

### Conversation.

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How often the letter writer has found occasion to say: if I could only speak with you face to face, I could tell you my wishes and feelings so much more freely than by means of this more or less artificial correspondence! Notwithstanding the popularity of modern stump speaking and forensic eloquence, the politician will acknowledge that the friend made by five minutes conversation is more reliable than the hundreds of adherents gained around the platform. The one is a friend the others are partisan adherents likely to be turned aside by a flood of eloquence from the other party. The wise preacher knows that the carefully prepared sermon of a year will not accomplish so much as the casual visits to the homes of his people, and a few minutes of unstudied and sympathetic conversation with the families. Indeed, in the ability to converse well there lies for every man more power than in the possession of libraries of encyclopedias, or law books, or in masses of oratorical or literary wisdom.

A Demosthenes, or a Lord Braughan, or a Pitt, or Burke, or Webster, or Calhoun may bend an evidence momentarily to his will like a storm wind passing over a forest, but for permanent impression, for the knitting of fast friendship, for the planting of seeds which will go on yielding harvests of good or bad fruit, give me the man who converses well. The great movements of the world's history have all begun, and the plots which have ended in national disgrace have all been hatched "unter Vier Augen" as the German's say. This matter of conversation is of the utmost importance to the student who desires to utilize all the abilities with which he is endowed. In his essays and discourses and studied harangues, all useful in their place, he elevates his thoughts upon the more or less stylish stilts which other men have constructed; he clothes his sentiments in a fashionable garb; models his speech after some Swift, Addison, or Blair stand-