

stores are gradually being bought out by the people, and being used as general purpose societies.

It is important to realize that co-operation is not a magic pill that will cure every social disease overnight. If some outports are uneconomic, co-operation nor any other form of organisation can put such communities on their feet. Redistribution of the population may in these cases be the only real remedy. Hasty condemnation of an area must however be avoided, for uneconomic is a relative term, and potential resources are hard to estimate. Social evils such as unemployment can only be wiped out slowly as capitalism is modified and transformed from within. Although Newfoundlanders are often pessimistic, it is the faith of most of us that with a widespread co-operative movement and the

best forms of organised marketing there is a decent living possible for everyone in the country.

The actual material benefits of the new movement in Newfoundland, expressed in hard dollars and cents, have been very noticeable, and these bid fair to increase steadily. The movement is only in a stage of healthy infancy. But the significance of the movement will be misunderstood, particularly at this stage, if attention is confined only to the business side. The educational aspect is vital in Newfoundland, and so are the effects this is having on persons and on community life. Lives as well as livelihoods are being changed by this new gospel of study, self-reliance, independence, and united action. It is perhaps by the intangible results that the movement will do most good for the country.

Some Aspects of Public Speaking

By ARTHUR L. YATES

THERE are certain facts regarding ears and hearing which we must take into account when speaking from a platform, and these will be considered. The normal ear does not hear a sound at the moment that it reaches it, for there is a tiny period before the waves of sound can set the mechanism of the ear in operation, and similarly, the mechanism continues in operation for a fractional period after sound has ceased to fall upon it. As a result, if a succession of notes fall upon the ear they are heard separately, but, if they are repeated more and more rapidly, there comes a time when the separate notes appear to fuse and form a single prolonged sound. In a perfect hall, the notes would not thus be fused until they recurred sixteen times a second. Perfect halls are however

rare, for the walls will generally reflect the sound and form an echo, and it is not uncommon to find that notes repeated six times a second will fuse to a continuous note in such a hall. If for such test notes, we substitute the syllables of words we find that, in a perfect hall, they will be audible because the tiny period of silence in between the syllables and words is clear, but that in a faulty hall, the echo of the syllable fills up the period of silence so that the syllables run into one another.

It is a matter of some difficulty to many speakers to frame their words in a staccato manner and fortunately there is no need to do so for, if each syllable is spoken on a different note, it will achieve the same effect and make the speech quite clear.

When any member of the audience is hard of hearing, this tendency of the syllables to run into one another is for

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them increased, so that the period of silence in between the syllables must be more marked before they hear with ease or, if the period of silence is not used, the change of note which marks each syllable must be very plain. It may be computed that 10 per cent of all young audiences are hard of hearing, and that this proportion rises to more than 20 per cent in audiences composed of persons of all ages. It must also be remembered that, when a person cannot hear with ease, he rapidly gets auditory fatigue and so will cease to listen and, having ceased to give attention, will sit in a dejected attitude which other people who can hear will note, and by example will cease to give attention to the speaker's words. If a speaker does not address himself particularly to those members of his audience who are hard of hearing and make sure that they will hear, he will very soon lose the attention of the rest.

For this reason the speaker should pay particular attention to the way in which he forms his words and must have some knowledge of the functions of the larynx, throat and tongue and lips as far as these relate to speech.

The larynx forms the note on which the speech is based and the principal structures which perform this function are the vocal cords. By stretching them the note is rendered higher and by relaxing them it is lower. The vocal cords are brought together when the note of speech is made. They are strong structures but like other organs of the body will not stand much strain if this is wrongly applied.

When the note is generated in the larynx, the sound passes up the throat and is reflected forwards by the curved soft palate to the mouth. By the position of the tongue the note acquires the character of a vowel and when the note of the vowel is stopped by the tongue or by the lips, the consonants are formed. It will be seen that one of the most important factors, which govern clarity of speech, is the position of the soft palate which should be contracted hard against the back of the throat. If it

is not contracted and hangs lax, air will escape into the nasal cavities and the vowel sound will partly pass with it. Should this occur the vowel sound will not be fully stopped by the tongue or lips to form the consonant, the sound of which will be indistinct and lacking in its characteristic and necessary sharpness.

Words and Phrases.

A word is made by adding syllables together but a word alone is meaningless. To gain a meaning a word must be a portion of a phrase. Phrases are the units of thought and, in speaking, a phrase must be spoken continuously with only such small periods of silence as will permit the syllables and words to gain distinctness and, there is a pause after the phrase, to let the hearer's brain appreciate its meaning and after this, the next phrase follows and so on till the sentence is completed.

The rate at which the phrases are delivered, will depend on their importance and they will follow one another rapidly when they describe some matter which is of no great consequence in the address, but the rate will depend also on the power of the audience to grasp the subject of which we are speaking.

Cadence.

When words are spoken in a public hall, the note, on which each syllable is formed, is higher or lower than that of the preceding syllable. This alteration of the note will form a sort of time and, by selection of the music in the speech the words will have an added meaning. This rise and fall of pitch in speech is known as cadence. The art of cadence is to explain the meaning of the phrases but cadence introduces one pitfall into speech. It may be that we have used words which are ambiguous. This ambiguity will be removed from what we say by cadence so that our audience understands fully what we mean. The reporters, sitting at their desks, will faithfully write down our words and the next day they will appear in print and will be read aloud perhaps by

someone who would like to disagree with what we said. He uses different cadence in this ambiguous phrase and, by the alteration of the cadence, our words may have a meaning very different from that which we intended. It is for this reason that the orator has to learn to speak in phrases which are devoid of ambiguity.

Auditory Fatigue.

There is another reason why cadence is essential in all oratory. If the speech came to be delivered on a monotone, the recurrence of the unchanged note would tire the ear and in a short while it would become impossible to understand the words. If the note is changed this auditory fatigue does not occur. Fatigue of an audience is above all things to be avoided, for what after all is the definition of fatigue but a condition in which, as a result of previous efforts, each further effort produces less and less result. The more they listen, the less they understand when in a state of auditory fatigue.

It is not only the note on which the words are based which leads to auditory fatigue. It has been said that no body of persons can listen to a complex subject for longer than ten minutes, and there is little doubt that this is true. It is therefore necessary to relieve the strain of listening at frequent intervals by introduction of some lighter matter, or by a story or an illustrative anecdote.

The Difference between Written and Spoken Speech.

When any passage in a book is read, we can look back at any words that we have failed to understand and so obtain their meaning. It is therefore permissible to write and print sentences which need careful study and to pen passages which can be fully grasped only by reading them again. This is not the case with speech for, if a sentence is not understood, the words have flown and we shall never know their meaning or significance. It is therefore necessary to use very simple methods of expression when speaking to an audience. Brain speaks to

brain not tongue and lips to ears and the expressions that a speaker uses must readily be understood by the least intelligent members of his audience.

Much of the bad oratory that is heard, is due to the difference between the speech as written and as spoken. It is well to consider this in detail. Examination of a written passage shows the fact that many words begin with consonants and that a few begin with vowels and, if this passage is read aloud, it will be noticed that, if the reader is unskilled, the words that begin with vowels are considerably plainer in enunciation than those beginning with a consonant. If one listens carefully to such a passage when read by a skilled speaker, one finds that he enunciates each consonant at the beginning of a word with a very short vowel sound which precedes the consonant. This is called the silent vowel and, in the case of the bad speaker, this silent vowel is indefinite and slurred. If we look at the sound strip of a talking picture through a magnifying glass, we see a lot of wavy lines and on studying these more carefully, one finds that they represent the vowel sounds and that the vowel sounds are altered when they are stopped by the tongue or lips to form the consonant. There are in fact no consonants, but only different methods of stopping vowels. There are about ten vowels, that is to say, each of the vowels a e i o u may be short or long and there are about twenty different ways of stopping these. If one looks at the tracing on the sound strip of the initial consonant, one finds that it is always preceded by a vowel. The p of proceed and the c of consonant have, for example, such short vowel sounds that they can hardly be detected, but in the sounds of n as in nominal or m as in mountain the initial vowel sounds are more prolonged. In either case, the strength and clearness of the initial consonant depends upon the strength of the initial silent vowel and, in bad speech, it is not unusual to find that lack of knowledge of this fact leads to a bad introduction of the work which is there-

fore difficult to understand. The bad speaker in fact endeavours to speak words as they are written.

It is a ponderable thought that, the more a man has read, the more is he likely to speak words in the way that they are printed and that the less that he has read, the less likely is he to do this and so he may with much less knowledge be the better speaker.

Limits of Comprehension.

If men of average intelligence are subjected to a simple test, their power of understanding is found to depend to a large extent upon their power of memory of the words that they have read, or of the words that they have heard and, among educated men of average intelligence, this power of memory of the words they read is better than their power of memory of the words they hear. Among those less well educated but of similar grade of intelligence, the reverse is found to be the case, and they can remember the words that they have heard better than the words that they have read.

Men of average intelligence can generally repeat some thirty words which they have read or heard but, among them, there is a fairly high proportion who can repeat only about ten words that they read and thirty that they have heard and a still higher proportion who can repeat thirty words that they have read and only ten to fifteen words that they have heard.

Men of proved ability, whether in the scholastic or the business world or politics, can generally repeat some sixty words or more but scholars can remember what they read more easily than what they hear and business men and politicians can remember more of what they hear than of the words they read.

This fact is of importance to the man who speaks in public for, if he utters twenty words without a pause, a small proportion of his audience will fail to understand. If without a pause, he utters thirty words at least one half of his audience will fail to understand him and, if he garrulously goes on for sixty words, no one will follow what he says.

There is another factor which has much to do with the ability of the members of an audience to hold the phrases in their memory until the sentence ends. This is the ease with which they hear the speaker's words.

The Acoustic Properties of Public Halls.

Speakers have to know something of the acoustic properties of halls if their words are to be heard. In halls which are perfect acoustically, and these are rare, the only difference between the voice of oratory and that of conversation is its loudness. In the majority of halls, there are acoustic defects which have to be recognised and overcome if the speaker would be heard.

The sound of the speaker's voice will be reflected from the walls. If this reflection is too little and the hall is large, it will be necessary to raise the voice so much that those in front will think that he is shouting, while those behind will hardly hear him. If loud speakers have been fitted, they will overcome this fault with ease. If the reflection is too much, the problem is by far more difficult. When the sound is reflected, it passes back towards the speaker. But the reflected sound has lost the character of speech and is of the nature of a humming noise of the same pitch as the vowel voiced in the last syllable. If the next syllable is spoken on the same pitch as this echoed sound, it will tend to be inaudible. Speech on a monotone in such a hall is generally unintelligible as are any words of which the syllables are spoken without a change of pitch.

It is for this reason that in such a hall syllable cadence is employed. This means that one syllable is never spoken on the same pitch as the preceding syllable. It is partly for this reason, and partly to make speech more pleasing and effective, that phrase cadence is employed. In phrase cadence the important words in that phrase stand out by reason of the note on which these words are spoken. In addition to the use of cadence to overcome the echoes of a hall, it is necessary to find out, either by scientific tests or by trial sentences

at the beginning of a speech, the point from which the echoes chiefly emanate. This is not the place to describe such scientific tests but the tests employed at the beginning of a speech should be known to every speaker. In these, the speaker faces his audience and begins his speech with a series of observations which are of no importance, except that while he makes them, he directs his voice to various areas of the hall, watching meanwhile the faces of the audience. He will see persons in a certain sector of the hall who are hearing easily, others who strain to hear his words. He faces differently and directs his voice towards those who are not hearing easily. He tries raising his voice and then speaking less loudly. He tries a certain rate of speech and finds that it is too fast or too slow. He bears in mind that the hall must have an echo period, that is to say, the tiny period of relative silence in between the words or phrases may be filled up with the echo. He increases the period of relative silence between the words, and speaks in what to him is a staccato manner but to the audience sounds like ordinary speech.

He remembers also that every hall has what is called a fundamental note, which note will be reflected more than any other note. He finds that, if he pitches his voice higher or lower, he is more audible and so avoids the fundamental note. Finally, having found the point to which he should direct his voice, the rate at which he can speak and the fundamental note, he begins the real material of his speech.

The Musical Character of Public Speech.

The changing note which is essential to good speech has characters which are akin to music. The range of the human voice is about two octaves and the best speakers seem to use all this range in public speech.

The notes on which the speech is based, must be well chosen so that they clarify the meaning of the words.

Music however, has two characteristics in addition to the pitch of note and these are its loudness and its time. The varying loudness of the words is one of the most important features of good public speech and the terming of the words produces poetry or prose at will. Prose which is spoken to the lilt of poetry is called lyrical. The greatest orators have shown that to change from prose, in which time is not a special feature, to lyrical prose, is one of the most telling tricks of oratory. But it is not without its dangers for in a hall which has acoustic difficulties the rhythm tends to build up echoes.

It has to be remembered that in the music of the savage tribes, drums were the most important instruments. By these, a certain rhythmic beat excites man to a spurious bravery or delight. Some orators have the trick of employing this same drumming effect in speech and by its means exciting throngs to frenzy. The best orators avoid this form of rhetoric.