where important affairs are transacted, and
 persuasion of course, is more seriously studied. LECT.
XXV.

Wherever man can acquire most power over
 man by means of reason and discourse, which
 certainly is under a free state of government,
 there we may naturally expect that true Elo-
 quence will be best understood, and carried to
 the greatest height.

HENCE, in tracing the rise of Oratory, we
 need not attempt to go far back into the early
 ages of the world, or search for it among the mo-
 numents of Eastern or Egyptian antiquity. In those
 ages, there was, indeed, an Eloquence of a certain
 kind; but it approached nearer to Poetry, than to
 what we properly call Oratory. There is reason
 to believe, as I formerly showed, that the Lan-
 guage of the first ages was passionate and meta-
 phorical; owing partly to the scanty stock of
 words, of which Speech then consisted; and
 partly to the tincture which Language naturally
 takes from the savage and uncultivated state of
 men, agitated by unrestrained passions, and
 struck by events, which to them are strange
 and surprising. In this state, rapture and enthu-
 siasm, the parents of Poetry, had an ample field.
 But while the intercourse of men was as yet un-
 frequent, and force and strength were the chief
 means employed in deciding controversies, the
 arts of Oratory and Persuasion, of Reasoning
 and Debate, could be but little known. The
 first empires that arose, the Assyrian and Egyp-
 tian, were of the despotic kind. The whole power

LECT. was in the hands of one, or at most of a few.
 XXV. The multitude were accustomed to a blind reverence: they were led, not persuaded; and none of those refinements of society, which make public speaking an object of importance, were as yet introduced.

It is not till the rise of the Grecian Republics, that we find any remarkable appearances of Eloquence as the art of persuasion; and these gave it such a field as it never had before, and, perhaps, has never had again since that time. And, therefore, as the Grecian Eloquence has ever been the object of admiration to those who have studied the powers of Speech, it is necessary, that we fix our attention, for a little, on this period.

GREECE was divided into a multitude of petty states. These were governed, at first, by kings who were called Tyrants, and who being, in succession, expelled from all these states, there sprung up a great number of democratical governments, founded nearly on the same plan, animated by the same high spirit of freedom, mutually jealous, and rivals of each other. We may compute the flourishing period of those Grecian states, to have lasted from the battle of Marathon, till the time of Alexander the Great, who subdued the liberties of Greece; a period which comprehends about 150 years, and within which are to be found most of their celebrated poets and philosophers, but chiefly their Orators: for though poetry and philosophy were not

extinct among them after that period, yet Elo- L E C T.
quence hardly made any figure. XXV.

OF these Grecian Republics, the most noted, by far, for Eloquence, and, indeed, for arts of every kind, was that of Athens. The Athenians were an ingenious, quick, sprightly people; practised in business, and sharpened by frequent and sudden revolutions, which happened in their government. The genius of their government was entirely democratical; their legislature consisted of the whole body of the people. They had, indeed, a Senate of five hundred; but in the general convention of the citizens was placed the last resort; and affairs were conducted there, altogether, by reasoning, speaking, and a skilful application to the passions and interests of a popular assembly. There, laws were made, peace and war decreed, and thence the magistrates were chosen. For the highest honours of the state were alike open to all; nor was the meanest tradesman excluded from a seat in their supreme courts. In such a state, Eloquence, it is obvious, would be much studied, as the surest means of rising to influence and power; and what sort of Eloquence? Not that which was brilliant merely, and showy, but that which was found, upon trial, to be most effectual for convincing, interesting, and persuading the hearers. For there, public speaking was not a mere competition for empty applause, but a serious contention for that public leading, which was the great object

LECT. both of the men of ambition, and the men of
XXV. virtue.

AMONG a nation so enlightened and acute, and where the highest attention was paid to every thing elegant in the arts, we may naturally expect to find the public taste refined and judicious. Accordingly, it was improved to such a degree, that the Attic taste and Attic manner have passed into a proverb. It is true, that ambitious demagogues, and corrupt orators, did sometimes dazzle and mislead the people, by a showy but false Eloquence; for the Athenians, with all their acuteness, were factious and giddy, and great admirers of every novelty. But when some important interest drew their attention, when any great danger roused them, and put their judgment to a serious trial, they commonly distinguished, very justly, between genuine and spurious Eloquence: and hence Demosthenes triumphed over all his opponents; because he spoke always to the purpose, affected no insignificant parade of words, used weighty arguments, and showed them clearly where their interest lay. In critical conjunctures of the state, when the public was alarmed with some pressing danger, when the people were assembled, and proclamation was made by the crier, for any one to rise and deliver his opinion upon the present situation of affairs, empty declamation and sophistical reasoning would not only have been hissed, but resented and punished by an assembly so intelligent and accustomed to business. Their greatest

Orators trembled on such occasions, when they rose to address the people, as they knew they were to be held answerable for the issue of the counsel which they gave. The most liberal endowments of the greatest princes never could found such a school for true oratory, as was formed by the nature of the Athenian Republic. Eloquence there sprung, native and vigorous, from amidst the contentions of faction and freedom, of public business, and of active life; and not from that retirement and speculation, which we are apt sometimes to fancy more favourable to Eloquence than they are found to be.

PYSISTRATUS, who was cotemporary with Solon, and subverted his plan of government, is mentioned by Plutarch, as the first who distinguished himself among the Athenians by application to the Arts of Speech. His ability in these arts, he employed for raising himself to the sovereign power; which, however, when he had attained, he exercised with moderation. Of the Orators who flourished between his time and the Peloponnesian war, no particular mention is made in history. Pericles, who died about the beginning of that war, was properly the first who carried Eloquence to a great height; to such a height indeed, that it does not appear he was ever afterwards surpassed. He was more than an Orator; he was also a Statesman and a General; expert in business, and of consummate address. For forty years, he governed Athens with absolute sway; and historians ascribe his

LECT. XXV. influence, not more to his political talents than to his Eloquence, which was of that forcible and vehement kind, that bore every thing before it, and triumphed over the passions and affections of the people. Hence he had the surname of Olympias given him: and it was said, that, like Jupiter, he thundered when he spoke. Though his ambition be liable to censure, yet great virtues certainly he had; and it was the confidence which the people reposed in his integrity, that gave such power to his Eloquence; a circumstance, without which the influence of public speaking in a popular state can seldom go far. He appears to have been generous, magnanimous, and public spirited: he raised no fortune to himself; he expended indeed great sums of the public money, but chiefly on public works; and at his death is said to have valued himself principally on having never obliged any citizen to wear mourning on his account, during his long administration. It is a remarkable particular recorded of Pericles by Suidas, that he was the first Athenian who composed, and put into writing, a discourse designed for the public.

POSTERIOR to Pericles, in the course of the Peloponnesian war, arose Cleon, Alcibiades, Critias, and Theramenes, eminent citizens of Athens, who were all distinguished for their Eloquence. They were not Orators by profession; they were not formed by schools, but by a much more powerful education, that of business and debate; where man sharpened man, and

civil affairs carried on by public speaking, called forth every exertion of the mind. The manner or style of Oratory which then prevailed, we learn from the Orations in the history of Thucydides, who also flourished in the same age. It was manly, vehement, and concise, even to some degree of obscurity. "Grandes erant verbis," says Cicero, "crebri sententiis, compressione rerum breves, et, ob eam ipsam causam, interdum subobscuri *." A manner very different from what in modern times we would conceive to be the Style of popular Oratory; and which tends to give a high idea of the acuteness of those audiences to which they spoke.

THE power of Eloquence having, after the days of Pericles, become an object of greater consequence than ever, this gave birth to a set of men till then unknown, called Rhetoricians, and sometimes Sophists, who arose in multitudes during the Peloponnesian war; such as Protagoras, Prodicus, Thrasymus, and one who was more eminent than all the rest, Gorgias of Leontium. These Sophists joined to their art of rhetoric a subtle logic, and were generally a sort of metaphysical Sceptics. Gorgias, however, was a professed master of Eloquence only. His reputation was prodigious. He was highly vene-

* "They were magnificent in their expressions; they abounded in thought; they compressed their matter into few words, and, by their brevity, were sometimes obscure."

LECT. rated in Leontium of Sicily, his native city; and
XXV. money was coined with his name upon it. In the latter part of his life, he established himself at Athens, and lived till he had attained the age of 105 years. Hermogenes (de Ideis, l. ii. cap. 9.) has preserved a fragment of his, from which we see his style and manner. It is extremely quaint and artificial; full of antithesis and pointed expression; and shows how far the Grecian subtilty had already carried the study of language. These Rhetoricians did not content themselves with delivering general instructions concerning Eloquence to their pupils, and endeavouring to form their taste; but they professed the art of giving them receipts for making all sorts of Orations; and of teaching them how to speak for, and against, every cause whatever. Upon this plan, they were the first who treated of common places, and the artificial invention of arguments and topics for every subject. In the hands of such men, we may easily believe that Oratory would degenerate from the masculine strain it had hitherto held, and become a trifling and sophistical art: and we may justly deem them the first corrupters of true Eloquence. To them, the great Socrates opposed himself. By a profound, but simple reasoning peculiar to himself, he exploded their sophistry; and endeavoured to recall men's attention from that abuse of reasoning and discourse which began to be in vogue, to natural language, and sound and useful thought.

IN the same age, though somewhat later than the philosopher above - mentioned, flourished Isocrates, whose writings are still extant. He was a professed Rhetorician, and by teaching Eloquence, he acquired both a great fortune, and higher fame than any of his rivals in that profession. No contemptible Orator he was. His orations are full of morality and good sentiments: they are flowing and smooth; but too destitute of vigour. He never engaged in public affairs, nor pleaded causes; and accordingly his orations are calculated only for the shade: "Pompæ", Cicero allows, "magis quam pugnæ aptior; ad voluptatem aurium accommodatus potius quam ad iudiciorum certamen. *." The Style of Georgias of Leontium was formed into short sentences, composed generally of two members balanced against each other. The Style of Isocrates, on the contrary, is swelling and full; and he is said to be the first who introduced the method of composing in regular periods, which had a studied music and harmonious cadence; a manner which he has carried to a vicious excess. What shall we think of an orator, who employed ten years in composing one discourse, still extant, entitled the Panegyric? How much frivolous care must have been bestowed on all the minute elegance of words and sentences? Dionysius of

* "More fitted for show than for debate; better calculated for the amusement of an audience, than for judicial contests."

- LECT. Halicarnassus has given us upon the orations of
 XXV. Isocrates, as also upon those of some other Greek
 orators, a full and regular treatise, which is, in
 my opinion, one of the most judicious pieces of
 ancient criticism extant, and very worthy of
 being consulted. He commends the splendour of
 Isocrates's Style, and the morality of his senti-
 ments; but severely censures his affectation, and
 the uniform regular cadence of all his sentences.
 He holds him to be a florid declaimer; not a
 natural persuasive speaker. Cicero, in his critical
 works, though he admits his failings, yet discovers
 a propensity to be very favourable to that
 "plena ac numerosa oratio," that swelling and
 musical style, which Isocrates introduced; and
 with the love of which, Cicero himself was,
 perhaps, somewhat infected. In one of his Treatises
 (Orat. ad M. Brut.) he informs us, that his friend
 Brutus and he differed in this particular, and
 that Brutus found fault with his partiality to
 Isocrates. The manner of Isocrates generally catch-
 es young people, when they begin to attend
 to composition; and it is very natural that it
 should do so. It gives them an idea of that
 regularity, cadence, and magnificence of style,
 which fills the ear: but when they come to
 write or speak for the world, they will find this
 ostentatious manner unfit, either for carrying on
 business, or commanding attention. It is said,
 that the high reputation of Isocrates prompted
 Aristotle, who was nearly his cotemporary, or
 lived but a little after him, to write his institut-

tions of Rhetoric ; which are indeed formed upon a plan of Eloquence very different from that of Isocrates, and the Rhetoricians of that time. He seems to have had it in view to direct the attention of orators much more towards convincing and affecting their hearers, than towards the musical cadence of periods.

ISÆUS and Lyfias, some of whose orations are preserved, belong also to this period. Lyfias was somewhat earlier than Isocrates, and is the model of that manner which the ancients call the "Tenuis vel Subtilis." He has none of Isocrates's pomp. He is every where pure and attic in the highest degree; simple and unaffected; but wants force, and is sometimes frigid in his compositions *. Isæus is chiefly remarkable for

* In the judicious comparison, which Dionysius of Halicarnassus makes of the merits of Lyfias and Isocrates, he ascribes to Lyfias, as the distinguishing character of his manner, a certain grace or elegance arising from simplicity: "περικνηστος ἢ Λυσίας λέξις ἔχειν το Χαρίεν' ἢ δ' Ἰσοκράτην, ἐκλεταί." "The style of Lyfias has gracefulness for its nature: that of Isocrates, seeks to have it." In the art of narration, as distinct, probable, and persuasive, he holds Lyfias to be superior to all orators: at the same time, he admits that his composition is more adapted to private litigation than to great subjects. He convinces, but he does not elevate nor animate. The magnificence and splendour of Isocrates is more suited to great occasions. He is more agreeable than Lyfias; and, in dignity of sentiment, far excels him. With regard to the affectation which is visible in Isocrates's manner, he concludes what he says of it which the following excellent observations, which should never be forgotten by any who aspire to be true Orators.

L E C T.
XXV.

LECT. being the master of the great Demosthenes, in
XXV. whom, it must be acknowledged, Eloquence
shone forth with higher splendour, than perhaps
in any that ever bore the name of an orator, and
whose manner and character, therefore, must
deserve our particular attention.

I SHALL not spend any time upon the
circumstances of Demosthenes's life; they are

“ Τῆς μὲντοι ἀγωγῆς τὰν περιόδων το κικλιν, καὶ τῶν σχηματισμῶν
τῆς λέξεως το μίαν ἰωδεῖ, καὶ ἐδοκιμαζόν’ οὐλεῖται γὰρ ἡ διάνοια πο-
λοῦσιν τῶν ῥυθμῶν τῆς λέξεως, καὶ τῇ κομῇ λαιπεται το ἀκρίβειαν.
κρίσις τ’ ἐπιτηδεύματα ἐν διαλεκτῶ πολιτικῇ, καὶ ἐναγώνῃ, τὴν
ὁμοιοτάτων τῶν κατὰ φύσιν. βλεπεται δὲ ἡ φύσις τοῖς νοήματιν ἐπιτίται
τὴν λέξιν, καὶ τῇ λέξει τα νοήματα συμβαλὼν δε ὅν περὶ πόλεμος καὶ
εἰρήνης λεγόντι καὶ ἰδιωτὴ τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς τρεχόντι κινδύνον ἐν ἀποσει,
τα κομῆα, καὶ θεατρικὰ, καὶ μεγακρίση ταῦτα καὶ εἶδα ἥτινα
δυναίτ’ αἰ παρασχεῖν ὠφείλειαν. μάλλον δ’ εἶδα ὅτι καὶ βλαβὴς αἰ
αἰτία γεννιέτ’ ἡμεντισμός γὰρ πᾶς ἐν σπουδῇ, καὶ καλῶς γινώσκων,
ὁρῶν προαγμα καὶ πολεμιοτάτων ἔλεω.” Judic. de Isocrate § 38.

“ His studied circumflexion of periods, and juvenile affect-
“ tation of the flowers of speech, I do not approve.
“ The thought is frequently made subservient to the music
“ of the sentence; and elegance is preferred to reason.
“ Whereas, in every discourse, where business and affairs
“ are concerned, nature ought to be followed: and nature
“ certainly dictates that the expression should be an object
“ subordinate to the sense, not the sense to the expres-
“ sion. When one rises to give public counsel concerning
“ war and peace, or takes the charge of a private man,
“ who is standing at the bar to be tried for his life,
“ those studied decorations, those theatrical graces and
“ juvenile flowers, are out of place. Instead of being of
“ service, they are detrimental to the cause we espouse.
“ When the contest is of a serious kind, ornaments,
“ which at another time would have beauty, then lose
“ their effect, and prove hostile to the affections which
“ we wish to raise in our hearers.”

well

well known. The strong ambition which he discovered to excel in the art of speaking; the unsuccessfulness of his first attempts; his unwearied perseverance in surmounting all the disadvantages that arose from his person and address; his shutting himself up in a cave, that he might study with less distraction; his declaiming by the sea-shore, that he might accustom himself to the noise of a tumultuous assembly, and with pebbles in his mouth, that he might correct a defect in his speech; his practising at home with a naked sword hanging over his shoulder, that he might check an ungraceful motion, to which he was subject; all those circumstances which we learn from Plutarch, are very encouraging to such as study Eloquence, as they show how far art and application may avail, for acquiring an excellence which nature seemed unwilling to grant us.

DESPISING the affected and florid manner which the Rhetoricians of that age followed, Demosthenes returned to the forcible and manly Eloquence of Pericles; and strength and vehemence form the principal characteristics of his Style. Never had Orator a finer field than Demosthenes in his Olynthiacs and Philippics, which are his capital Orations; and, no doubt, to the nobleness of the subject, and to that integrity and public spirit which eminently breathe in them, they are indebted for much of their merit. The subject, is to rouse the indignation of his countrymen against Philip of Macedon, the

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public enemy of the liberties of Greece; and to guard them against the insidious measures, by which that crafty Prince endeavoured to lay them asleep to danger. In the prosecution of this end, we see him taking every proper method to animate a people renowned for justice, humanity, and valour, but in many instances become corrupt and degenerate. He boldly taxes them with their venality, their indolence, and indifference to the public cause; while, at the same time, with all the art of an Orator, he recalls the glory of their ancestors to their thoughts, shows them that they are still a flourishing and a powerful people, the natural protectors of the liberty of Greece, and who wanted only the inclination to exert themselves, in order to make Philip tremble. With his cotemporary orators, who were in Philip's interest, and who persuaded the people to peace, he keeps no measures, but plainly reproaches them as the betrayers of their country. He not only prompts to vigorous conduct, but he lays down the plan of that conduct; he enters into particulars; and points out, with great exactness, the measures of execution. This is the strain of these orations. They are strongly animated; and full of the impetuosity and fire of public spirit. They proceed in a continued train of inductions, consequences, and demonstrations, founded on sound reason. The figures which he uses, are never sought after; but always rise from the subject. He employs them sparingly indeed; for splendour and ornament are not the distinctions

of this Orator's composition. It is an energy of thought peculiar to himself, which forms his character, and sets him above all others. He appears to attend much more to things than to words. We forget the orator, and think of the business. He warms the mind, and impels to action. He has no parade and ostentation; no methods of insinuation; no laboured introductions; but is like a man full of his subject, who, after preparing his audience by a sentence or two for hearing plain truths, enters directly on business.

DEMOSTHENES appears to great advantage, when contrasted with Æschines in the celebrated oration "pro Corona." Æschines was his rival in business, and personal enemy; and one of the most distinguished Orators of that age. But when we read the two orations, Æschines is feeble in comparison of Demosthenes, and makes much less impression on the mind. His reasonings concerning the law that was in question, are indeed very subtle; but his invective against Demosthenes is general, and ill supported. Whereas Demosthenes is a torrent, that nothing can resist. He bears down his antagonist with violence; he draws his character in the strongest colours; and the particular merit of that oration is, that all the descriptions in it are highly picturesque. There runs through it a strain of magnanimity and high honour: the Orator speaks with that strength and conscious dignity which great actions and public spirit alone inspire. Both

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Orators use great liberties with one another; and in general, that unrestrained licence which ancient manners permitted, even to the length of abusive names and downright scurrility, as appears both here and in Cicero's Philippics, hurts and offends a modern ear. What those ancient Orators gained by such a manner in point of freedom and boldness, is more than compensated by want of dignity; which seems to give an advantage, in this respect, to the greater decency of modern speaking.

THE Style of Demosthenes is strong and concise, though sometimes, it must not be dissembled, harsh and abrupt. His words are very expressive; his arrangement is firm and manly; and, though far from being unmusical, yet it seems difficult to find in him that studied, but concealed number, and Rythmus, which some of the ancient critics are fond of attributing to him. Negligent of those lesser graces, one would rather conceive him to have aimed at that Sublime which lies in sentiment. His action and pronunciation are recorded to have been uncommonly vehement and ardent; which, from the manner of his composition, we are naturally led to believe. The character which one forms of him, from reading his works, is of the austere, rather than the gentle kind. He is, on every occasion, grave, serious, passionate; takes every thing on a high tone; never lets himself down, nor attempts any thing like pleasantry. If any fault can be found to his admirable Eloquence,

it is, that he sometimes borders on the hard and dry. He may be thought to want smoothness and grace; which Dionysius of Halicarnassus attributes to his imitating too closely the manner of Thucydides, who was his great model for Style, and whose history he is said to have written eight times over with his own hand. But these defects are far more than compensated, by that admirable and masterly force of masculine Eloquence, which, as it overpowered all who heard it, cannot, at this day, be read without emotion.

AFTER the days of Demosthenes, Greece lost her liberty, eloquence of course languished, and relapsed again into the feeble manner introduced by the Rhetoricians and Sophists. Demetrius Phalereus, who lived in the next age to Demosthenes, attained indeed some character, but he is represented to us as a flowery, rather than a persuasive speaker, who aimed at grace rather than substance. "Delectabat Athenienses," says Cicero, "magis quam inflammabat." "He amused the Athenians, rather than warmed them." And after his time, we hear of no more Grecian Orators of any note.