

alter the tone of their voice, though they do not attend to it. It rises, sinks, and has various inflections given it, according to the present state and disposition of the mind. When the mind is calm and sedate, the voice is moderate and even; when the former is dejected with sorrow, the latter is languid; and when that is inflamed by passion, this is elevated.

It is the orator's business, therefore, to follow nature, and to endeavour that the tone of his voice appear natural and unaffected. And for this end, he must take care to suit it to the nature of the subject; but still so as to be always grave and decent. Some persons continue a discourse in such a low and drawling manner, that they can scarcely be heard by their audience. Others again hurry on in so loud and boisterous a manner, as if they imagined their hearers were deaf. But all the music and harmony of voice lies between these extremes.

Perhaps nothing is of more importance to a speaker, than a proper attention to accent, emphasis, and cadence. Every word in our language, of more than one syllable, has, at least, one accented syllable. This syllable ought to be rightly known, and the word should be pronounced by the speaker in the same manner as he would pronounce it in ordinary conversation. By emphasis, we distinguish those words in a sentence which we esteem the most important, by laying a greater stress of voice upon them than we do upon the others. And it is surprising to observe how the sense of a phrase may be altered by varying the emphasis. The following example will serve as an illustration.

This short question, "Will you ride to town to-day?" may be understood in four different ways, and, consequently, may receive four different answers, according to the placing of the emphasis.

If it be pronounced thus; Will *you* ride to town to-day? the answer may properly be, No; I shall send my son. If thus; Will you *ride* to town to-day? Answer, No; I intend to walk. Will you ride to

town

town to-day? No; I shall ride into the country. Will you ride to town *to-day*? No; but I shall to-morrow.

This shows how necessary it is that a speaker should know how to place his emphasis. And the only rule for this is, that he study to attain a just conception of the force and spirit of the sentiments which he delivers. There is as great a difference between one who lays his emphasis properly, and one who pays no regard to it, or places it wrong, as there is between one who plays on an instrument with a masterly hand, and the most bungling performer.

Cadence is the reverse of emphasis. It is a depression or lowering of the voice; and commonly falls upon the last syllable in a sentence. It is varied, however, according to the sense. When a question is asked, it seldom falls upon the last word; and many sentences require no cadence at all.

Every person who speaks in public, should endeavour, if he can, to fill the place where he speaks. But still he ought to be careful not to exceed the natural key of his voice. If he does, it will neither be soft nor agreeable; but either harsh and rough, or too shrill and squeaking. Besides, he will not be able to give every syllable its full and distinct sound; which will render what he says obscure, and difficult to be understood. He should therefore take care to keep his voice within reach, so as to have it under management, that he may raise or sink it, or give it any inflection he thinks proper; which it will not be in his power to do, if he put a force upon it, and strain it, beyond its natural tone.

The like caution is to be used against the contrary extreme, that the voice be not suffered to sink too low. This will give the speaker pain in raising it again to its proper pitch, and be no less offensive to the hearers. The medium between these two is a moderate and even voice. But this is not the same in all; that which is moderate in one would be high in another. Every person therefore must regulate it by the natural key of his own voice. A calm and sedate voice is generally best;

best; as a moderate sound is most pleasing to the ear, if it be clear and distinct. But this equality of the voice must also be accompanied with a variety: otherwise there can be no harmony; since all harmony consists in variety.

Nothing is less pleasing than a discourse pronounced throughout in one continued tone of the voice, without any alteration. The equality, therefore, we are here speaking of, admits a variety of inflections and changes within the same pitch. And when that is altered, the gradations, whether higher or lower, should be so gentle and regular as to preserve a due proportion of the parts, and harmony of the whole; which cannot be done, when the voice is suddenly varied with too great a distinction. And therefore it should move from one key to another, so as rather to glide like a gentle stream, than pour down like a rapid torrent, as an ingenious writer has well expressed it.

But an affected variety, ill placed, is as disagreeable to a judicious audience, as the want of it, where the subject requires it. We may find some persons, in pronouncing a grave and plain discourse, affect as many different tones, and variations of their voice, as if they were acting a comedy; which is doubtless a very great impropriety. But the orator's province is not barely to apply to the mind, but likewise to the passions; which require a great variety of the voice, high or low, vehement or languid, according to the nature of the passions he designs to affect. So that for an orator always to use the same tone or degree of his voice, and expect to answer all his views by it, would be much the same thing as if a physician should propose to cure all distempers by one medicine. And, as a perfect monotony is always unpleasant, so it can never be necessary in any discourse.

That some sentences ought to be pronounced faster than others is very manifest. Gay and sprightly ideas should not only be expressed louder, but also quicker than such as are melancholy. And when we press an

opponent,

opponent, the voice should be brisk. But to hurry on in a precipitate manner without pausing, till stopped for want of breath, is certainly a very great fault. This destroys not only the necessary distinction between sentence and sentence, but likewise between the several words of the same sentence; by which mean, all the grace of speaking is lost, and in a great measure, the advantage of hearing.

Young persons are very liable to this, especially at first setting out. And it often arises from diffidence. They are jealous of their performances, and the success they may have in speaking, which gives them a pain till it is over; and this puts them into a hurry of mind, which incapacitates them from governing their voice, and keeping it under that due regulation which perhaps they proposed to themselves before they began to speak.

And as a precipitant and hasty pronunciation is culpable, so likewise on the other hand, it is a fault to speak too slow. This seems to argue a heaviness in the speaker. And as he appears cool himself, he can never expect to warm his hearers, and excite their affections. When not only every word, but every syllable is drawn out to too great a length, the ideas do not come fast enough to keep up the attention without much uneasiness. Now, to avoid either of the two extremes last mentioned, the voice ought to be sedate and distinct. And in order to render it distinct, it is necessary, not only that each word and syllable should have its just and full sound, both as to time and accent, but likewise that every sentence, and part of a sentence, should be separated by its proper pause.

This is more easy to be done in reading, from the assistance of the points; but it is no less to be attended to in speaking, if we would pronounce in a distinct and graceful manner. For every one should speak in the same manner as he ought to read, if he could arrive at that exactness. Now the common rule given in pausing is, that we stop our voice at a comma till we

can tell one, at a semicolon two, at a colon three, and at a full period four. And as these points are either accommodated to the several parts of the same sentence, as the first three; or different sentences, as the last; this occasions the different length of the pause, by which either the dependence of what precedes upon that which follows, or its distinction from it is represented.

It is not in our power to give ourselves what qualities of the voice we please; but only to make the best use we can of what nature has bestowed upon us. However, several defects of the voice are capable of being helped by care and proper means; as, on the other hand, the best voice may be greatly hurt by ill management and indiscretion. Temperance is a great preservative of the voice, and all excess is highly prejudicial to it. The voice must necessarily suffer, if the organs of speech have not their proper tone. A strong voice is very serviceable to an orator, because, if he want some other advantages, he is, however, capable to make himself heard. And if at any time he is forced to strain it, he is in less danger of its failing him before he has finished his discourse.

But he, who has a weak voice, should be very careful not to strain it, especially at first. He ought to begin slow, and rise gradually to such a pitch as the key of his voice will well carry him, without being obliged to sink again afterwards. Frequent inflections of the voice will likewise be some assistance to him. But especially he should take care to speak deliberately, and ease his voice, by allowing due time for respiration at all the proper pauses. It is an extreme much less inconvenient for such a person rather to speak too slow, than too fast. But this defect of a weak voice is sometimes capable of being helped by the use of proper methods; as is evident from the instance of Demosthenes, before mentioned.

Some persons, either from want of due care in their education at first, or from inadvertency and negligence afterwards,

afterwards, run into a very irregular and confused manner of expressing their words; either by misplacing the accent, confounding the sound of the letters, or huddling the syllables one upon another, so as to render what they say often unintelligible. Indeed, sometimes this arises from a natural defect, as in the case of Demosthenes; who found a method to rectify that, as well as the weakness of his voice. But in faults of this kind, which proceed from habit, doubtless the most likely way to mend them is to speak deliberately.

OF GESTURE.

By this is meant, a suitable conformity of the motions of the countenance, and several parts of the body in speaking, to the subject matter of the discourse. It is not agreed among the learned, whether voice or gesture has the greater influence upon us. But as the latter affects us by the eye as the former does by the ear, gesture in the nature of it seems to have this advantage, that it conveys the impression more speedily to the mind; for the sight is the quickest of all our senses. Nor is its influence less upon our passions; nay, in some instances, it appears to act more powerfully. A cast of the eye will express desire in as moving a manner as the softest language; and a different motion of it, resentment.

To wring the hands, tear the hair, or strike the breast, are all strong indications of sorrow. And he, who claps his hand to his sword, throws us into a greater panic than one who only threatens to kill us. Nor is it in some respects less various and extensive language. Cicero tells us, he often diverted himself by trying this with Roscius the comedian; who could express a sentence as many ways by his gestures, as he himself could by words. And some dramas, called pantomimes, have been carried on wholly by mutes, who have

have performed every part by gestures only, without words, in a way very intelligible.

But with respect to oratory, gesture may very properly be called the second part of pronunciation; in which, as the voice should be suited to the impressions it receives from the mind, so the several motions of the body ought to be accommodated to the various tones and inflections of the voice. When the voice is even and moderate, little gesture is required; and nothing is more unnatural than violent motion, in discoursing upon ordinary and familiar subjects. The motions of the body should rise therefore in proportion to the vehemence and energy of the expression, as the natural and genuine effect of it.

But as gesture is very different and various as to the manner of it, which depends upon the decent conduct of several parts of the body, it will not be amiss to consider more particularly the proper management of each of those parts. Now all gesture is either natural, or from imitation. By natural gesture, we mean such actions and motions of the body, as naturally accompany our words, as these do the impressions of our mind. And these either respect the whole body, or some particular part of it.

The speaker should not long continue standing in the same position, like a statue, but be constantly changing, though the motion be very moderate. There ought to be no appearance of stiffness, but a certain ease and pliability, naturally suiting itself to every expression; by which means, when a greater degree of motion is necessary, it will appear less sudden and vehement: for as the raising, sinking, and various inflections of the voice must be gradual, so likewise should the motions of the body. It is only on some particular occasions that a hasty vehemence and impetuosity is proper in either case.

As to the several parts of the body, the head is the most considerable. To lift it up too high has the air of arrogance and pride; to stretch it out too far, or throw it

back.

back, looks clownish and unmannerly; to hang it downwards on the breast, shows an unmanly bashfulness and want of spirit: and to suffer it to lean on either shoulder, argues both sloth and indolence. Wherefore, in calm and sedate discourse, it ought to keep its natural state, and upright posture. However, it should not be long without motion, nor yet always moving; but gently turn sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, as occasion requires, that the voice may be heard by all who are present; and then return again to its natural position. It should always accompany the other actions of the body, and turn on the same side with them; except when aversion to any thing is expressed; which is done by stretching out the right hand, and turning the head to the left.

But it is the countenance, that chiefly represents both the passions and dispositions of the mind. By this we express love, hatred, joy, sorrow, modesty, and confidence: by this we supplicate, threaten, soothe, invite, forbid, consent, or refuse; and all this without speaking. Nay, from hence we form a judgment not only of a person's present temper, but of his capacity and natural disposition. And therefore it is common to say, such a one has a "promising countenance," or that "he promises little by his countenance." It is true, this is no certain rule of judging; nor is it in the power of any one to alter the natural make of his countenance.

But the several parts of the face bear their part, and contribute to the proper and decent motion of the whole. In a calm and sedate discourse, all the features retain their natural state and situation. In sorrow the forehead and eyebrows low, and the cheeks hang down. But in expressions of joy and cheerfulness, the forehead and eyebrows are expanded, the cheeks contracted, and the corners of the mouth drawn upwards. Anger and resentment contract the forehead, draw the brows together, and thrust out the lips. And terror elevates both the brows and forehead. As these

are the natural signs of such passions, the orator should endeavour to conform to them.

But as the eyes are most active and significant, it is the advice of Cicero that the greatest care should be taken in their management. And he gives this reason for it. "Because other parts of the countenance have but few motions; whereas all the passions of the soul are expressed in the eyes, by so many different actions; which cannot possibly be represented by any gestures of the body, if the eyes are kept in a fixed posture." Common experience does in a great measure confirm the truth of this observation. We readily guess at a person's intention, or how he is affected to us by his eyes. And any sudden change or emotion of the mind is presently followed by an alteration in the look.

In speaking, therefore, upon pleasant and delightful subjects, the eyes are brisk and cheerful; as, on the contrary, they sink and are languid in delivering any thing melancholy and sorrowful. This is so agreeable to nature, that before a person speaks, we are prepared with the expectation of one or the other from his different aspect. So likewise in anger, a certain vehemence and intenseness appears in the eyes, which, for want of proper words to express it by, we endeavour to represent by metaphors taken from fire, the most violent and rapid element; and say in such cases, the eyes sparkle, burn, or are inflamed. In expressions of hatred or detestation, it is natural to alter the looks, either by turning the eyes aside, or downwards.

Indeed, the eyes are sometimes turned downwards upon other occasions, as to express modesty. And if at any time a particular object be addressed, whatever it be, the eyes should be turned that way. And therefore Philostratus very deservedly ridicules a certain rhetorician as guilty of solecism in gesture, who, upon saying, O Jupiter! turned his eyes downwards; and when he said, O Earth! looked upward. A staring look has the appearance of giddiness and want of thought: and to contract the eyes gives suspicion of

craft

craft and design. A fixed look may be occasioned from intenseness of thought; but at the same time shows a disregard to the audience; and a too quick and wandering motion of the eyes denotes levity and wantonness. A gentle and moderate motion of the eyes is, therefore, in common, most suitable; always directed to some of the audience, and gradually turning from side to side with an air of respect and modesty, and looking them decently in the face, as in common discourse. Such a behaviour will of course draw attention.

As to the other parts of the body distinct from the head, the shoulders ought not to be elevated; for this is not only in itself indecent; but it likewise contracts the neck, and hinders the proper motion of the head. Nor, on the other hand, should they be drawn down and depressed; because this occasions a stiffness both to the neck and the whole body. Their natural posture therefore is best, as being most easy and graceful. To shrug the shoulders has an abject and servile air; and frequently to heave them upwards and downwards is a very disagreeable sight. A continued motion of the arms any way, is by all means to be avoided. Their action should generally be very moderate, and follow that of the hands; unless in very pathetic expressions, where it may be proper to give them a more lively spring.

Now, all bodily motion is either upward or downward, to the right or left, forward or backward, or else circular. The hands are employed by the orator in all these except the last. And as they ought to correspond with our expressions, so they ought to begin and end with them. In admiration, and addresses to Heaven, they must be elevated, but never raised above the eyes; and in speaking of things below us, they are directed downwards. Side motion should generally begin from the left, and terminate gently on the right. In demonstrating, addressing, and on several other occasions, they are moved forward; and in threatening, sometimes

sometimes thrown back. But when the orator speaks of himself, his right hand should be gently laid on his breast.

The left hand should seldom move alone, but accommodate itself to the motions of the right. In motions to the left side, the right hand should not be carried beyond the left shoulder. In promises, and expressions of compliment, the motion of the hands should be gentle and slow; but in exhortations and applause, more swift. The hands should generally be open; but in expressions of compunction and anger, they may be closed. All finical and trifling actions of the fingers ought to be avoided; nor should they be stretched out and expanded in a stiff and rigid posture, but kept easy and pliable.

The gestures we have hitherto discoursed of, are such as naturally accompany our expressions. And we believe those we have mentioned, if duly attended to, will be found sufficient to answer all the purposes of our modern pronunciation. The other sort of gestures above mentioned are such as arise from imitation; as where the orator describes some action, or personates another speaking. But here great care is to be taken not to overact his part by running into any ludicrous or theatrical mimicry. It is sufficient for him to represent things of this nature, as may best convey the image of them in a lively manner to the minds of the hearers; without any such changes either of his actions or voice as are not suitable to his own character.

SOME PARTICULAR RULES FOR THE VOICE AND GESTURE.

WE shall begin with the parts of a discourse, and treat of them in their natural order. And here the view and design of the speaker in each of them will easily help us to see the proper manner of pronunciation.

ation. Let us suppose then a person presenting himself before an assembly, in order to make a discourse to them. It cannot be decent immediately to begin to speak so soon as ever he makes his appearance. He will first settle himself, compose his countenance, and take a respectful view of his audience. This prepares them for silence and attention.

Persons commonly form some opinion of a speaker from their first view of him, which prejudices them either in his favour or otherwise, as to what he says afterwards. A grave and sedate aspect inclines them to think him serious; that he had considered his subject, and may have something to offer worth their attention. A haughty and forbidding air occasions distaste, as it looks like disrespect. A wandering, giddy countenance argues levity. A dejected drooping appearance is apt to raise contempt, unless where the subject is melancholy. And a cheerful aspect is a proper prelude to a pleasant and agreeable argument.

To speak low at first has the appearance of modesty, and is best for the voice; which, by rising gradually, will with more ease be carried to any pitch that may be afterwards necessary, without straining it. However, some variation of the voice is always proper to give it harmony. Nay, and sometimes it is not improper for an orator to set out with a considerable degree of warmth. We have some few instances of this in Cicero; as in his oration for Roscius Amerinus, where the heinousness of the charge could not but excite his indignation against the accusers. And so likewise, in that against Piso, and the two first against Catiline, which begin in the same manner, from the resentment he had conceived against their persons and conduct.

In the narration, the voice ought to be raised to somewhat a higher pitch. Matters of fact should be related in a very plain and distinct manner, with a proper stress and emphasis laid upon each circumstance, accompanied with a suitable address and motions of the body to engage the attention of the hearers. For there is a certain

grace in telling a story, by which those who are masters of it seldom fail to recommend themselves in conversation.

The proposition, or subject of the discourse should be delivered with a very clear and audible voice. For if this be not plainly heard, all that follows in proof of it cannot be well understood. And for the same reason, if it be divided into several parts or branches, they should each be expressed very deliberately and distinctly. But as the design here is only information, there can be little room for gesture.

The confirmation admits of great variety both of the voice and gesture. In reasoning, the voice is quick and pungent, and should be enforced with suitable actions. And as descriptions likewise have often a place here, in painting out the images of things, the orator should so endeavour to adapt both his voice, and the motions of his body, particularly the turn of his eyes, and action of his hands, as may best help the imagination of his hearers. Where he introduces another person speaking, or addresses an absent person, it should be with some degree of imitation. And in dialogue, the voice should alter with the parts. When he diverts from his subject by any digression, his voice should be lively and cheerful; since that is rather designed for entertainment than instruction.

In confutation, the arguments of the adverse party ought first to be repeated in a plain and distinct manner, that the speaker may not seem to conceal, or avoid the force of them. Unless they appear trifling and unworthy of a serious answer; and then a facetious manner, both of expression and gesture, may be the most proper way to confute them. For, to attempt to answer, in a grave and serious manner, what is in itself empty and ludicrous, is apt to create a suspicion of its having more in it than it really has.

But caution should be used not to represent any argument of weight in a ludicrous way, lest by so doing the speaker should more expose himself than his adversary.

sary. In the conclusion, both the voice and gesture should be brisk and sprightly; which may seem to arise from a sense of the speaker's opinion of the goodness of his cause, and that he has offered nothing but what is agreeable to reason and truth; as likewise from his assurance that the audience agree with him in the same sentiment. If an enumeration of the principal arguments of the discourse be convenient, as it sometimes is, where they are pretty numerous, or the discourse is long, they ought to be expressed in the most clear and forcible manner. And if there be an address to the passions, both the voice and gesture must be suited to the nature of them.

We proceed now to the consideration of particular expressions. And what we shall offer here, will be in relation to the single words, sentences, and the passions. Even in those sentences which are expressed in the most even and sedate manner, there is often one or more words which require an emphasis and distinction of the voice. Pronouns are often of this kind; as, *this is the man*. And such are many words that denote the circumstances and qualities of things. Such as heighten or magnify the idea of the thing to which they are joined, elevate the voice; as, *noble, admirable, majestic, greatly*, and the like. On the contrary, those which lessen the idea, or debase it, depress the voice, or at least praeact the tone: of which sort are the words, *little, mean, poorly, contemptible*, with many others.

Some tropes, likewise, as metaphors and verbal figures, which consist in the repetition of a single word, should have a particular emphasis. As when Virgil says of the river Araxes, "It *disdained* a bridge." And Nisus of himself, in the same poet, "I, *I* am the man;" where the repeated word is loudest. This distinction of words, and giving them their proper emphasis, does not only render the expression more clear and intelligible, but very much contributes to the variation of the voice and the preventing of a monotony.

In

In sentences, regard should be had to their length, and the number of their parts, in order to distinguish them by proper pauses. The frame and structure of the period ought likewise to be considered, that the voice may be so managed as to give it the most musical accent. Unless there be some special reason for the contrary, it should end louder than it begins. And this difference of tone between the end of the former sentence and the beginning of the next, not only helps to distinguish the sense, but adds to the harmony of the voice.

In an antithesis, or a sentence consisting of opposite parts, one contrary must be louder than the other. As, "He is gone, but by a *gainful* remove, from *painful labour* to *quiet rest*; from *unquiet desire* to *happy contentment*; from *sorrow* to *joy*; and from *transitory time* to *immortality*." In a climax or gradation, the voice should generally rise with it. Thus, "There is no enjoyment of property without government; no government without a magistrate; no magistrate without obedience; no obedience where every one acts as he pleases." And so in other gradations of a different form; as, "Since concord was lost, friendship was lost, fidelity was lost, liberty was lost, all was lost."

That the passions have each of them both a different voice and action, is evident from hence, that we know in what manner a person is affected, by the tone of his voice, though we do not understand the sense of what he says, or many times so much as see him; and we can often make the same judgment from his countenance and gestures. Love and esteem are expressed in a smooth and cheerful tone; but anger and resentment, with a rough, harsh, and interrupted voice; for when the spirits are ruffled, the organs are moved unequally. Joy raises and dilates the voice, as sorrow sinks and contracts it. Cicero takes notice of a passage in an oration of Gracchus, wherein he bewails the death of his brother, who was killed by Scipio, which in his time was thought very moving: "Unhap-

py man (says he.) whither shall I betake myself? Where shall I go? Into the capitol? that flows with my brother's blood. Shall I go home, and behold my unhappy mother all in tears and despair?"

Though Gracchus had a very ill design in that speech, and his view was to excite the populace against their governors, yet (as Cicero tells us) when he came to this passage, he expressed himself in such moving accents and gestures, that he extorted tears even from his enemies. Fear occasions a tremor and hesitation of the voice, and assurance gives it strength and firmness. Admiration elevates the voice, and should be expressed with pomp and magnificence. "O surprising clemency, worthy of the highest praise and greatest encomiums, and fit to be perpetuated in lasting monuments!" This is Cicero's compliment to Cesar, when he thought it for his purpose. And oftentimes this passion is accompanied with an elevation both of the eyes and hands. On the contrary, contempt sinks and protracts the voice.

All exclamations should be violent. When we address inanimate things, the voice should be higher than when animated beings; and appeals to Heaven must be made in a loftier tone than those to men. These few hints for expressing the principal passions may, if duly attended to, suffice to direct our practice in others. Though, after all, it is impossible to gain a just and decent pronunciation of voice and gesture merely from rules, without practice and an imitation of the best examples: which shows the wisdom of the ancients, in training up their youth to it, by the assistance of masters, to form both their speech and actions. But here, as has been before observed, great caution should be used in directing our choice of an example. An affected imitation of others, in pronunciation or gesture, especially of stage-players, whose pretensions to literature are seldom considerable, and who are generally too fond of *singularity*, ought to be carefully avoided. For nothing can appear more disgusting to persons of discernment than affectation.