

**ORATORY; ITS
REQUIREMENTS
AND ITS REWARDS**

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Oratory; Its Requirements and Its Rewards by John P. Altgeld

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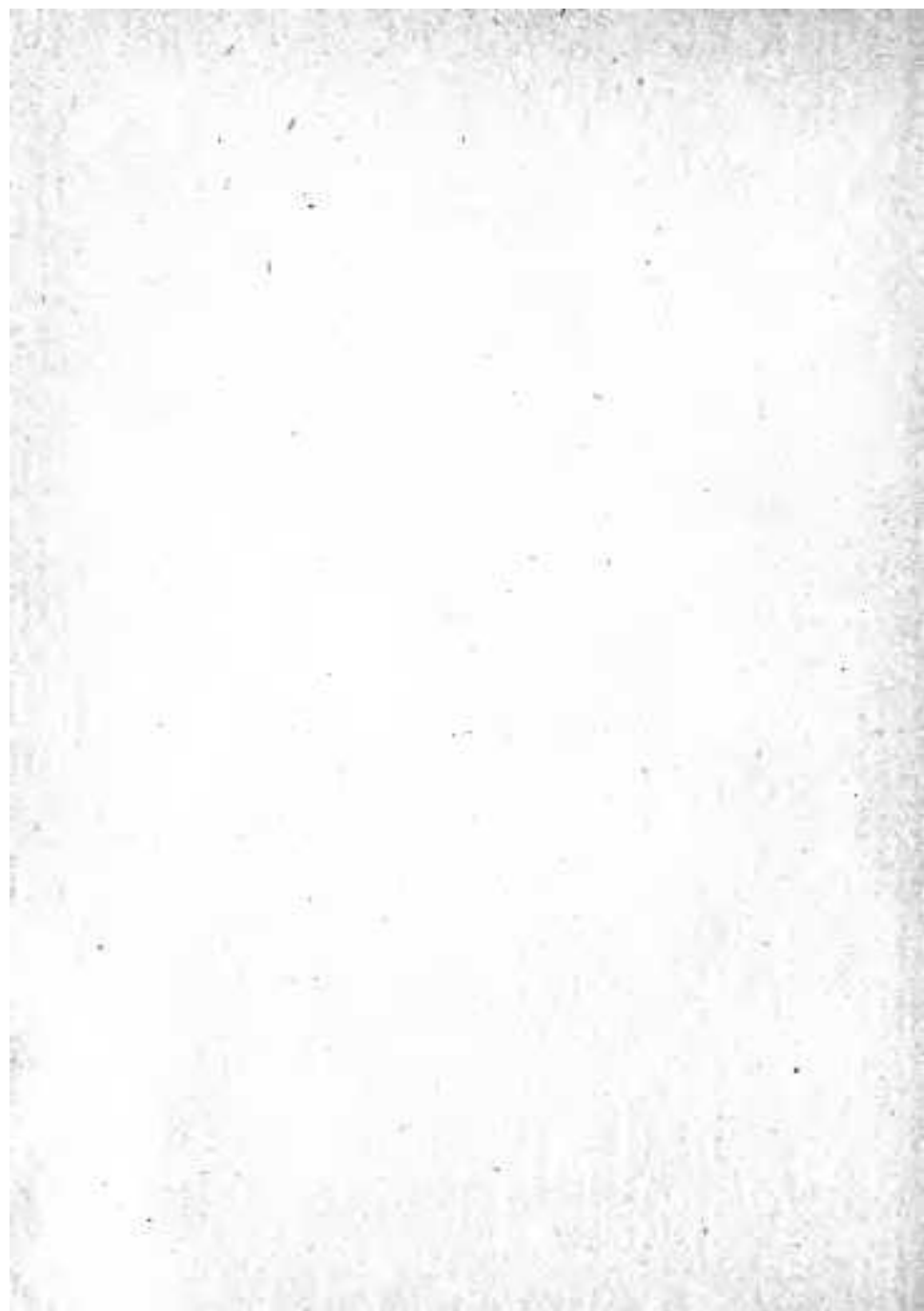


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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

ORATORY

ITS REQUIREMENTS AND ITS REWARDS.

Oratory is the greatest art known to man and embraces a number of great arts.

In music tradition furnishes the ideas. The poet clothes them in words. The composer sets these to music, and the singer renders them into song.

The orator must be able to do all of these things.

He must furnish the ideas, he must clothe them in words, he must give these a rhythmic arrangement, and he must deliver them with all the care with which a singer sings a song.

Each of these elements is of supreme importance. The ideas must be bright and seem alive. The language must be chaste and expressive. The arrangement must be logical,

natural and effective. There must be a natural unfolding of the subject-matter.

The delivery requires as much attention to voice and action as is given by a singer.

Labor is the foster mother of oratory, and no man has risen to eminence as an orator without great labor.

KNOWLEDGE.

The orator must have a general knowledge of history, of literature, of religion, of the sciences, of human nature, and of affairs.

He must have a full and special knowledge of the subject he attempts to discuss.

He must present new ideas, or old ideas in a new light. And they must be lofty ideas, that appeal to the nobler sentiments of men.

Mind must commune with mind and soul must talk to soul, or there is no oratory. The soul of the speaker and the soul of the audience must become one.

LANGUAGE.

The intelligent people of America use reasonably pure English.

If the speaker falls below this level he simply disgusts. If he only stands on this level he may be tolerated but will gather no laurels. Men may say, "He makes a strong talk," but this is all. It is not oratory.

If he would delight and chain his audience so that the doors of the soul may be thrown open to him, his language must have the charm of superior excellence. His words must be simple, pure, chaste and crystalline—his sentences clear, epigrammatic and sparkling, and his arrangement logical, forceful and climactic.

In attempting to acquire a superior command of language it must be borne in mind that words are only the expression of thoughts, and where the thoughts are coarse or careless, and not well arranged, elegance of language is impossible.

On the other hand elevation of thought produces elevation of language. Studying the stars and contemplating nature prepare the soul for great things.

A familiarity with polite literature is also essential and experience has taught that the reading and digesting each day of a half page or a page of some classic author, so as to imbibe his spirit and assimilate his words, will by degrees give elegance of diction and purity and strength of expression.

It is necessary to avoid slang and to be careful as to our use of words in daily intercourse. By degrees we can acquire an entirely new vocabulary.

ARRANGEMENT.

Arrangement is the third essential of oratory. Without it the effort is lost.

The subject-matter should be treated from the point from which it naturally unfolds or