



The Book of Eloquence: A Collection of Extracts in Prose and Verse, From the Most Famous Orators and Poets; Intended as Exercises for Declamation in Colleges and Schools (Classic Reprint)

Charles Dudley Warner

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Excerpt from The Book of Eloquence: A Collection of Extracts in Prose and Verse, From the Most Famous Orators and Poets; Intended as Exercises for Declamation in Colleges and Schools

The continual call in our schools for extracts suitable for declamation, and the difficulty of obtaining them, has induced the editor to prepare the present work, which he hopes will meet the demand. Of the many compilations of a similar design in print, some are utterly unfit for their intended purpose, by reason of the too great length of the selections, and nearly all having been long in use, have become irksome to the student; and it has been an especial endeavor in this work to present new and spirited extracts, and not to encumber it with those too lengthy for practical use. With the object in view of compiling a really valuable book for declamation, the usual mode has been slightly departed from; the prose being made to outbalance the poetry, and dialogues being entirely omitted, as the writings of the best dramatists, - and those alone can be used with profit, - are in every ones hands, and the introduction of the usual hackneyed colloquies of school-books would only serve to crowd out more useful matter.

Yet, in making this a new book, the editor has not permitted himself to lose sight of those master-pieces of eloquence, which, though familiar, never grow old, neither lose their interest by lapse of years, nor grow stale by repetition, and which should always find a place in a book of this character, until the great names of American and of European story fall unheeded on the ear, until the mention of Marathon and Bannockburn and Bunker Hill fails to quicken the pulse and brighten the eye.

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