

THE FORENSIC

OF PI KAPPA DELTA

ALFRED WESTFALL, Editor

G. W. FINLEY, Business Manager

SERIES 24

MAY, 1939

NUMBER 4

Some Suggested Revisions In Contest Procedures

By DR. LEROY T. LAASE

—◆—

(This is the last in a series of articles by Dr. Laase on the general theme of "Obtaining the Maximum Educational Values from Forensics.")

—◆—

In previous articles, the writer has supported the thesis that forensic contests do possess potential educational values, and has recommended a philosophy for the director which he believes will help attain these values. In this article we shall make recommendations for revising specific contest methodologies to facilitate obtaining maximum educational values from forensics. We shall confine our recommendations to two fields: (1) tournament debating; (2) oratory and extempore contests.

During the depression, tournament debating became the vogue. It was an economical method of obtaining competition. It facilitated providing competition for a large number of students. It was a convenient arrangement for determining championships. It offered a medium for the rapid teaching of debate. It helped improve and standardize debate practices. It offered an opportunity for students from many institutions to assemble and mingle together. But it has also been seriously indicted. Tournament debating usually means no audiences except the judge and time-keeper. The entering of several

teams by each school has necessitated the using of the "butcher, the baker, and the candlestick-maker" as judges. Debaters generally won or lost without insight into their inadequacies. Coaches tended to concentrate on a "winning combination." The changing of sides from round to round forced some debaters to argue against their convictions and invited "shyster" practices. The presence of eliminations led to "scouting" and "jockeying" for judges. The strain of successive rounds under the constant threat of elimination was terrific. It is little wonder that a protest has been raised against "too much tournament debating."

In an attempt to avoid the weaknesses of tournament competition there came a greater emphasis on discussion techniques. Their advocates claim they place a premium upon cooperative rather than competitive thinking. They are said to more nearly approximate life-situations. They would eliminate the abuses which occur when winning is involved. They facilitate the training in techniques and procedures which precede the formulation of a debate proposition. They permit expression on all rather than merely two views. But others deplore the demand for discussion instead of debating. They claim that the usual discussion technique accomplishes nothing. They say that the standards for instruction and measurement of achievement are too indefinite. They point out discussion invites participation with inadequate preparation. They deplore the quibbling and playing of politics which frequently obscure the real purpose. Discussion techniques may be a fine supplement, but they have not been generally accepted as an adequate substitute for debating.

In spite of the emphasis upon discussion procedures, tournament debating continues to dominate the field. Consequently it might be well to take stock of tournament debating and see whether its weaknesses can not at least in part be eliminated.

As a starting point, the writer suggests limiting the total number of rounds and reducing the amount of participation per day. In long tournaments like that of the national Pi Kappa Delta convention in which debaters are also doing other things, he believes that two rounds a day are enough; in a short two-day tournament, four a day are sufficient. In order to reduce the "strain" of eliminations, he would cut out eliminations and bring the tournament to a close at a maximum of eight rounds. He would allow time between debates for judges to give oral criticisms and for debaters to profit by the mistakes of their last debate. The writer realizes that limiting the number of rounds may result in more than one "champion." More will be said about this later.

Another reform which the writer believes imperative for tourna-

ment debating is the providing of a method for giving debaters insight into their points of inadequacy and achievement. The requiring of the judges to give a critical-analysis might help considerably. The use of a rating scale including nine or ten points commonly agreed upon as essential to good debating, which is filled out and handed to the debaters, may prove of material assistance in indicating the points of relative strength and weakness. At the end of the tournament each debater would have the benefit of the reactions to his debating, of some four, six, or eight judges, and from the total picture should with the assistance of his coach get a valuable index of his achievement in the various principles underlying effective debating.

The use of rating scales in the measurement of achievement calls for certain warnings. We do not advocate the totaling of the points on a given performance, which frequently leads to unnecessary controversy as to the relative importance of the various points. Instead we would supplement the ratings on the individual points by a description of the total performance as "superior", "excellent", "good", "fair", or "poor" according to the judge's evaluation of the speaker's total effectiveness. Likewise, the writer does not advocate totaling the points on the rating scale as a basis for a decision if one is given. Although it is probably true that the team whose sum of points for the two speakers is greater generally would be judged the winners, debating is a team function and should be judged as such. When we have devised methods for giving debaters insight into the level of their achievement, their needs and abilities, we shall be more nearly fulfilling our responsibilities as teachers of speech.

Another reform which the writer believes equally imperative in tournament debating pertains to the method of awards. We would like to see awards made to teams on the "quality" of their performance instead of "wins" and "losses." The number of debates won before elimination is often as much a matter of luck in the drawing of opponents as it is a matter of superior debating. If it were possible to seed teams in debate tournaments as satisfactorily as it is done in athletic tournaments, wins and losses might be a representative index; but this is not generally feasible. In order to recognize the quality of the performance, judges might rank each team as "superior", "excellent", "good", "fair", or "poor." These can be scored as 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 points, respectively, and at the end of the tournament the teams ranking between 3.5 and 4.5 may be classified as "excellent" and those ranking above 4.5 as "superior." Incidentally, the use of the group rating system does not exclude decisions if coaches must have them; but it is the opinion of this writer that if ratings

were tried, decisions would become relatively insignificant to the debaters and would soon be abandoned.

Under the group rating scheme, a team might conceivably be recognized as "superior" despite the fact that it met and lost to one or more other "superior" teams. The use of this system would eliminate many of the malpractices which accompany debating to "win", including "scouting" which now plagues tournament debating. The desire for a "superior" ranking would still motivate the student to put forth his best effort. Under this arrangement the only loss which the writer sees would be the loss of a "tournament champion", but he recognizes nothing virtuous in selecting a "champion" when there may be several "superior" teams. Inter-scholastic music associations have abandoned the naming of a "champion" in favor of the group rating scheme. When forensic contests are viewed purely as educational techniques, the naming of a "champion" will likewise become a non-essential.

Another point at which tournament debating could be improved is in the judging. If the reforms already named were adopted, much of the judging problem would probably be solved. However, in order to provide reliable judging certain additional precautions are in order. Granting for the moment that we must have some decisions, this writer believes that at least in pre-season and practice tournaments in which one institution may enter many teams, decisions should not be made, or if made, should not be recorded in any central office and made public. There is no merit in having decisions if those rendering the decision are not qualified to do so. The writer would rather dispense with the judgment of the unqualified critic and have the debaters rank their opponents on a rating scale such as that described above; he honestly believes that it would be worth more to the participants. If the tournament is actually a pre-season practice affair, why must there be a "champion"? If as we have contended a "champion" is unnecessary in regular tournaments, it is utterly absurd in the pre-season practice variety.

When the tournament is not of the practice type, the writer advocates restricting entries to two teams, either an affirmative or negative team, or a men's and women's team with free substitution of personnel in each. This latter provision would permit using more than four debaters, but the limitation to two teams per school would insure enough coaches to take care of all the judging without using outside judges. It is assumed, of course, that coaches who take teams to tournaments are qualified to serve as judges, at least more so than those local judges who might be drafted for the purpose. If the director is interested in debate as an educational technique, he will

surely want his team to have the benefit of a good critical analysis; he should then be willing to serve in turn, and if necessary should be required to do so as a condition for entering his team in the tournament. Incidentally, the use of a rating scale or a compulsory critical analysis would probably tend to increase the competency of judging obtained from the coaches.

The audience problem is not as impossible in tournaments as might at first be supposed. The possibility of arranging to hold debates before classes in public schools or at the host college has not been thoroughly tried. At the Rocky Mountain Speech Conference, which is held under the direction of Dr. Elwood Murray, audiences are actually provided for every round of debate competition. If it can be done in Denver, it can be done elsewhere. The lack of audiences, however, will probably remain as the greatest weakness in tournament debating. It is for this reason that tournament debating must never dominate the forensic program to the exclusion of non-tournament debates.

Like tournament debating, extempore speaking and oratory can also profit from certain alterations in procedure. The first change that we wish to suggest for them is that the judging methods used in them should also be revised. As in debate, the writer would use a rating scale which would give the student insight into his achievements and an understanding of why he ranks as he does. In the case of the individual speaking contest, since it is not a team enterprise, the writer would go so far as to say that the rating scale can be used as a basis for the decision. It would at least provide a uniform basis for judging and guarantee consideration of the various speech skills. It has the merit of putting the judge's decision on a more objective basis. It is especially usable for the coach-judge system, for the coaches have an opportunity in their business session to decide upon the points to be used and familiarize themselves with the use of the scale.

This leads us to our second suggestion for improving oratory and extempore contests, namely, revising the method of awards. Again, as in debate, the writer proposes the substitution of the group rating scheme, of "superior", "excellent", "good", "fair", and "poor" for the rank order method. It has the merit of rewarding the speaker's achievement at face value. If several speakers are superior, they are so recognized; if none are superior, no erroneous notions are given to the contestants. If anyone thinks that this system is less accurate than the rank-order system, let him try to justify the subjective basis upon which he assigns a certain percentage to a speaker's achieve-

ments and he is soon likely to concede the superiority of the group rating scheme.

The system is adapted to the naming of a "champion" if a winner must be named. If a representative must be chosen for participation in interstate competition, the one whose average score is highest can be so designated, but the closeness of the competition is also recognized. In large tournaments, such as those sponsored by Pi Kappa Delta, the scores can be added from round to round, using three judges in preliminaries, five in semi-finals, and seven in finals, and the participant with the highest total can be declared the winner. But even when winners are named the average score can be taken as an index of the quality of performance and the adjectives "superior", "excellent", etc., assigned according to statistically determined norms. Instead of announcing first, second, and third place winners, the writer would favor announcing an "honor roll" of the "superior" speakers and awarding "honorable mention" to those rating as "excellent". The adoption of the group rating system of awards focuses the student's attention upon the quality of the performance and will, in the opinion of the writer, bring speaking contests more in line with educational objectives.

We have covered much ground since we started our critical evaluation of contest methodologies. We have evaluated contest aims and procedures and have concluded that forensic contests do possess educational values if properly conducted. It was readily admitted that contest procedures as conducted are not resulting in the maximum attainment of educational objectives. It was the position of the writer, however, that the contest system could be adapted to a greater realization of potential educational values. At the risk of inviting disagreement on specific proposals, he has gone so far as to make suggestions on what the philosophy of the director should be and recommendations for revisions in contest procedures which he believes will facilitate greater realization of the potential educational values which exist in intercollegiate forensics. Whether others will agree with the writer's recommendations in toto is not so important, for it is readily admitted that they are merely suggestions which he believes would result in improvement in the contest system. It is conceivable to him that better suggestions may be made and when they are he will be among the first to accept them. In the meantime he shall continue to advocate these as steps in the direction which directors must take in order to adapt and utilize forensic contests for the maximum realization of their potential educational values.

Flux De Bouche

J. R. PELSMA

Teachers College, Pittsburg, Kansas



"Men of few words are the best men."—Henry IV

A negro once applied for a divorce on the grounds that his wife talked all the time. Said the judge, "What is she always talking about?"

"She ain't said yet," replied the man.

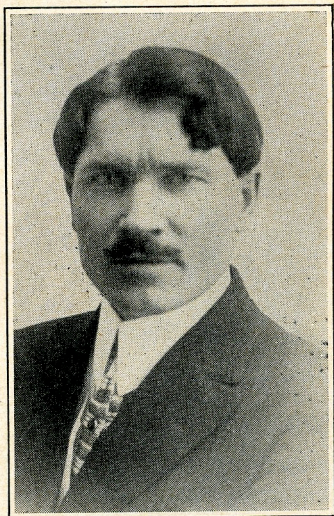
Although women may excel men in extensive conversation, men take the palm in excessive public speaking. Platform speaking has become a national disease—speechitis. The French call it *flux de bouche*.

Chronic diagnostic symptoms are (1) Frequency, (2) Poor Quality, and (3) Quantity.

Why is it that an oriental can sit for hours enjoying a feast, while we no sooner have the pleasant sensation of smoothing the wrinkles out of our tummies, but that some one must interfere with the metabolic processes by heaping ill-digested verbiage on undigested herbage? Shall we never learn to quietly partake, with our friends, of the bounties of nature without the customary, and often vulgar and asinine, remarks of the perpetual post-prandial pulmotor?

Next in useless frequency come the political harangues. In the last presidential campaign, over four million dollars was wasted in writing and delivering ghost speeches—part of the price we pay for the freedom of speech in a democracy. Yet there is no price we wouldn't pay for the privilege of retaining it! But it is too priceless to be abused.

Again, the radio has opened a new field for the oral exhibitionist. Tune in your radio almost any place, day or night, and you are sure



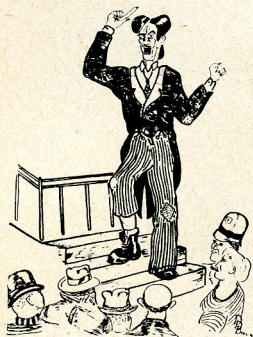
J. R. PELSMA

Pittsburg Teachers

to hear the blare of a jazz band, or the bray of a "jassax." Any time from six o'clock Sunday morning until ten o'clock at night you can tune in on some sermon. Pray tell me, have you ever heard of anyone who has been converted by a radio sermon? If Christ condemned the Pharisees for praying on the corners of the streets, what would he say should he listen in today on a nation-wide hook-up?

An aphorism learned from my first instructor in oratory, Prof. M. C. Bogarte, Valparaiso University, was "Never speak until you are so full of the subject that you cannot keep still." Just imagine this becoming the motto of every public speaker in America!

Much can be said for the Quaker meeting. Often hours pass without a spoken word interrupting the communion of souls with their Maker. No one speaks until impelled by the spirit to give utterance to thoughts for the edification of those present. "Why," says Bruce Barton, "must we have sermons every time we go to church?" The Christian religion is the only one so ordained. Is it that we are so Baalish we think God hears us for our much and loud speaking? In Ecclesiastes we read, "Let thy words be few ***** a fool's voice is known by his multitude of words."



Fervid Oratory

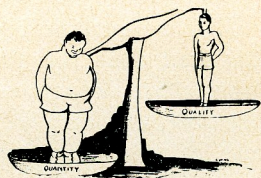
It is a real treat to stroll on a Sunday afternoon through the Boston Commons, or Hyde Park, London, and listen to the fervid, spontaneous outbursts of oratory from each occupant of a soap box. Here you have speeches from persons "so full of the subject that they cannot keep still." Most of them have never heard of Lindley Murray or the three Graces, but there is a warmth and glow and earnestness that cause "many who come to scoff to remain to pray."

There are public officials in Washington who could spend their time to better advantage than by making speeches denouncing other governments, thereby bringing this country

under ridicule and jeopardizing our amicable relations with foreign nations. What good can possibly result from such egotistic outbursts? There is enough fire raging in the world already. No vocal gasoline is needed.

Frequency of speech often results from the fact that many, especially young men, have not sufficient moral courage to say, "No." "Won't you speak at our 'gathering' tonight?" coos a decided blond; and the answer invariably is, "Yes." We jump up like a jack-in-the-box and make a speech every time some one presses a spring.

This frequency is sure to result in poor quality. We cannot expect a literary classic from Eddie Guest or Berton Brailey when they are obligated to turn out a poem every day. Quantity and quality are not Siamese twins. Every poet has one great poem. Every artist has one great masterpiece. Every orator has one great speech. Lincoln has his *Gettysburg Address*, Henry his *Give Me Liberty*, Webster his *Bunker Hill Address*, Ingersoll his *Liberty of Man, Woman and Child*, Bryan his *Prince of Peace*.



Not Siamese Twins

“Of the making of books there is no end;” but praise be, we do not have to read them. It is different with speeches. No matter how poor they are, both as to content and delivery, social conventions and professional experience often compel us to listen—or at least to deposit ourselves within hearing. On such occasions I have found a welcome remedy—“God still giveth his beloved sleep!” After listening to the introduction I usually decide between Prometheus and Morpheus. It is usually Morpheus.

Poor quality results from (1) Matter and (2) Manner.

Too many speeches show insufficient preparaton, both general and specific. There is no background of facts, no deep, prolonged study—no premeditation. Too many speeches are impromptu, and the results are words, words, words; ranting, ranting, ranting, nothing, nothing, nothing! Blackstone failed to list one felony usually committed by speakers—triteness—generalities that are commonplace, and banal.

One does not sing a solo without years of general preparation and days of specific practice. But one arises to speak at the drop of a hat. Our speech standards should be raised to equal those in music.

The manner of address is often as objectionable as the matter. The two undesirables often go hand in hand. Which, you may ask, is worse, the ability to express one’s self acceptably without having anything to say, or being primed with the wisdom of the ages and unable to say it? I cannot answer the question. It might depend upon the degree of either. More often the fault lies in not having anything worth while to say rather than in being unable to express it adequately. Teachers of speech have usually done their part. The present generation knows *how* to speak even though other departments of our colleges have not always kept pace by teaching them something to say. They are better equipped with jaws than with brains. However, we speech teachers are not wholly blameless; too much encouragement is given students to “vocalize” on all occasions when we

know they are unprepared. Hence our duty seems clear. *Encourage fewer, better, and shorter speeches.* The Rooseveltian doctrine is that reform should take place within the industry itself. So let it be.

May we remark here, in case some one, not a teacher of speech, has read thus far, that our realm is bounded by material sent us from other departments. Our task is to aid the student to select, organize, and arrange his knowledge on a given subject to a definite end, as well as to help him to overcome faulty speech habits and to acquire others more effective. If his speeches lack substance, it should not be laid at the door of our department.

The English, schooled in the accuracy of classical lore, have no compunction in hesitating in the midst of a sentence until the right word comes; on the other hand, the American never falters for a word. If the one which would express his precise meaning is not on his tongue's tip, he takes the next best and goes on.

The mightiest men in the British Parliament have ever been slow of speech. For a speaker who has something to say, John Bull has an exhaustless patience; but for mere loquacity he has an unmitigated contempt. When he suspects that a speaker is talking "for buncombe," that he is, in short *Vox et preterea nihil*, he gives reins to his indignation and coughs him down without mercy. It may be said to be nearly unparliamentary to be fluent—to speak right on without hemming and hawing—without, shall we say getting tangled up in a long sentence, stumbling over the King's English, or even the King himself. Like Antony they are plain blunt men, and because of their verbal difficulties seem to get the sympathy of their audience. If an Englishman wishes to succeed as a speaker, he first stores in his mind facts and more facts, and by patient study and profound meditation masters the subjects upon which there is a demand for knowledge. Not until he has honestly worked out a problem by brooding over it like a hen over her eggs, does he prepare to lay the solution of it before the public. It has been justly said that "if the maiden speeches of some of England's most brilliant and polished debaters have been downright failures, it has been owing to inexperience, not to lack of solid information."

But says someone, "Is it then of no importance to cultivate facility in speech?" Do not men of fine abilities sacrifice half their power and influence by not learning the art of speaking well in public? Is it not painful to see a man who has spent years in self-culture, standing dumb as a heathen oracle, or with his intellect smitten with indescribable confusion, the moment he rises to speak, for the lack of a few happy sentences in which to embody his thought? Every time

one opens his lips in speech, he has an opportunity to acquire and strengthen the habit of giving clear and forceful utterance to his thoughts. Instead of bidding our students to "spout" at every opportunity, we should bid them to read widely, think deeply, reason logically, and act sensibly.

We have rarely known a fluent speaker who said things that stuck like burrs in the memory; but we have heard artless talkers who have blurted out the most original, the deepest, and the most pregnant things in words we can never forget. We want thought, taste, and brevity, and the Doric simplicity of style which is so nearly allied to the highest and most effective eloquence.

Assuming that a speech *must* be made, a student should be taught to make the most of the occasion. If he cannot present new, vital, and interesting material, he should at least clothe the old in a new dress, and in place of substance use substantives, so that the audience may say, "What a beautiful speech," as they did when Alcibiades spoke, if not "Let us march against Philip," as was said at the conclusion of addresses by Demosthenes. There may be beauty if not duty in a fruitless phrase. There are times when "beauty is its own excuse for being."

However well a speaker may be informed on his subject and however profound his study and research, unless the facts are logically arranged, clearly and persuasively presented, the speech will not fulfill its purpose. The dictum of Socrates that "All men are sufficiently eloquent in that which they understand" is not true. The speech department justifies itself when aiding a student in manner and method of composition and delivery. But no instructor, however enthusiastic, whose sanity is above question, will advocate that these factors take precedence over having something worth while to say. We rather hold with Lowell, who would add another beatitude: "Blessed is the man who has nothing to say and cannot be persuaded to say it."

Speeches are most boring to those who realize how much more interesting and effective they might be. The manager of a large utilities company, after completing a course in speech, once remarked to me: "I am sorry I took the course. Annually I am obliged to listen to a score of speeches at our national conventions. Before taking the course, I didn't know how rotten they were, and so enjoyed them; now I am bored to distraction." Paraphrasing Bobbie Burns, if we could only *hear* oursel's as ithers *hear* us!

Voltaire said, "Men employ speech only to conceal their thoughts." To this, too, we cannot subscribe. Speech, the greatest invention of

all time, originated to express thought, and only in so far as it fulfills this mission is it wholly justified. It loses much of its potency through injudicious use. Words are often spoken, not to conceal thought, but as a substitute for judicious thinking, a camouflage to hide a vacant mind. "Empty vessels make most sound."

The ability for impromptu speaking which dazzles so many persons begets self-conceit and a thirst for public notice, and tempts thousands of young men to seek temporary notoriety at the expense of a solid and lasting reputation. Instead of cultivating and disciplining their brains, storing their minds with the hived wisdom of the ages, and, above all, acquiring that most valuable and important of all arts, the art of consecutive and persistent thinking, they study claptrap and sensational speech pyrotechnics—the art of producing the instantaneous and ephemeral, instead of the deep and enduring. Habits of speaking thus formed speedily react on the habit of thinking, and instead of weighing questions carefully and trying to ascertain their merits, young men view them only as pegs upon which to hang their speeches. An easy utterance, a lively verbosity, a knack for stinging invective, and a command of that piquant ridicule which always brings down the house, soon come to be preferred to the profoundest knowledge, the largest grasp of mind, the most thorough comprehension of a subject, which, owing to the very *embarras des richesses*, hems and stammers in trying to wreak itself upon expression.

There is hardly a gift so dangerous or so worthless as what is vulgarly termed eloquence. It is a mistake to suppose that it is difficult to acquire. Almost any man can succeed who will try often and who can harden himself against the mortification of frequent failures. Complete self-possession and a ready flow of language may thus be acquired mechanically; but it will be the self-possession of ignorance and the fluency of comparative emptiness. Such a habit may teach him something of arrangement and a few of the simplest methods of making an immediate impression; but as Lord Brougham has said, "his diction is sure to be much worse than if he had never made the attempt. Such a speaker is never in want of a word, and hardly ever has one that is worth having." The truth is, full men are seldom fluent.

As Andy would say, "Another thing." We come to our last point—Quantity. When Alexander Pope read Milton's *Paradise Lost* his comment was, "If it has no other virtue, it at least has length." Would it not be well if we might say of some speeches, If they have no other virtue, they at least have brevity? Civilization has learned much through the years relative to the length of speeches. Sheridan

spoke six hours at the trial of Warren Hastings. A two- or three-hour sermon was the rule during our Colonial period; one hour during the pre-Civil War period; one-half hour at the beginning of the century; and now, thanks to the radio, most sermons are cut to fifteen minutes. We have often wondered what would happen if a preacher would some Sunday morning have the courage to preach a five-minute sermon. May we predict that it would be remembered until the following Sunday?

We will go on record here and now, that any candidate of whatever creed or political faith who will promise to introduce in the next Assembly a bill similar to the one passed by a South African tribe, will get our vote.

This tribe, partly civilized, had set up a deliberative body, all the members of which were experts in the art of oratory. Hardly a speaker had reasonable terminal facilities. So the elder statesmen, the wise men of the tribe, got their heads together and attempted a remedy. In the simplicity of their minds they clearly saw that long speeches were injurious not only to both listener and speaker, but, also to the cause advocated.

The elder statesmen finally agreed to put their remedy in the form of a law. Every speaker must stand on one leg while addressing an audience. As soon as he had to place his other foot on the ground or floor, his oration must close. Native orators desperately balanced themselves on one leg as long as possible, but the moment that leg gave out, and the speaker connected himself with the planet by both supports a wild yell arose and the speaker was obliged to take his seat. It was a simple device, but it worked.



Native Stop Watch

The purpose of an introductory speech is to create an eagerness in the audience to hear the speaker. Such speeches have been an hour in length. The briefest and most appropriate introductory speech I ever heard was that given by Senator Barkley when chairman of a political meeting introducing Franklin D. Roosevelt. Senator Barkley said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, your President."

The Germans, long-winded as they are in their books and equal to any amount of printed matter, unappalled by the size of volume, number of pages, or closeness of type, will not tolerate a long speech out of a lecture-room.

Washington seldom spoke in public, and when he did, it was in a few pointed sentences, delivered in an easy conversational way. In the convention that framed the Constitution of the United States he made but two speeches, of a few words each; yet it has been said that but for the thirty words of his first speech, the Constitution would have been rejected by the people. Neither Franklin nor Jefferson had "the gift of gab." President Jackson was as tongue-tied as General Grant. After Grant was given the command of the 21st Illinois Volunteers at Springfield, Illinois, on June 16, 1861, General John Logan made the address of the day. And when he concluded the soldiers called on Grant for a speech. The audience wondered if Governor Yates had not made a great blunder in appointing such a quiet, insignificant man, small of stature, and weighing only 135 pounds, instead of the 200-pound personification of superb and eloquent manhood, General Logan. Grant arose, looked at the thousands of troops, and said, "*Go to your quarters!*" Perhaps, after all, Governor Yates was right. General Moltke is said to have been silent in eight languages. He rarely spoke, except in the crash of solid shot or the shriek of angry shell. When the Creator chose a man for some of the greatest work ever done in this world, it was Moses, the man "slow of speech," and not Aaron, the man who could "speak well," that he commissioned.

The most convincing speakers have been niggard of their words. The reason why the classic orators of antiquity spoke with such terseness and condensed energy was that they turned over their subjects long and deeply and made the pen a constant auxiliary of the tongue.

Southey was right in "Words are like sunbeams, the more they are condensed the deeper they burn."

One day Tennyson made a social call on Carlyle. After a formal greeting, both sat down by the fireplace. Neither spoke again, each busy with his own deep thoughts. At the end of an hour Tennyson arose, bade his friend good night and thanked him for a pleasant and profitable evening.

Repetition may be the cause of immoderate length. The same idea is often prefaced by "In other words."

A colored preacher boasted of his hour-and-a-half sermons. "How come you all can preach so long?" inquired a fellow exhorter.

"Well," said the preacher, "De fust half hour I tells 'em what I's gwine to say. Den I expostulates for a half hour. Den I uses the last half hour tellin' 'em what I dun said."