

482 ON DELIVERY, AS REGARDS VOICE.

propose to say, so that you may feel no uneasiness; for the dread of failure sadly interrupts the flow of thought and feeling.¹ Think it all over within a short time of the hour for speaking, so that you may be sure of the ground, and so that your feelings may be brought into lively sympathy with the subject; it is, however, best *immediately* before speaking to have the mind free from active thought, maintaining only a quiet, devotional frame. Let the physical condition be as vigorous as possible. In order to this seek good health in general; take abundant sleep the night before speaking; at the meal before speaking eat moderately, of food easily digested, and if you are to speak immediately, eat very little; and do not, if it can possibly be avoided, exhaust your vitality during the day by exciting conversation. A healthy condition of the *nervous* system is surpassingly important; not a morbid excitability, such as is produced by studying very late the night before, but a healthy condition, so that feeling may quickly respond to thought, so that there may be sympathetic emotion, and at the same time complete self-control.²

Above all, be yourself. Speak out with freedom and earnestness what you think and feel. Better a thousand faults than through dread of faults to be *tame*. Some of the most useful preachers, men in a true and high sense eloquent, have had grave defects of manner. Habitually correct faults as far as possible, but whether the voice and the action be good or bad, if there is something in you to say, speak it out. And by all means let there be no affectation, or even artificiality.³

¹ Comp. McIlvaine on Elocution, p. 120.

² Comp. McIlvaine, pp. 103 ff., 165 ff.; Monod, p. 399 f.; Pittenger, pp. 190-192.

³ Comp. above, Introd. § 5.