

Eastern Clackamas News

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DECLINE OF ORATORY

A writer deprecates the falling off of the art of oratory, that with the passing of W. J. Bryan and others of the old-time public speakers the phonograph and the radio have displaced the personal face to face contact and magnetism of the orator, and we now sit comfortably and listen to mechanized reading from manuscript. It is, alas, true, and the enthusiasm we used to get from listening to some fervid orator who pounded the rostrum table and made the rafters ring and the plaster fall from the wall has gone from us, and we listlessly bend an ear to the phonograph or radio to the words of some great man with not as much interest as we were wont to accord the barker in front of the tent where the fat lady was on exhibition.

Who that ever saw and heard T. DeWitt Talmadge, the great preacher, on the platform and witnessed his wild contortions and stampings up and down the boards and felt himself fired with the same energy, could occupy an easy chair and hear the same words over the radio or phonograph without someone standing over him with a club to keep him awake? And so with any so fortunate as to have listened to the words of the great Lincoln in the Gettysburg speech. Can one imagine the same inspiration filling the hearts of the people who only read it or hear it recited over the air or ground out from one of Mr. Edison's contraptions as those who sat and looked the great man in the face, saw his simple gestures and heard the soft modulations of his voice on that historical occasion? The words of Patrick Henry, of Daniel, of Daniel Webster, of Calhoun, of Beecher, of Bryan, of Roosevelt and hundreds of others without the physical presence of these men, no matter by whom recited or by what other means reproduced, do not carry the same conviction nor create the same feeling within us that it did in those who actually heard them.

We are truly living in a fast-moving world, and many things are changing, they tell us, for the better. But the decline of oratory from what it was in times past we shall argue is not for the best. We would rather hear an old-time "pulpit-pounder" or a red-hot political speaker with no collar, his throat bare, galluses down, sweating bucketsful, and a voice like a Hereford bull than anything coming over all the radios ever erected to squawk and fill the air with discordant sounds when we had much rather go to sleep. We, therefore, herewith petition for a revival of oratorical classes in all our schools and colleges.

IMPENDING DOOM

It does not need a Daniel to read the handwriting on the wall, nor yet interpret it. In these days of education, the public school student at least is taught to read and interpret for himself. He may be thrown into the lion's den, he may even be kept a prisoner to "the system" for daring to interpret that system; still the seed which that system is responsible for implanting in his mind will take root and grow. It will branch out, it will have sturdy stalk; it may even produce beautiful blossoms; it may have thorns concealed in its beautiful foliage; its fruit may at first taste, appear as nectar fit for the gods. There, will come, however, a change in that taste—it will turn sour, then as bitter as wormwood and gall to those connected with the system. No country was ever blessed with the auspicious launching given the U. S. A. No country was as free from the taint of greed, selfishness, graft, oppression and dishonor. No country as impartial in its administration of the law. Yet what a change, what a transformation in a short century and a half. Where it was considered an honor to be elected to office, it has become a question. Men of honor and standing are refusing to permit their names to go before the people, because of the type of men holding office, and the scandal connected with their names. Men who

live under the Constitution of the United States and who will take the Constitutional oath as an officer of this government, flaunt their utter disregard, their own dishonor—and appear on the streets a walking advertisement of their own debasement. What respect for law or common decency do they expect to instill in the minds of the rest of the populace? The poor man who is supposed to possess no political influence is haled before the bar of justice and heavily fined and given a jail sentence for an infraction of the law. The wealthy man, or so-called prominent citizen, is haled before the same bar of justice for a like infraction of the law, and is given an apology—while the officer making the arrest is slapped on the wrist three times, and admonished to go and sin no more. Senator Reed Smoot, in a recent speech, declared that the United States is growing better. They say an ostrich will put his head in a hole so as to be able to say he did not see that thing which frightened him. The Senator must have done likewise in Washington so as not to see, and be able to truthfully say the United States is growing better. The violation of their Constitutional oaths of office; the discrimination practiced against the poor who violate the law, the favoritism shown the wealthy corporations, the prominent, tend rather to prove the opposite. We are told statistics show that there are a greater number of uneducated men per thousand in our penitentiaries than of educated men. This may be true; but it is true only because the educated man of wealth or prominence who has been caught violating the law has managed to keep out of statistics. If the law were enforced impartially statistics would show the percentage of educated men in the penitentiaries to be far in excess of the uneducated men. It is upon this rock, this rotten discrimination in the enforcement of the law that the ship of state will meet its doom. The handwriting is on the walls of our courts of justice, and is being interpreted with savage growls, with mutterings and imprecations. The fires of unrest and discontent lie

smouldering beneath an apparently calm exterior. A tiny breath of the air of greed and favoritism, partiality and injustice, may any day make the recent explosion in the U. S. arsenal look like a "dud," for once started, nothing can quench the fires that will revolt against the system that is prostituting these United States to its own greed and selfishness. Bolshevism and Facism will be as ice bergs to the fires of hell that will be turned loose. Then will the poor say with fervor, "Blessed be he who has nothing." Impartially administer the law, let justice use her sword and permit no other influence than right and wrong to temper her decisions. Her scales too frequently are unevenly balanced by the gold on one side against the copper on the other.

Oh ye of little faith draw nigh and listen to the deliberations of the Portland Ministerial Association. A committee has called upon the city administration, more specifically upon the mayor, who flanked his position with his city attorney and his faithful chief of police. These officials separately and collectively held the committee spell-bound with their tales of valor in law enforcement, citing the specific instances. Statistics of arrests, convictions and fines—minus jail and penitentiary sentences—were produced. It's a saddle-girth cinch that no statistics were prepared showing law violations known to the city administration in which no arrests or prosecutions were indulged in. Neither were statistics prepared showing the changing of charges of "driving while intoxicated" to "reckless driving". Nor showing what percentage of autos were impounded with the sheriff under the charge of "driving while intoxicated." Nor yet showing the loss of the senses of smell and sight by officers who had arrested law violators they had seen driving in an intoxicated manner, smelled liquor on them and seen liquid in a container that smelled like liquor. Watch the proceedings closely, ever bearing in mind that this is the same

city administration that this same ministerial association liked so well that it got behind it at the last election and was responsible for continuing it in power. They have already gone on record as not in favor of the method or means employed by Rev. Clement G. Clark in exposing conditions in Portland under the city administration of their choosing.

There seems to be a strong sentiment with many politicians that Senator Charles McNary is standing between the Devil and the deep sea. If he gets behind the irregular nominee of his party he will be criticised by the regulars. If he does not he will be criticised by the same influence that made the nomination.

"Ma" Ferguson seems to have lost her grip on the majority of the electorate of the Lone Star State. Will she pay the bet, or will she make a proclamation declaring all bets off?

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