APPENDIX.

THE DELIVERY OF SERMONS,

BY DR. ADOLPHE MONOD.*

ALTHOUGH the art of recitation depends more on practice than on theory, it nevertheless has certain rules, which must be presented to the mind before you can address yourselves with profit to the exercises which are demanded, and which form the object of this course. In commencing the lectures of the year, I think it my duty to lay these rules before you, or rather to recall them to your memory. In so doing, I limit myself to such general views as may be comprised in a single discourse, and, at the same time, are of universal application.

GENERAL VIEWS OF THE ART OF RECITATION—ITS IMPORTANCE—ITS DIFFICULTY —ITS NATURE—INVESTIGATION OF A QUESTION.

It is scarcely necessary for me to call your attention to the IMPORTANCE of a good delivery. Among all human means, there is no one which contributes more to fix the attention of men, and to move their hearts. The discourse which, delivered with forced emphasis or with monotony, leaves the hearer cold and seems to court inattention, would have attracted, convinced, and melted, if it had been pronounced with the accent of the soul, and the intonations which nature communicates to sentiment and reason. It is vain to say

* This Lecture was delivered by Dr. Monod, to several classes of Theological students at Montauban. A translation of it by Dr. James W. Alexander, appeared in the Princeton Review, some fifteen years ago, and at the time excited remarks of a very commendatory nature. The wish has been expressed that it might be had in a more available form, and read, especially by young ministers, generally. Dr. Monod, as the most accomplished orator of our day, in France, if not in Europe, certainly deserves to be heard with the respect due to a master in the department of sacred eloquence. For vivid originality and native truth, there are few compositions on the subject to compare with this Lecture. The very accurate rendering referred to above, is here, in the main retained; a few changes, mostly at the kind suggestion of Dr. Alexander, having been made.

that this is an affair of mere form, about which the Christian orator should not much concern himself. Even if delivery were a secondary thing with the orator, which indeed it is not—inasmuch as the state of the mind has more to do with it than is commonly thought—it must always have a commanding interest for the hearer, from its powerful influence on his thoughts and inclinations. Hearken to two men, who ought to be at home in this matter—Demosthenes and Massillon. The greater the difference between the kinds of eloquence in which they respectively excelled, the more forcible is the testimony which they both bear to the power of delivery and oratorical action. Demosthenes was asked what was the first quality of the orator? "It is action," and the second? "Action," and the third? "Action." Massillon expressed the same judgment, when he replied, on a certain occasion, to one who asked him which he thought his best sermon, "That one which I know best." Why so, unless that which he knew the best was that which he could best deliver? We may be allowed to believe that these two great masters of the art exaggerated their opinion in order to make it more striking: but its foundation is perfectly true. It is not merely a true opinion; it is an experimental fact, which cannot be contested.

There is nothing in what we have been saying which should startle a pious soul. True piety does not forbid the use of the natural faculties which God has allotted to us; but commands us to use these for His glory, and for the good of our race. What Bossuet so well said of God's imspired servants, applies with greater reason to all others: "True wisdom avails itself of all, and it is not the will of God that those whom he inspires should neglect human means, which also in some sort proceed from Him." The motto of the mystic morals is *abstain;* that of evangelic morals is *consecrate.* And surely the latter is above the former: for to abstain, it is enough to distrust; but to consecrate, we must believe. Exercise yourselves, then, gentlemen, without scruple in the art of elocution and delivery; but let it be in a Christian spirit. Let the art of recitation be with you, not an end, but a means. If in your application to this exercise you have no higher aim than recitation itself, and those praises which the world lavishes on such as speak well, you are no longer a preacher; you are no longer even an orator; you are an actor. But if you cultivate elocution as a means of glorifying God and doing good to man, you fulfill an obligation; and the greater the zeal and labor which you bring to the task, the more may you implore with confidence that grace without which the most eloquent is but "a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal."

This labor is the more necessary, moreover, because the DIFFICULTY of the art which occupies our attention is equal to its importance. This is proved by experience: those who recite well are few. There is, however, a distinction to be observed between the recitation of the actor, and that of the orator. The former is much more difficult than the latter; and good orators are not commonly great actors, at least in tragedy. Scarcely one appears in an age. For the actor has two things to do, of which the orator has but one. To the latter, it suffices to express the sentiments which he actually experiences; but the former must express the sentiments of another. Now, to express these, he must first make them his own; and this necessity which has no existence in

the case of the orator, demands of the actor a study altogether peculiar, and apparently constitutes the most difficult portion of his art. To transform one's self into a person altogether foreign; to become invested with his manners, character, passions, and language; and, nevertheless, to remain master of himself and with the mind free, since it would be a weakness in the actor to confound himself with his part, so far as to forget himself and his acting; this demands a prodigious faculty, and one which seems to depend on certain natural dispositions which are altogether peculiar.* It seems as if there were a separate organ for the dramatic art; and it has been remarked that illustrious actors have not always been men of commanding intellect. So that we may make the same distinction between the orator and the actor, which Cicero makes between the orator and the poet: *nascuntur poetæ, fiunt oratores.* We may thank God that we depend less on organization, and that this power of imagination is not indispensable to us: our task is, at the same time, more noble and less complicated. To communicate our thoughts and feelings in a suitable, just, and expressive manner, is all that we demand.

But how does it happen, then, that speakers, whose delivery is good, exist in no greater numbers? Leaving out of view forensic and parliamentary orators, how comes it that there are Christian preachers who sometimes pronounce their discourses without action, and even without just inflection, and this when neither the sincerity of their belief nor their interest in the subject can be called in question? There is the greater reason to be astonished at this, because the same men often manifest in animated conversation many of the very qualities which we miss in their pulpit exercises, so that they need nothing in order to make them excellent speakers, but to be themselves. It is a difficult question; but let us attempt its solution.

It must be borne in mind, in the first place, that there is a wide distinction between preaching and conversation, however grave, interesting, or animated. A discourse, in which it is attempted to develop one or more propositions, one person being sole speaker for an hour, before a numerous audience, has, and ought to have, something of continuity and elevation which does not belong to mere conversation. We are no longer in the sphere of simple nature. There must be some calculation of measures, management of voice, and strengthening of intonations; in a word, there must be *self-observation;* and where this begins, the speaker is no longer in that pure simplicity where nature displays and acts itself forth unreservedly. Preaching likewise demands certain powers, both physical and moral, which are not possessed by every one, and which are not required in conversation. The two cases, therefore, are not parallel; and this may suffice to show how the same persons may succeed in one and fail in the other.

This first difference, which is in the nature of things, produces another which pertains to the orator. In attempting to rise above the tone of conver-

* Some curiosity will be felt, perhaps, to know in what great actors themselves have made their talent to consist. "What they call my talent," Talma somewhere says, "is perhaps nothing but an extreme facility in raising myself to sentiments which are not my own, but which I appropriate in imagination. During some hours I am able to live the life of others, and if it is not granted to me to resuscitate the personages of history with their earthly dress, I at least force their passions to rise and murmur within me."

sation, most preachers depart from it too much. They inflate their delivery, and declaim instead of speaking; and when the pompous enters, the natural departs. We must not, indeed, expect too much; but whether it be the influence of example, or traditionary bad taste, or the ease of a method in which capacity of lungs goes for labor of reflection and energy of sentiment, the fact is that there is scarcely one among us, who does not betray some leaven of declamation, or who preaches with perfect simplicity.

We may read, recite, or speak extempore. If we read, it is almost impossible to assume a tone entirely natural; either because the art of reading well is perhaps more difficult than that of speaking well, or because the preacher who reads, when he is supposed to be speaking, places himself thereby in a kind of false position, of which he must undergo the penalty. It will be better to rehearse after having committed to memory; the preacher speaks throughout after his manuscript, it is true, but he *speaks*, nevertheless. Where the speaker has prepared his thoughts and even his words, it is a matter which the auditor need not know, and which a good delivery can ordinarily conceal from those who are not themselves in the habit of speaking in public. The mind, the voice, the attitude, all are more free, and the delivery is far more natural. But can it be completely so? I do not know. Art may go very far, but it is art still; and there is a certain tone of semi-declamation, from which there is scarcely any escape; a tax, as it were, which must be paid to method; to that method which we are, however, far from condemning, and which seems to have been practised by some of the servants of God, in whom He has been most glorified. Finally, will it be possible to avoid the inconveniences just mentioned, and shall we certainly attain a simple delivery, by abandoning ourselves to *extempore* speaking? I believe, indeed, that this is the method in which one may hope for the best delivery; provided, always, that the speaker has so great a facility, or so complete a preparation, or, what is better, both at once, as to be freed from the necessity of a painful search for thoughts and words. Without this, it is the worst of all methods, for matter as well as for form. But even where one has received from nature, or acquired by practice a genuine facility, and has premeditated, with care, the concatenation and order of his ideas, and has even been aided by the pen (which is almost indispensable, in order to speak well), there will nevertheless always remain something of that constraint which arises from the research of what is to be said: and while the solicitude about mere words absorbs much of the mind's forces, the orator will hardly preserve freedom enough to secure, in all cases, the tones of nature. In this way simplicity will be injured by causes different from those which affect one who recites from memory, but scarcely less in degree. It is a fact, that with men who abandon themselves to extempore speaking, false and exaggerated intonations are not rare, at those moments when they are not perfectly free, and completely masters of their diction.

I have mentioned freedom of mind. It is this, more than all the rest, which brings the preacher into the natural position, and, consequently, into the true intonation. If he could be perfectly at his ease, the greatest hindrance of a just and natural elocution would be removed. But it is this which is chiefly wanting, both in those who speak extemporaneously what has been meditated

without extraordinary pains, and even in those who rehearse a discourse which they have learnt by rote. When they find themselves before an auditory, they become agitated. They fear to displease; or, if they are under the influence of higher sentiments, they fear lest they shall not make an impression on their hearers; or, finally, they experience a vague embarrassment of which they take no distinct account themselves, and from which certain pious ministers are not altogether exempt. Sometimes, it is the concourse which intimidates them; sometimes, it is the small number of hearers; nay, perhaps, a single hearer, more enlightened, more fastidious, or higher in rank, than the rest; —alas, for poor human heart!—From the moment that this miserable timidity enters the soul all is lost. The mind's vision is troubled, the thoughts are confused, the feelings are blunted, the voice itself is less firm; the laboring breath fatigues the lungs, and forebodes an approaching hoarseness. If the orator speak extempore, he will be in danger of stopping short; or, by a sort of calculation which takes place almost without his own knowledge, he will seek to hide the poverty of the matter under the show of the manner, and will vent common-place, ill-developed, though, perhaps, just ideas with a solemn voice and a declamatory tone, which will leave his hearers as cold as himself, and which, once adopted, or rather submitted to, will hold him enchained till the end of his discourse.

We hear much of the talent and facility for speaking. I am far from admitting the principle, which (whether justly or not) is attributed to Jacotot—that all capacities are equal. Yet, it is an error which, like most others, is only the exaggeration of a truth. God has shown himself in the distribution of His gifts, less frugal and less unequal than it is common to think; and as there is scarcely any soil from which culture may not extract at least necessary food, so there is scarcely any mind, which, under proper direction, may not learn to speak in a correct, interesting, and impressive manner. The immense differences which we observe between speakers proceed less than is imagined, from a natural inequality, and much more than we imagine, from that *other* inequality which depends on human will and human effort. This seems just, and as it should be; and it is true, doubly true, as to *pulpit* eloquence, in which the moral element holds so considerable a space.

But, to return to the subject which gave occasion to this reflection; the power with which certain men speak, and the excellence of their delivery, arise in a great measure from their ability to put themselves perfectly at their ease in a position where others are embarrassed. If confusion paralyses the faculties—self-possession multiplies them. Of two men who encounter any danger, it is not always the ablest who best extricates himself; it is commonly he who keeps himself cool; and the greatest genius is good for nothing when frozen by fear. Of what avail would the best faculties be to you, without self-possession? But he who is at his ease says just what he intends, and just as he intends; reflects; checks himself in a moment, if necessary, to seek a word or a thought, and from the very pause borrows some natural and expressive accent or gesture; takes advantage of what he sees and hears, and in a word brings into use all his resources; which is saying a great deal; for "the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts."

You will, perhaps, tell me, that this confidence to which I exhort you, is rather a favor to be wished for, than a disposition to be enjoined; that it is the happy fruit of temperament, or of success, or of native talent; and that it is not every one that chooses who *can* be at his ease. I grant that it depends partly on temperament; and this is a reason for fortifying it, if it is naturally timid: so on success; and this is a reason why the young man should use all pains to make a good beginning: so on talent itself; and this is a reason for improving that which may be possessed. But there is another element which enters into this ease of manner, and I both wish it for you, and enjoin it upon you;—it is *Faith*. Take your position as the ambassador of Jesus Christ, sent by God to treat with sinful men; believe that He who sends you will not leave you to speak in vain; labor for the salvation of those whom you address, as if it were your own; so forget yourself to see only the glory of God and the salvation of your hearers; you will then tremble more before God, but less before men. You will then speak with liberty, therefore with the same facility and propriety which you possess in the other circumstances of life. If our faith were perfect, we should scarcely be in more danger of falling into false or declamatory tones, than if we were crying out to a drowning man to seize the rope which is thrown out to save him.

I attribute, therefore, the inferiority of many preachers, in oratorical delivery, partly to the difficulty of public and continuous discourses, but partly, also, to the want of certain moral dispositions. Hence it follows, that it is by assiduous labor and by spiritual progress, that they must become able to carry into the pulpit the same powers of speech which they enjoy elsewhere. But this particular question has diverted us too far from our subject; it is time to return, and give some account of *what constitutes* THE ART of recitation, or acceptable delivery.

The basis of every art is nature, but nature in a state of embellishment. The basis is nature; poetry and eloquence do not rest on conventional rules; it is the heart and the mind of man—of man as he is—which must be depicted, and which must also be interested. But it has for its basis nature *embellished*, —*idealized*: *imitates* it, but it does not *copy*. When Barthélemy describes to us the massacres of September, in terms which cause us not so much to understand, as to behold with our own eyes; when his bloody muse has no other ambition than that of inspiring the same horror which the hideous spectacle, to which he delights to drag us, would itself have produced; Barthélemy, with all his genius, has been false to his art; here is neither painting nor poetry, but butchery.

I would not subject myself to the prepossession of a mere artistic view, in treating of the recitation of the preachers. Yet, it may be said, in general, that this recitation should partake equally of imitation and of nature. Listen to those who speak well; observe them, at times, when they are not observing themselves; retain their intonations, and transfer them to your delivery. But while you adopt, elevate them; *imitate*, but do not *copy*. Do not *talk* in the pulpit. Too great familiarity is almost as great a fault as declamation; more rare, indeed, but nevertheless occurring among certain preachers, and especially such as are uneducated. It is the tone of good conversation, but this

tone ennobled and exalted, which seems to me to be the ideal of oratorical delivery.

From these general considerations, I pass to those exercises which are soon to occupy us; and the remainder of this discourse will be employed in giving some DIRECTIONS, first for the *physical*, and then for the *moral* part of elocution.

We have just said, and we shall have occasion to repeat it, that the *Physical Part* of delivery is secondary, because it is instrumental. In public speaking, as in all the operations of the human understanding, the organs are the mere agents of the mind. But these agents are indispensable, and in proportion as they obey the understanding, other things being equal, will the delivery be effective. We must not, therefore, despise the physical part of delivery. We shall, nevertheless, be brief on this point, where every one will be able, with the aid of a few suggestions, to guide himself.

The *voice* should be exercised frequently and carefully. Endeavor to render your voice at the same time distinct, strong, sonorous, and flexible; this can be attained only by long practice. Labor to acquire the mastery of your voice. He who possesses this faculty will find resources even in a refractory voice, and will produce great effects, with little fatigue. But most public speakers are the slaves of their voice; they do not govern it, so much as it governs them. In this case, even though it has the most precious qualities, it is but a rebellious instrument. No one need fear any injury to the chest from those daily exercises which are necessary, in order thus to subdue and discipline the voice. If moderate, they will on the contrary strengthen it; and experienced physicians recommend recitation and singing to persons of delicate habit. The most favorable time for these exercises, is an hour or two after a meal; the stomach should be neither full nor empty.

After the care of the voice comes that of *pronunciation*. There is a natural pronunciation; by which I mean that utterance of the elements of speech which is common to all languages; and there is a conventional pronunciation, or that which each nation adopts for the words of its own tongue.

The student should begin by making himself perfectly master of the natural pronunciation, and learn to give every vowel its appropriate sound, and to make the organic motions belonging to every consonant. The latter point is the more important. If the purity of the vowel sounds conduce much to the grace of discourse, it is especially the articulation of the consonants, which gives it distinctness, vigor, and expression. A man who articulates well can make himself heard at a distance without vociferation, even though he lay little stress upon the vowels; and this is the method to which actors have recourse, when they make dying persons speak with a subdued voice; they explode the consonant while they retain the vowel sound. But one who articulates badly will never make himself heard at a distance; and adding force to the vowels will but increase the confusion. It is, further, in the utterance of consonants that the most usual impediments and other faults occur; and there is scarcely any one, who may not, on strict observation, detect himself as faulty in some particulars. One speaks thickly, he pronounces the *r* with the uvula and in the throat, instead of uttering it with the tongue, against the palate.

Another *lisps;* in pronouncing the *s* he protrudes the end of the tongue between the rows of teeth, and makes the English *th*, instead of a pure sibilation. Many fail in the *ch* (English *sh*), substituting an *s*, or a sort of *f*, or an awkward *ch*, produced by an oblique portion of the tongue. There is no one of these faults which may not be corrected by perseverance.* You remember the example of Demosthenes, whose principal efforts were directed to the development of his voice, and the utterance of the letter *r*. It is to be wished, that it were more customary to exercise children, at an early age, in the proper formation of sounds and use of their organs; there might thus be obtained without trouble, results which at a more advanced age cost immense pains and valuable time.

There remains another point, which is almost entirely neglected by public speakers, and which has, nevertheless, great importance; it is the art of *taking breath at the right time.* A man who takes breath properly, will fatigue himself less in speaking three or four hours, as certain political orators do, especially in England, than another in half an hour; and the orators who are able to speak so long, are either men who have studied the management of their breath, or men who speak much, but who speak well; for in this case, respiration regulates itself, without separate thought, just as in conversation. But it is by no means the same when one recites a discourse from memory; especially if it is the discourse of another; for in writing we take care, without being aware of it, to adjust the length of the periods to the habitudes of our lungs. But the exercise in which it is most difficult to breathe aright, as being that which is furthest removed from the natural tone, is the exercise of reading; and it is remarked that one is wearied much sooner by reading than by speaking. There are very few persons who can bear half an hour of reading without a slight inconvenience of the organ; but there are many who can speak an hour without trouble. The point of the difficulty is this, to time the respiration so as always to take breath a moment before it is exhausted. For this purpose, it is necessary to breathe quite often, and to take advantage of little rests in the delivery. It might be feared lest this necessity should injure the utterance and make it frigid; but, on the contrary, the rests which are thus employed by one who is exercised so as to use them properly, are as expressive as the voice itself; the slowness which they communicate to the discourse is only that slowness which gives more weight and vigor to the thought; so this happy infirmity becomes an additional power.

It is, lastly, by breathing seasonably, that the speaker will avoid a fault which is very common and very great; that of letting the voice fall at the end of sentences, which renders the recitation at the same time indistinct and monotonous. This is the abuse of the rule which is pointed out by nature. It is natural to lower the voice slightly at the moment of finishing a sentence, at least in most cases; for there are certain thoughts which, on the contrary, demand an elevation of the voice at the close. But the fall is made too perceptible, and is taken from too great a height, so that there are often three or

* The difficulty with regard to the *r* is one which is least easily removed. Yet it may be effected by pronouncing *d* instead of *r* for some time. Excellent teachers declare this expedient to be infallible.

four words which the hearer catches with difficulty, or does not catch at all. This would be bad enough, even without the additional evil, that the expression is weakened at the same time with the voice. As a general rule, the voice should be kept up to the end of the sentence, excepting only that slight depression and, as it were, reflexion which denote that the sense is terminated. But to do this, you must breathe in time; as it is, because the lungs are exhausted that you must lower the voice; for, where there is no breath, there is no sound.

I come now to some directions as to the *Moral Part* of delivery.

The expression sufficiently shows the point of view under which we consider the whole art of recitation, and in which we find the fundamental principle which supports all our rules. The principle is this: delivery has its residence, not in the mouth, but in the *sentiment* and the *thought*. It depends less on the *voice* than on the *soul*. I should have been in danger of being misunderstood if I had not begun by making some reservation in favor of the vocal part of delivery. This I am far from wishing to sacrifice. But now I assume an instrument fully exercised, an organ flexible and strong, a good pronunciation, distinct articulation, and easy respiration. When this previous training is accomplished, and when the moment has come for actual speaking, remember that the delivery is above all an affair of the soul; and make it as independent as possible of your organs. It is at bottom, the soul of the speaker, which addresses the soul of the hearer. The organs of speech, on the one part, and the organs of hearing on the other, are but intermediates between the mind of him who speaks and the mind of of him who hears. The more free one makes this communication, the more one forgets the organ, so as to bring out nothing but the soul, the better will be the elocution. Let the soul, the entire soul, with its constant unity, as well as with its infinite movements, look through the utterance, like the bottom of a stream, through perfectly limpid water; so limpid that it seems not to exist. The organs should be such docile and faithful interpreters of the thought, as to seem not to be present; they should obey to a degree of self-concealment. This is their glory and their mission; and the realizing of this ideal would infer the perfection, as well of the organ, as of the sentiment. This is according to our fundamental principle, viz.: "*It is the soul that should speak.*" We proceed now to deduce from this certain general directions:

I.—The delivery should be *true*, or just; it should give to each thought and each sentiment the tone which belongs to it. Why is such a tone proper to such an emotion of the soul? Why, for example, do we raise the voice at the beginning of a sentence, and let it fall at the end, when we ask a question to which an answer is expected? Why do we invert the method, in that species of questions which require no answer, and which are only another form of affirmation? Why does a certain intonation mark a simple assertion, another a doubt, another surprise, another anger, and the like? This is a question which we cannot answer. We are assured it is so in nature: to observe and to reproduce it, is the business of elocution. But to explain the secret relation which exists between the movements of the mind and the inflections of the

voice, is more than any one can do, if we except Him who formed both the human soul and the organs which serve to communicate its impressions. That there are, in regard to this, fixed and well-determined laws, is sufficiently proved by the two following observations. In the first place, all men, without excepting those who never practise public speaking, recognize just inflection, when they hear it: the dramatic art is founded on this remark. In the second place, there are certain inflections which may be called primitive, and which remain invariable; when we pass from one nation and idiom to another, notwithstanding the infinite diversity of all that is conventional.

But how are we to discover these accents of nature? The first means, which offers itself to the mind, is to observe them in others; it is excellent; but we cannot employ it in every case. We do not always find an occasion to hear precisely this or that word, or sentence, about which we are embarrassed, pronounced by good speakers. I suppose the case therefore where we are left to ourselves. How are we to discover the accents of nature? I answer, we must seek them in the soul. We must begin by discerning the inward impression; and this impression, well caught, will conduct us to the intonation. This is the first consequence of the general principle which we have laid down above, or rather it is only the principle itself put into practice.

It is not meant that random trials must be made of all sorts of intonations, or that bursts of voice must be uttered at hazard. We must sit down, reflect, comprehend, feel, and silently interrogate the mind and heart. It is not till after this inward labor, that the essays of the voice will be useful: they will succeed in clearing and animating the movement of mind which gave them birth. By these means, one may gradually arrive at the true tone, which once found, and especially found in this way, will abide in the soul's memory, and will return and present itself at the moment of necessity. A very useful method of aiding in this research, is to translate the thought into other terms, more familiar than those of the discourse; or, which is still better, to inquire how one would utter an analogous sentiment in the ordinary course of life. This care in tracing the language to the thought, and questioning the soul concerning the inflections of the voice, is the more necessary, from the fact, that the same sentence or the same word, is susceptible of a multitude of inflections, which the mind alone can distinguish, perceiving as it does the most delicate relations, while the diction and the pen have but a single expression for the whole.

Take a word—the most insignificant you can find—a proper name, for instance —and this, if you please, a monosyllable, as *Paul*. For writing and for language, there is but this one word, *Paul;* but there are ten, twenty, an infinity, for the soul, and the organ it inspires. By the mere way in which an intelligent speaker, or better still, one who speaks without observing how, utters this name, and without waiting for him to add anything, you will be able to discern whether he be about to praise or to blame; to tell good news, or bad; to encourage a design, or to depart from it; to call one afar off, or at hand; to question, or to repel. We should never end, if we should try to enumerate all the thoughts which may be included in the utterance of this little name. Now, amidst this infinite variety, what rule shall guide us? What other than that

the mind, well exercised and correct, will find in delivery, the tone which suits the occasion and the moment of speaking? I cannot, then, repeat too often, speak *ex animo* (*out of the soul*). Perhaps you think this is a matter of course, and that the advice is unimportant. But practice will convince you that it is not so.

Let me be allowed to cite the authority of a man, who, received from God a rare genius, which, unfortunately, he squandered on vanities—I mean Talma; listen to his own exposition, given in private to some of his friends; for he wrote nothing of importance on his art. It will be seen that his mode of preparation was that of which I have been speaking; and it may be believed, that one of the causes of that reform which he wrought in theatric delivery, was the care which he bestowed, in searching for inflections in his soul, and in employing his organs only as docile instruments, destined to reproduce the internal impressions.*

The intonations being found, we must give it a degree of intensity greater than one would employ in conversation. From this comes the *energy* of public discourse. It is needless to say, this energy should bear a proportion to the nature of the subject. It will be at one time the energy of argument, at another the energy of passion; but it will always be the energy of propriety and of truth. This utterance, at once accurate and firm, these inflections, true and struck out with precision, have a peculiar charm for the hearer, and can make a discourse interesting from beginning to end, even in the least animated parts.

II. The delivery should be simple, or natural. In speaking from the soul, one will speak simply—for the soul is simple. It is only the presence of man which can make us affected; when alone we are always simple, for the single reason, that then we are ourselves. The accents of the soul are those of nature. It is these which we are to reproduce; and we must take care not to substitute for these the accents of conventional artifice, or of arbitrary choice. It is necessary that the hearer should recognize himself, and that the instinct of his nature should be satisfied with each of our inflections. In other words, we must speak, and not declaim. I have already said, elevate, ennoble the tone of conversation and of common life; but while you elevate, do not forsake it. An able painter does not slavishly copy the traits of his model; he idealizes them, and transfers them to the canvas only after he has subjected them to a sort of transfiguration in his brain; but even while idealizing them, he so imitates them, that they may be recognized at once. Thus it is that a portrait

* "It has been imagined, even by enlightened minds, that in studying my parts, I place myself before a glass, as a model before a painter in his atelier. According to them, I gesticulate, I shake the ceiling of the room with my cries; in the evening, on the stage, I utter the intonations learned in the morning, prepared inflections, and sobs of which I know the number; imitating Crecentini, who, in his Romeo, evinces a despair scored beforehand in a passage sung a hundred times over at home, with a piano accompaniment. It is an error: reflection is one of the greatest parts of my labor; following the example of the poet, I walk, I muse, or even seat myself on the margin of my little river; like the poet, I rub my forehead, it is the only gesture I allow myself, and then you know it is by no means one of the grandest. Oh! how a thing becoming historical, remains true! If any one should inquire how I have found the greater part of my greatest successes, I should reply, 'By constantly thinking of them.'"—(*Musée des familles*, 6 vol. p. 124.)

may be a perfect likeness, and yet more beautiful than the original. The same thing occurs in good speaking. The tones of common parlance are embellished, and yet they are perfectly recognizable, because their essence is carefully preserved. But to declaim, to take a new tone, because one is in the pulpit—in fine, to speak as no one ever speaks, is a grievous fault; while, strange to say, it is a fault very common, very hard to avoid, and which, perhaps, none of us escapes altogether. For it is far easier to assume a sustained and unaltering tone, than, step by step, to follow thought and sentiment in their infinite sinuosities; and then, there are never wanting hearers of bad taste, for whom the pomp of language is imposing. Nevertheless, consulting only the human effect of your preaching—if this consideration were not unworthy—the man who *speaks* in the pulpit will rise above him who *declaims*. Even those who at first suffer themselves to be dazzled by the cadence of periods, and the outbreaks of voice, at length grow weary, and are less pleased with the artificial preacher than with him whose very tones make them feel that he thinks all that he says. And what shall I say of the real and useful effect produced by these two preachers? How much more directly, nay, exclusively, will the latter find his way to the heart and conscience! How will his vehement parts be relieved by the calm and simple tone of his habitual manner! How much more truly will he be what he ought, in the sight both of God and of man, by continuing to be himself, and not stepping aside from truth in announcing truth!

Yes, if you would have a pulpit delivery which shall be dignified and Christian, and which shall make deep impression, speak always with simplicity. Say things as you feel them. Put no more warmth into your manner than you have in your heart. This honesty in speaking—allow me the expression—will constrain you to introduce a more sincere and profound warmth than you would ever have attained in any other way. It will, besides, have a salutary reaction on your writing, and even on your soul. For, displaying things as they are, it will bring your faults to light, and admonish you to correct them.

I have spoken of the pulpit. If it had been proper here to speak of the stage, many similar observations might be made. Great actors no longer *declaim*; they *speak*. Talma, whom I have so often named, began by declaiming, as do others. An interesting circumstance made him feel the necessity of adopting a new manner, more conformed to nature: and from that day he became another man, in regard to his art, and produced extraordinary effects. Those who have heard him will tell you that the extreme simplicity of his playing astonished them at first, and that they were tempted to take him for a very ordinary man, whose only advantage over others consisted in a magnificent voice. But they were soon subdued by the power of nature; and the vivid impressions by which they were seized, made them understand that the very simplicity of his acting constituted its force, as well as its originality.*

* "We were," it is Talma who speaks, "rhetoricians and not dramatic personages. How many academic discourses on the stage! How few words of simplicity! But, one evening, chance threw me into a parlor with the leaders of the Gironde party; their sombre and disquieted appearance attracted my attention. There were written there, in visible characters, great and mighty interests. As they were too much men of heart to

III. The delivery should be *varied*. We know how monotonous it is in general; and though every one feels the grossness of the fault, few succeed in avoiding it. The best means of doing so, is to observe our principle of recitation *from the soul*. The soul is all full of variety. If there are no two leaves on a tree exactly alike, still less are there two sentiments in a human soul which are perfectly identical. Listen to a man engaged in animated conversation; you will be confounded at the marvellous flexibility of the human mind, and the infinity of shades to which it can adapt itself by turns. All this the vocal organ will deliver, if it confine itself to follow the movements of the soul. It must, therefore, be conceded, that there is no reason why any one should be monotonous in recitation. Take account of the sense of each sentence, of each member of a sentence, you will discover a perpetual mobility in the thought, and will need only to infuse abundance of truth into your delivery, to insure for it abundance of variety. There is, in particular, a kind of variety which will be found in this way, and which will spread itself over all the rest; I mean variety in regard to *rapidity of delivery*. It is natural to speak sometimes slow, and sometimes fast; sometimes, even very slow, and sometimes very fast. Here is a word on which one must dwell a moment; here, on the other hand, is a sentence which must be exploded, rather than recited, and which must be pronounced with all the rapidity of which the organs are capable in consistency with precise articulation. An elocution which levels these inequalities, and in which every sentence takes its turn with a measure always equal, and almost with the same rhythm, contradicts nature, and loses half its resources. This monotony must be broken, at all hazards. Better even would it be to employ excessive action and abrupt transitions, though this extreme must also be avoided, because it gives the delivery a theatrical air, or rather because by exaggerating the nature it falsifies it. In general, we speak too fast, much too fast. When any one speaks, the thoughts and sentiments do not come to him all at once: they rise in his mind by little and little. Now, this labor and this delay should appear in the delivery, or it will always fail of being natural. Take your time to reflect, to feel, to let ideas come; and do not make your elocution precipitate, except when determined so to do by some peculiar consideration. This *necessary* rapidity will give greater movement and vivacity to the deli-

allow these interests to be tainted with selfishness, I saw them manifest proofs of the dangers of the country. All were assembled for pleasure, yet no one thought of it. Discussion ensued, they touched the most thrilling questions of the crisis. It was beautiful. I imagined myself present at a secret deliberation of the Roman Senate. 'It is thus,' thought I, 'that men should speak. The country, whether it be named France or Rome, employs the same accents, the same language: if then they do not declaim here, neither did they declaim in the olden time, it is evident.' These reflections made me more attentive. My impressions, though produced by a conversation devoid of all violent manner (*emphase*), became profound. 'An apparent calmness in these men,' thought I, 'agitates the soul; eloquence, then, can have force, without throwing the body into disorderly movements?' I even perceived that discourse, uttered without effort or outcry, renders the gesture more energetic and gives more expression to the countenance. All these deputies, thus assembled before me, appeared far more eloquent than at the tribune, where, finding themselves a spectacle, they thought it necessary to utter their harangues in the manner of actors, of such actors as we then were, that is to say, of declaimers, fraught with turgidity. From that moment I caught new light and saw my art regenerated."—(*Musée des familles, ibid.* p. 280.)

very; but that other rapidity, which arises only from embarrassment and want of intelligence or reflection, confounds all the inequalities of thought, and engenders a manner which is effeminate, dull, lifeless, and uninteresting.

IV. Together with variety, the delivery should present another condition, without which this variety will itself be without connection and support; it is that of *unity*. The delivery should be one. In other words, we must use an effort to have a *récitation d'ensemble*, which results again from the principle which we laid down in the outset. For, if the words are manifold, the thought is one and indivisible in the mind. If we were pure spirits, we could communicate it to other spirits of the same nature, without decomposition. But being constrained to clothe it in words, we are constrained to dismember it, and, from being simple in our soul, it becomes multiplied in language. To seize and transmit to the hearer this sole thought, to rise from language to the soul, and from the multiplicity of words to the simplicity of intellect, is the great work of a good delivery. Collecting, then, into one general sentiment, the various sentiments of which I have said so much, it will deserve the definition which has been given of the Beautiful, "Unity in variety, or variety in unity."

This is not to be accomplished, however, always in the same manner. In general, we shall, in a well-constructed sentence, avoid giving prominence to this or that word; causing the whole of it, rather to stand forth alike, and supporting it to the end. For it is the genius of our language to accent constantly, but lightly, the end of every word, and consequently also the end of every sentence. There are, nevertheless, certain cases where one is obliged to give a saliency to some words, or even to a single word, because this word comprises the capital idea. Even then, however, such words should predominate over the sentence, but not absorb it. It is the thought which should always appear, and always in its unity. A delivery which is broken, jerking, rising and falling by turns, is bad indeed. . . . .

I might add other counsels, but these are such as experience shows to be most useful; and by means of the illustrations which we have commenced, you will yourselves be able to make other applications of one general principle, to which we must continually return, and in which are embodied all the directions we have given.

I have said nothing about gestures. It is a subject by itself, and one which I have not time to treat at present. Let me merely say, that the preacher should make few gestures, and these of a very simple kind, and further, that they should be dictated by the emotions of the soul, as well as by the inflections of the voice.

To sum up what I have said, if you wish to attain to a good delivery, begin by preparing your mind and your heart. Then, by reflection, with the aid of observation, search for the inflections of the soul, and oblige your organs to conform to these, humbly and exactly. As to the rest, be persuaded you will speak all the better, the more you sink yourselves; that the best delivery is that which turns attention away from the orator, and fixes it upon what he says; and finally, that the highest point of the art, especially in the case of the preacher, is to cause himself to be forgotten.