

1. N. P. e.

HINTS
TO
PUBLIC SPEAKERS;

Intended for

YOUNG BARRISTERS,
STUDENTS AT LAW,

And all others who may wish to improve their Delivery,
and attain a just and graceful

ELOCUTION.

By T. KNOX, A.M.

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How to make yourself heard without difficulty

THE first thing to which a speaker ought to attend, when he gets up, is to make himself heard, not only with ease to himself, but to those who compose his auditory; for if he is not heard without difficulty by them, they will not give themselves the trouble of attending, as they are unwilling to plague themselves about that which requires so much of their attention. Besides the ear being at such great pains to make out the words, the mind would be thereby inattentive to the matter delivered.

To avoid these inconveniences you ought to have a clear strong voice so you may be able to fill the place in which you speak, and that your tones may reach the ear of the furthest person in the room. Some people have this power naturally, and in this respect are peculiarly fortunate if they discharge their duty by improving it to the best advantage. But for those whose nature has not so favoured, great things may be done if they call in the assistance of art (voice coaches that teach actors how to carry their voice).

How to strengthen the voice

If your voice be weak and inclined to timidity speak aloud in your chambers a quantity each day of whatever you happen to be reading. At first do not deliver or read out much, for you may thereby injure rather than strengthening your voice organs.

Increase the quantity by degrees, for it is by degrees and perseverance that you may hope to accomplish your purpose. Your organs will thus gradually open, and your tones will gain power every day. It is astonishing how practice will strengthen and give vigour to the voice and ultimately bring it to a perfection that will enable the speaker to do almost anything with it.

The voice of Demosthenes was naturally weak and it was by practice and no other means that brought it to sufficient strength. If therefore, you have nothing to complain of but a weak voice, do not despair, but pursue what others have successfully done before you, and read or deliver aloud by yourself such a quantity which you think will not over-strain your powers.

Faltering (tripping over your words) and how to get rid of it

If you are apt to falter in your speech, accustom yourself in your private readings to pronounce your words and syllables so distinctly, one after another, that they may all have their full sound and proportion.

When you have done this for some time, and have got into the habit of speaking deliberately plainly, you may afterwards express yourself more fluently, and without that care and deliberation so essentially necessary at first.

If you find it a very difficult matter to avoid this fault of faltering or stammering, particularly when you come to particular sentences or phrases-in that case you would do well to change

the order of the words, inserting a smooth particle or two, and putting synonymous words into the place of those which made you falter, and you will thus easily correct yourself of the error.

BELLOWING, or SPEAKING TOO LOUD -To be avoided.

It is very unbecoming and disagreeable to speak so loud, or rather to bellow out such a tremendous sound as renders every thing said so confused, that all articulation is destroyed. Many people think that this gives a dignity and majesty to what they say; but on the contrary it deprives their speeches of one of their greatest objects, that of being clearly and distinctly heard. This method is so destructive of all good speaking, rendering all speeches into a confused bundle of sound and noise.

Mumbling – to be corrected

This is an error quite contrary to the one I have just mentioned, and takes place when someone does not open his mouth wide enough to give proper room for their words to pass. This means the advocate makes a kind of rumbling noise in the roof of their mouth, as if the advocate were speaking out of a cave, and hardly ever sends forth a distinct sounds or conveys one articulate word, much further than his teeth or lips. This hollow way of speaking is no less unpleasant than the one above mentioned.

The voice to be made soft and agreeable to the ear

As the wish of an advocate is certainly to be heard with pleasure and delight, an advocate ought to endeavour to make their voice as sweet, soft, and agreeable as possible. Everything harsh and discordant in the tone of the advocate must be got rid of, and which for the most part arise from nothing else but bad habits. Where the fault lies in the natural formation of the organs, in that case no effectual remedy can be administered, but perseverance and a little labour may certainly do a great deal. That the art of softening and harmonizing the voice may be acquired by care and industry is plain from what Cicero did in this particular; for he had a very rude, coarse voice before he went to Greece, but by staying there some time, he brought it, by habit, to so much sweetness and delicacy that he charmed the ear with the softest sounds imaginable. You must therefore try to give your voice such a smoothness, that the turns, tones and cadences of it may please the ear of your listener and judge, even if he does not understand in the least your language or the subject you are speaking of.

Never spit or hem whilst speaking

Several people have a custom of spitting and hemming in their speech, which are not only disgusting to the eyes and ears of their listeners, but considerably interrupt their delivery. The latter habit is very common even among the first speakers of the House of Lords and Commons. The late Lord Ashburton had it to a very great excess, which rendered him, with other causes, a most disagreeable and ungracious deliverer, although what he said was always to the purpose and logically correct. (CB Comment – poor Lord Ashburton – what an epitaph!)

Of varying the voice

You ought to vary the voice according to the changes of your subject, the passions you would express yourself, or excite in others, the several parts of your speech, and according to the nature of the words you make use of. There is nothing so grating to the ear, or that gives so much disgust to those listening to you, as a voice continually in the same key, with the least division or variety, and yet this is a common fault of most advocates. There are few voices so bad that might not be rendered not only bearable, but pleasant, if their owners knew how to give them those turns and variations which are so necessary in the course of a speech, in order to keep alive the attention of the hearer.

A uniformity of tone not only palls upon the ear, but it is extremely prejudicial to whatever you say; it places every part of a speech on the same level, takes away all power from that which ought to have the greatest strength, not only of argument but also of expression, and reduces all to that equality of sound, which gives no more distinction to the passions, than to the driest part of a cold and regular narration. This monotony is too common a fault on the stage, in the pulpit, at the Bar, and in fact in every place where public speaking is practised.

How to cure yourself of a monotonous tone

The best way to get rid of a monotonous tone is to attend particularly to common conversation, to the chit chat of a dinner table, or the manner in which people talk ordinarily. Mind likewise the way that women express themselves when they feel the subject they talk upon; for the loss of a husband, a child or any other fond and beloved relative. When you have done this, endeavour to express yourself, when in private, after the same manner as if upon the same occasions. By these means you will insensibly improve your voice, and in time, give it that richness and variety, which are essentially necessary to your becoming a good advocate.

Rules for varying the voice

There are the following distinctions in the voice – a high tone or a low tone, a vehement or a soft one, a swift or a slow one. The speaker's business is to keep up a just measure in these distinctions, and thereby observe that variety which I have shown is so essential.

The principal thing is to maintain a proper medium of tone, because any extreme is exceedingly disagreeable. First, with respect to its height, you ought to take care not to raise it, as some people do, continually to the highest note it can reach, or on the other hand, must you sink it so low as to render yourself scarcely intelligible. To be constantly straining it to the top destroys the solemnity of preaching, the weight and dignity of pleading, and renders what you say to no more than a squeaky delivery. It often likewise creates a harsh and unmusical sound, and frequently occasions a hoarseness in the throat, that will prevent you from being able to do the smallest justice to whatever you afterwards say. The contrary extreme is just as bad, for to utter in a low bass is a kind of muttering, and you may as well sit down as continue in such unintelligible manner, not one word in ten reaching the ear of the jury.

To cure yourself of these imperfections, when you are alone attune the tones of your voice to your ear (which ought to be nicely correct) and whatever offends it immediately try to amend, and bring it to that harmonious sound which is pleasant to yourself; for if your organs of hearing be perfect they will serve, in this respect, as a just and faithful guide.

NOT TO BE TOO VIOLENT WITH YOUR VOICE.

Do not be fond of forcing your tones too often to that vehemence which you cannot support long without considerable pain to yourself, and, which, perhaps, might be the means of cracking your voice, which, like the strings of a musical instrument, frequently breaks when wound up too high.

On the contrary, you should not be too gentle and mild spoken, as these destroy the force and energy of your speech and make it no more attended to, than the flimsy tone of an ordinary story-teller.

Too great a volubility to be avoided

The volubility of your utterance ought always to be moderated in such a manner as to prevent you from being too precipitate; a fault which most people commit, and which injures very materially their articulation; for it often creates a thickness in their speaking, one word following another with such rapidity, that all pronunciation is destroyed, and every thing is hurried and confused. This is a vicious mode of delivery, and whatever abilities you may otherwise have, this one error will render them all as useless. All fluency should be kept within bounds, or else it becomes an unmeaning gabble, and a chaotic jumble of words. The object of an advocate is to persuade; but how can an advocate expect to convince their hearers, if they do not give them time to think, or reason upon what they say? and how should a jury be able to keep up with a lawyer whose language may be said to ride post (short for post-haste ie whose language is delivered at top speed)?

Of reasons and arguments thus hurled upon the ear as quick as flashes of lightning upon the eye-it is impossible that one in twenty can be remembered, and consequently they must effectual fail in their intended effect.

This practise of speaking too fast, without observing the proper pauses, is a great disadvantage to the advocate, as well as an indecency to the audience. Distinction of full stops, the fine cadences that adorn and illustrate a speech with grace and ornament, cannot be preserved in the confusion of talking at great speed, and the proper time of drawing the breath not being allowed, the lungs are very often thereby considerably affected.

Every person who wishes to distinguish themselves as an advocate, should carefully avoid this error, but not to go to the other extreme, which is equally bad, namely

Speaking too slow

The habit of drawling out by degrees, and with the same regular tenor of sound, one word heavily after another, has a most sleep inducing effect upon the attention, and should therefore be got rid of. The best way is to regulate your tongue agreeably to the ears of your auditors, without either speaking softer than they can follow you, or drawling out your words slower than they have patience to attend to.

Your speech ought to be sometimes fluent, but not too quick, and resemble, excepting where the passions are concerned, more the flow of a gliding stream, than the rapidity of a torrent.

The distinctions in the voice, which are here mentioned, give the power of great variation of tone; but this ought not to be done over hastily (with a few exceptions) with too conspicuous a difference between one sound and another; but let one tone, as it were, melt or slide into another, and not make suddenly so palpable a change, that it would seem that another person entirely had got up to stand in your place.

To vary the voice according to the subject

If you speak of such things as you wish your hearers only to understand, and nothing else, there is no need of any great heat or spirit in your delivery, but a clear distinct voice will answer sufficiently the purpose; because your object is not to move the feelings and affections so much as to inform the understanding-But if you design to make your hearers admire the bounty and goodness of the Creator, his wisdom and power, -you must do it with a grave voice, and with a tone of admiration.

If you speak of the actions of any person that deserve commendation, and such as you would wish to have your auditors value as much as you esteem them yourself; or if you speak of those that are unjust and infamous, and which you would have your hearers abhor and detest as much as you do, you must adjust your voice to the quality of the one and the other- expressing the first with a full, lofty and a kind of satisfactory tone, and the other with a strong, violent and passionate voice, and with a tone of anger and detestation.

If you speak of the events of human life you must give, in the relation, those that are fortunate a brisk and cheerful tone and those that are on the contrary, unfortunate, with sad and mournful accents. The tone of mirth suits well the character of good fortune, and a melancholy one is proper for any story concerning disappointment and affliction.

Things respecting nature should be spoken with a tone of ease and clearness, but require no exertion, being able to be conveyed through plain narration. Yet those are not all alike, for some are more considerable than others in terms of their grandeur, beauty and lustre. Such, for instance, are the heavens are more noble than the earth, the sun and stars are far more superior to herbs and insects, and they are therefore not to be spoken of in the same tone of voice or equal stress of pronunciation.

The actions and events of human life too are not all familiar as a great crime or an extraordinary cruelty will be much worse than the omission of the payment of a common debt; the noble exploits of a brave conqueror are to be considered more deserving than the captain of a vulgar mob, and the safety of a whole kingdom is of more consequence than the interests of a private individual.

They then consequently require, whenever they are introduced into discourse, a different kind of delivery, according to the diversity of subjects, for it would be ridiculous to speak of common and ordinary things with a solemn and tragical tone, and equally absurd on the other hand, to speak of great and important things with a tone of unconcern and familiarity, fit only for the prattle of the tea table.

How to vary the voice according to the passions

The best way to make others feel the same passion or affection of the mind you would wish to express, is to consider with care and attention what you are going to speak of; "force your soul" (as Shakespeare says) to your own conceit," and you will thereby be sensibly touched with the subject, and be able to move others upon it with more effectual sympathy. Some orators have brought, by art, a counterfeit resemblance of feeling to much perfection, and although, at the time, they have not felt themselves, still have contrived to make their auditors feel, and that to an astonishing degree – But there have been but few who have excelled in this talent, for without it is exquisitely done, the whole deception is immediately seen through, and consequently can have no other power but that of creating risibility in the audience. The method I have above advised, and which is more particularly mentioned in a subsequent part of this work, is infinitely the best, and can by habit be accomplished by almost everybody whose feelings are properly refined. If you are affected, your emotion will soon display itself by the voice, which, like the string of an instrument, will sound as it is touched. It will express love by a soft and charming tone; hatred by a sharp, sullen and severe one; joy with a full, flowing and brisk tone; and grief with a dull, heavy, and sorrowful one, occasionally heaving a sign from the bosom. Fear is demonstrated by a trembling agitated voice, sometimes interrupted by a perplexity and apprehension of thought. Confidence, on the contrary, is discovered by a loud, strong tone, always bold and daring, but ever within the bounds of decency and moderation. Anger is expressed by a sharp, impetuous and violent tone, often taking breath, and the utterance frequently smothered by the strength of the passion.

As for instance in the tragedy of Cymbeline (William Shakespeare play), when Posthumus suspects the celibacy (sexual restraint) of Imogen:

"No swearing -
If you will swear you have not done it, you lie.
And I will kill thee if thou dost deny
Thou'st made me a cuckold"

You must of course speak these words with an elevated and enraged tone, and with the accents of someone on fire, and in a fury next to distraction. And when Lear (King Lear, Shakespeare) is denied the liberty of speaking to his daughter:

Vengeance! Plague! Death! Confusion!
Fiery? What fiery quality?
My breath and blood!

It is evidence that these expressions must be spoken in such a manner, as if the passion had almost choked up your delivery, and that you cannot utter more words together, your choler and vexation being so great.

If you are moved with compassion, and your tones be in unison with your feelings, you will express yourself with a gentle compassion voice; as Mr Erskine did (in his memorable defence of Captain Bailie 1776) who was charged with a libel by the Earl of Sandwich, then first Lord of the Admiralty, and one of the Governors of Greenwich hospital) in reading the following words, which are part of an affidavit of Charles Smith on his dismissal from his situation in the hospital.

“That he received his dismissal when languishing with sickness in the infirmary, the consequences of which was, that his unfortunate wife and several of his helpless innocent children died in misery and want; the women actually expiring at the gates of the hospital.”

This sentence was delivered by Mr Erskine with the humblest accents of commiseration. His voice was composed of such tones as affected every person who heard him. He spoke with passion too; but then it was the passion of a mind afflicted, and sensibly touched with the sad and unfortunate situation of him whom he alluded to.

Esteem or admiration – how to express them

If you would wish to impress your audience with a respect for the character of any particular person or persons of whom you are speaking, and would testify your own esteem of him/her or them, you should do it with a lofty and magnificent tone, in the same manner as Mr Burke concluded his beautiful speech in support of Mr Fox’s famous India Bill in the year 1784 (Pitt’s India Act 1784)

“I anticipate with joy the reward of those who whole consequence, power and authority existed only for the benefit of mankind; and I carry my mind to all the people, all the names and descriptions that, relieved by this measure, would bless the labours of that Parliament, and the confidence that the best House of Commons had given to him who best deserved it. The little cavils of party (politics) would not be heard where freedom and happiness would be felt. There was not a tongue, a nation, a religion in India which would not bless the presiding care and beneficence of that House, and of him who proposed to them this great work. Their names would never be separated before the throne of the divine goodness, in whatever language, or with whatever rites, pardon was asked for sin, and reward for those who imitated the godhead in his universal bounty to his creatures”

Let anyone speak these words with a low and languishing voice, and nothing can appear more cold, flat and insipid; but, on the contrary; let the advocate pronounce them with a noble accent, and animate them with a lofty tone, agreeably to their own spirit and magnificence, and then they will appear in their own proper lustre, create in their audience the highest admiration, and delight perhaps as much as if they came from the mouth of the original speaker.

Contempt – how to express it by the Voice

If you would wish to show the contempt you have for someone, and expose them to the audience or jury, you must do it with a scornful tone, but without the smallest passion, eagerness or violence of voice, as no doubt Cicero did when he spoke to Caecilius, who pretended to be preferred before him for pleading in the accusation of Verres. (CB comment: This is basically a situation where an inexperienced advocate is trying to assert himself against a highly experienced advocate. In a modern context, this would be like a pupil telling a QC how to run a trial. Cicero's response is what you would expect!)

“But you Caecilius, pray what can you do? Where's your capacity upon this might pretension of yours? When, and upon what affair have you ever made any trial of your skill, or given any proof of your parts and sufficiency to people of sense, and have not attempted at the same time upon your own weakness, and run the hazard of both your reputation and your judgement? Do you not consider the difficulty of managing the case, of maintaining the peace of the public from disgrace and oppression, or unravelling the whole life of a person from the first breath of business, and not only of setting it forth in its proper colours to the understanding of the judges, but of exposing it also to the whole world; the difficulty of defending the safety and welfare of allies, the interests of the provinces, the power of laws and the authority of our courts of judicature? Take it from me sir, this is the first opportunity you have met with of learning something from your betters.”

There is also a fine example of contempt from a reply made by Lord Chatham, when Mr Pitt, in the year 1790, to Mr Winnington who had called him to order, but in doing so had himself used very illiberal terms.

“If this be to preserve order (said Mr Pitt) there is no danger of indecency from the most licentious tongue; for what calumny can be more atrocious or what reproach more severe, than that of speaking with regard to anything but truth. Order may sometimes be broke by passion or inadvertency, but will hardly be re-established by a monitor like that, who cannot govern his own passion, whilst he is restraining the impetuosity of others.

Happy would it be for mankind if every one knew his province; we should not then see the same man at once a criminal and a judge; nor would this gentleman assume the right of dictating to others what he has not learned himself.”

These are speeches of slight and disdain. If spoken with a passionate voice, and with an appearance of concern and indignation, their proper effect is at once destroyed for the objects spoken of are not thought worthy of anger or resentment, but merely of contempt, scorn and derision.

You would be laughed at, if you answered a dull reason with heat and choler, or spoke in a passion against that which deserves only to be trifled with. It would be silly to exert the last effort of your voice, in reply to some puny insignificant arguments, as if you made use of Hercules club to kill a worm, which is easily trod to pieces, and crushed underfoot.

A grievance complained of – how to be expressed

When you speak of any abuses you have received from a person, you must of course deliver it in a different manner to the last, and express the injustice you complain of with an elevated tone, proportioning the vehemence and passion of your voice to the cruelty of the injury; for if you spoke it without the least heat or concern, your audience would neither believe what you said to be true, nor that you were in the smallest degree aggrieved.

This was the reason that Demosthenes reprimanded a man that came to him upon an assault and battery and desired him to plead his cause for him; telling him the plain truth of the business with a great deal of simplicity, and showing no manner of concern or vexation by his voice. Why, said Demosthenes, I cannot believe what you tell me. But another man having told the same story over again in a great passion, with a spirit of fury and revenge for the affront; well I believe you, said Demosthenes, now you speak with thee accent and zeal of a man who has been assaulted and beaten. This plainly shows, he thought, a person ought to speak upon oppression and injury, either to be believed, or to make good his cause.

Almost innumerable are the situations in which the changes and inflexions of the voice are highly necessary as an advocate; but as I do not propose to enter at large into any of the parts of speaking, but merely to make such scattered observations as I think will most effectively serve those who want immediate assistance (ie baby barristers) I shall conclude this part of my labour, by observing, that the best way to acquire the faculty of varying the voice, not only when the passions are concerned, but in places where they are not called forth, yet where great difference of tones is necessary, is to be often reading comedies, tragedies or any dramatic works, as nothing else will be found to improve you in this way, half so much as these.

Exordium (Opening speech) – What kind of tone to use in it

The exordium (opening or introductory speech in a trial) ought to be spoken with a low and modest voice; for to begin in an unassuming tone is not only agreeable to the auditors (ie the judge and jury) as it shows how great a respect you have for them, but is also an advantage to yourself; for you will thereby be able to manage your voice much better, and work it up by degrees of moderation, to a higher pitch of warmth and passion, which, not attended to, will cause you at first to be out of breath, for want of proper management, and perhaps you will not be able to recover yourself during the whole of your speech. This does not, however, mean that you should begin so low as to be heard by only a few people; but on the contrary, you ought to speak at first, so clear and distinct as to be heard without the least difficulty by every attentive listener. Some clergymen are very faulty in beginning their

discourses so low, that hardly any person in the congregation can hear them; but, all of a sudden they raise their voices to such a height, that every body's ears are offended and astonished.

The proper method is to speak the exordium in a soft and easy tone, and in a lower key, together with a more humble address, than the other parts of your speech. But this rule admits of an exception; for there are some exordiums that do not fall under it, such as those that begin in an abrupt and unexpected manner. As that of Mr Fox, in the House of Commons, in February 1784, in answer to a declaration from Mr Pitt that his Majesty had not, in compliance with the resolutions of the House, dismissed his ministers:

"I have just heard the declaration of the right honourable gentleman with the greatest astonishment and concern. It was a language that House had never heard since the revolution, or at least since the accession of the present royal family. What was it but a fiat and peremptory negative to the sentiments and wishes of the House of Commons, who on their part had employed every caution and every delicacy? In what situation then was this branch of the legislature involved? To what degree of insignificance were the representatives of the people and the people themselves reduced? Could it be said that they had any longer the least influence in the constitution of the country? I will answer baldly, and to the point – in my opinion the matter is nearly at a crisis."

So abrupt an opening speech as this is not very common, and seldom found but upon very extra-ordinary occasions. When, however, such a tone is used, it is evident that it is to be spoken with an elevated tone, according to the passion, either of anger that transports, or of grief that afflicts, and which obliges you to set out so abruptly in your discourse.

Narration (the statement of facts) – what tone necessary

It is not in the least necessary to raise your voice to any great vehemence, as many do, upon the proposition or narration (statement of facts) of your speech; for your business in this part of your speech is to inform your listeners, in order to make them properly understand the subject in question. It is therefore sufficient that your tone be a little higher than that in which you speak the exordium; only you must take care that your articulation be very clear and distinct, because the narration lays the groundwork of the whole speech, and therefore it is absolutely necessary that you should make it well heard, if you intend to raise your arguments upon that foundation. This is not the proper place for any vehemence of voice, which must be kept in reserve for the following parts of your speech.

Confirmation and confutation – what tone necessary

(Note: Confirmation and confutation deals with the part of a trial where evidence and arguments (legal/policy) favourably to your cause and damaging to your cause is presented, often through the evidence of witnesses, and usually involves countering your opponents arguments)

In these lies the greatest stress of your speech and the last effort of your voice; for as your mind is more engaged here, in the first by setting forth your arguments, and in the other by

solving your adversaries objections, and when, at this place all the adorning figures of rhetoric are made use of, you ought therefore to speak with the greatest force and expression, and give your deliver as much variety of tone as possible, confining the whole, however, within the bounds of decency and moderation.

The peroration (closing speech) – What tone to be used

You would do well (and Mr Erskine normally practises it with great effect) to make a considerable pause between this part and the former, and to begin it with a lower tone than that in which spoke the confutation. As you proceed a little you should break forth into a louder voice, and conclude your speech with a triumphal tone, upon an assurance that you have sufficiently made good your cause, and that to the satisfaction of your whole listeners. As Mr Erskine did in his glorious defence of the Dean of St Asaph in 1784.

“As the friend of my client, and the friend of my country, I shall feel much sorrow, and you yourselves will probably hereafter regret it, which the season of reparation is fled. (Now Erskine broke forth in a tone of full confidence that there was no reason to fear his success) But why should I indulge such unpleasant apprehensions, when in reality I fear nothing. I know it is impossible for English gentlemen, sitting in the place you do, to pronounce this to be a seditious paper; much less upon the bare fact of publication explained by the pre-fixed advertisement, and the defendants general character and deportment, to give credit to that seditious purpose which is necessary to convert the publication of libel itself into a crime.

Figures of rhetoric

What tone to be used when using some of them

Exclamation – The proper tone to be used

The figure of exclamation clearly shows by its name that it must be pronounced with a louder voice, and a more impressive accent than any other. As for example, when the illustrious Chatham, not long before his death, exclaimed in the House of Lords, at the time that they were debating the calamitous event in Saratoga:

“What! Has some dreadful inundation, has some tremendous earthquake swallowed half the empire, that the nation should stand thus deprived of sense and motion!”

If you speak these words without any elevation of the voice, you deprive them of all their ornament and force, and instead of the animated effect, which would follow them, if properly delivered, the whole becomes dull, lifeless and insipid.

Swearing – the same tone proper

The same lofty tone is necessary when you swear by any thing, especially when there is something extra-ordinary in what you are going to say. As in when Lear says, when he disclaims all future intimacy (CB note ie any kind of relationship – in this case intimacy does not mean sexual intimacy) with his daughter Cordelia.

Let it be so. Thy truth then be thy dower.
For by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate and the night,
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist and cease to be—
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity, and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee from this for ever.

[Garrick](#) used to repeat these lines with an elevation of voice, as well as great rapidity of utterance, that almost chilled every person who heard him.

Personification (Prosopopoeia)

(CB Note – personification is a rhetorical device in which a speaker or writer communicates to the audience by speaking as another person or object. It can also be used to take some of the load off the communicator by placing an unfavourable point of view on the shoulders of an imaginary stereotype. The audience's reactions are predisposed to go towards this figment rather than the communicator himself.

This term also refers to a figure of speech in which an animal or inanimate object is ascribed human characteristics or is spoken of in anthropomorphic language. Quintilian writes of the power of this figure of speech to "bring down the gods from heaven, evoke the dead, and give voices to cities and states" ([Institutes of Oratory Book 9, Chapter 2,30-33](#))

You ought, in this figure, to change your voice, so that it may immediately appear as if it were not you speaking for yourself, but for another person introduced in the course of your speech. You must likewise vary your tone according to the character and business of the assumed person. For instance, if you bring into your discourse a plain, venerable old man, your manner of speaking for him would be of course very different to that you would use for a young, fashionable rake (CB aka disreputable man) This is so apparent that no example is necessary.

If you would introduce a man talking with himself up a point of great moment, and arguing in his own breast what he should do in the business, you must do it with a low voice, as if he were only speaking to himself, and within his own hearing alone, intending not to be overheard by any other person. Here is an example from Tully's Oration for Cluentius, where he says says of Stalenus:

"When the poor perfidious wretch saw a round sum of money brought home to him, he began to think of all the ways and means that malice, fraud and corruption could invent. Talking thus with himself: If I should let the rest of the judges come in now to have snacks with me, what should I get by the bargain but danger and disgrace? Can I think of nothing to have this person condemned for it? What then? Why, I'll try what can be done..."

Apostrophe – the tone necessary

(CB note - Apostrophe is an exclamatory figure of speech. It occurs when a speaker breaks off from addressing the audience (e.g. in a play) and directs speech to a third party such as an opposing litigant or some other individual, sometimes absent from the scene. Often the addressee is a personified abstract quality or inanimate object, such as God, love, time, or any other entity that can't respond in reality. Examples include

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Corinthians 15:55, Paul the Apostle

"Is this a dagger which I see before me, The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee! I have thee not, and yet I see thee still." Macbeth, act 2, scene 1)

You ought particularly to attend, in this figure, to the nature of the object you address, and to the reasons you have in making use of it, so that you may adjust the turn of your voice accordingly. For instance when you speak to inanimate things, you must raise your voice above an ordinary pitch or a common tone, as no doubt Cicero did in pronouncing that fine apostrophe, in his speech for Milo:

"I call you to witness, ye mounts and groves of Alba! And ye ruined altars of the Albans! Once glowing with social and equal rites. Ye altars – which the profane madness of Clodius has overthrow, and buried under the frantic piles of tasteless extravagance."
(p380 the orations of Marcus Cicero)

If you make an apostrophe to God, many writers on oratory have pointed out the necessity of raising your voice to a considerable height, as if you were to be heard afar-off. For when you speak, say they, as it were, to the Divinity, you ought of course to speak in a higher strain and in a loftier tone, than if you were speaking only to people on the same level as yourself.

This method, in some cases, will answer very well, but in many others a low, grave and deliberate tone will suit much better the solemnity of an appeal to the Deity.

This was sufficiently proved by the manner in which Mr Erskine spoke the following lines, at nearly the commencement of his admirable defence of Hardy:

"He (alluding to the prisoner) holds his life from the law, and by it he demands to be tried. This fair trial I ask; first from the court – I ask it more emphatically from the jury- but (here Erskine lowered his voice to the utmost solemnity) lastly and chiefly I implore it of Him in whose hands are all the issues of life, whose just and merciful eye expands itself over all the transactions of mankind, without whom not a sparrow falleth to the ground, and at whole command nations rise and fall, and are regenerated. I implore it of God himself, that he will fill your minds with the spirit of justice, and of truth, that you may be able to find your way through the labyrinth of matter laid before you; a labyrinth in which no man's life was ever before involved in the whole history of British trials, nor indeed the universal annals of human justice or injustice."

Epimone - in what tone to utter it

(CB note – epimone is where you repeat the same argument over and over.)

In this figure the speaker presses upon a particular point, and still insisting upon it, expresses it over and over again, until he makes it ridiculous by repetition. Here you would do well to use a brisk, pressing, and, as it were, a kind of insulting tone upon those parts where you lay the principal stress, in order to rivet them upon the attention of your hearers – which method Mr Sheridan adopted in one part of his speech on his motion in 1793, in which he said: “My friend, (Mr Windham) has been panic struck, and now strengthens the hands of government. Not later than the preceding sessions he would pull off the mask of perfidy, and declaimed loudly against that implicit confidence which some had argued ought to be placed in ministers. It was owing entirely to this panic that Mr Windham now prevailed with himself to support the minister because he had a bad opinion of him. It was owing to this panic that a noble and learned Lord (Loughborough) had given his disinterested support to government, and it was owing to this panic that he accepted the seals of an administration he had uniformly reprobated. But above all, it was owing to this panic that a right honourable gentleman (Mr Burke) had lost his fine taste, and descended to the most ridiculous pantomime tricks, and contemptible juggling, such as to carry knives and daggers to assist him in efforts of description.”

Parrhesia (speaking truth to power) – the tone necessary

This is a figure in which you take the liberty of saying very bold things, in fact whatever you like, let the danger be what it will, where there is any confidence in the cause, or any fear of losing it. When you practice it (parrhesia) your voice must be full and loud, as upon the following words of Tully in his orations for Ligarius:

O admirable clemency! Worthy of eternal praise, honour and memory. Cicero has the boldness now before Caesar to confess himself guilty of a crime for which he cannot endure another should be falsely arraigned, neither does he fear the private resentments of his judge for it. See how undaunted I am now upon the confidence of your goodness. See the great lights of generosity and wisdom that countenance me from your royal aspect. I will raise my voice as loud as I can, that all the people of Rome may hear me. The war being begun, Sir, and almost ended, I went over to your enemy's camp before the finishing stroke of it, upon my own choice, and without any compunction.

Climax – how to manage the voice

When your speech climbs up by degrees through several clauses of a sentence to a full stop, it is evident that the voice must accordingly rise by the same gradations of elevation to answer every step of the figure, until it is at the utmost height of it. As in this climax of Mr Erskine's, in his speech in defence of Mr Tooke, on the late state trials, alluding to the trial by jury:

There still remains that which is even paramount to the law – that great tribunal which the wisdom of our ancestors raised in this country for the support of the people's rights-that

tribunal that has made the law, that tribunal that has given me you to look at – that tribunal which is surrounded with a hedge, as it were, set about it – that tribunal which from age to age has been fighting for the liberties of the people, and without the aid of which it would have been in vain for me to stand up before you, or to think of looking around for assistance.

ANTITHESIS. How to speak it.

You must particularly distinguish both the contraries, and pronounce the first of them with a different tone from the latter- this with a louder accent than that, to show the opposition between the one and the other, and to adjust the voice to the contrariety. As in the following example, in the second Catilinary

“If we will but compare both parties, and weigh the justice, and the reasons of the one against the other, we shall find how inconsiderable our enemies are, and how easy it is to conquer them. For modesty fights on this side, and impudence on that: Here is purity of manners, there impurity; here is faith, there fraud; here is piety, there wickedness; here is constancy, there fool-hardiness; here is honour, there infamy; here is continence, there lust. Here, in fine, justice, temperance, courage, prudence and all kinds of virtues are in confederacy and contending with injustice, with luxury, with cowardice, with temerity, and all kind of vices.”

I shall not trouble the reader with any more of the figures which rhetoricians have given us, it not being necessary to our present purpose, and shall therefore close them with the antithesis.

Breath – How to manage it in speaking

There are some sentences very short, each part of which is but a simple expression, and consists of only one simple proposition. Such as the following:

“He died young, but he died happy. His friends had not had him long, but his death is the greatest trouble and grief they ever had for the love and the loss of him. He has enjoyed the sweets of the world only for a little while, but he never tasted the bitters of it. He has not taken a long walk, but he went only upon flowers.”

These sentences can not only be pronounced with one breath, but can hardly be pronounced otherwise, without considerably weakening their expression.

There are some sentences that are longer, such as the following:

“Look upon the world as a place where you will be losing something every day, till you have lost all and have no more to lose; and with these meditations prepossess your soul, that, having its original in heaven, it will one day have the happiness to return thither.”

And this sentence may also be pronounced all at a breath, if your voice be tolerably good; if you cannot do it with ease, you must practise it; for a sentence so delivered comes rounder and fuller to the ear, and appears with more force and beauty than if you take breath often.

Long breath necessary in an advocate – how to acquire it

You must endeavour, by frequent exercise, to acquire a habit of being long-winded, but it must be done by degrees, for nature is not to be changed in a moment. She may do a great deal in this respect, but where there is deficiency, art may do much. It is said that Demosthenes, who had naturally a short breath, finding the necessity of a public speaker having a long one, gave a great actor of comedy a thousand drachmas to improve him in this particular. He used to exercise himself upon all the difficulties of respiration, and while running up a hill would repeat verses or parts of his legal speeches; this substantially strengthened his lungs and in a short time, with pains and labour, he accomplished his purpose. Any person, may by the same means be as successful, if he will make the experiment.

There are other sentences that run considerably longer than those I have given, which cannot be pronounced without taking breath twice or thrice, as for example:

“As it is prejudicial to one’s health to take food and not to digest it, because crude and indigested meats create ill humours, and do not nourish but cloy and corrupt the body: so when the stomach of the soul, that is the memory, is filled with a great deal of knowledge; if this knowledge be not well digested by the warmth of charity; if it does not diffuse itself after that through the arteries and marrow of the soul, and pass into the actions and manners of people, and if it does not become good itself upon knowing what is good, and what goes to the making of a good life; does not this knowledge turn into sin, as that nutriment does into bad humours?”

You ought to pronounce the first part of this sentence without taking breath. If you find you cannot utter the second in the same manner, it will be much better for you to make a pause at the best place you can, than run yourself out of breath, which is destructive of whatever you attempt then to repeat.

Clauses of a sentence – how to manage them

In distinguishing the different parts of a sentence, you must not do it in such a way as if there were more full stops than one in a sentence. Where the distinction of the clauses are compelled to be prominent, you would do well to distinguish them by your pronunciation without taking breath, excepting that there may be so many of them that one single respiration cannot reach the end of the whole sentence.

Short sentences – pauses after them different from those after long sentences

It is proper to make a pause after every full stop, but it must be a very short one after a short sentence, and a little longer after long ones. This rule must of course be broken into, when the

sense requires that you should wait for some considerable time after a sentence, in order to leave an impression of some weighty matter upon the mind, although the sentence perhaps be very short; and on the contrary, there are many long sentences, after which you may pause but for a very little time, as they contain nothing that is worthy of marking particularly on the attention.

Subsequent sentence lower than the close of the preceding one

When you begin a sentence, you ought to do it in a lower tone than that in which you concluded the last. This will be found to give you ease, and save your powers, although in many cases it is much better to begin it with a tone a little higher, than the cadence of the last, in order to accord with the sense and spirit of your sentence; and in so doing a variation of tone is created, which prevents you always beginning in the same manner.

Sentence that requires great force of voice – how to manage the sentences immediately preceding.

When you have a sentence to say that requires a great elevation of the tone, you must moderate and manage your voice with care, upon those sentences that just precede it, left, by employing the whole force of it upon those, you exhaust yourself and express this languidly, which requires more vigour and vehemence.

It is in this management that Garrick particularly excelled; as when Hamlet is collared by Laertes in Ophelia's grave, he exclaims, among other things:

Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

The energy with which this great actor repeated these lines was sufficient to give them a certain force; but it was not so great as he would, no doubt, have called forth, had he not known that it was necessary for him to save his powers for what was to follow:

'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't tear thyself?
Woul't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. — Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart!

Here, he exerted all his powers, which he could not have done if he had spent himself, and exhausted his voice beforehand, upon any occasion that just preceded.

Pronunciation

Your pronunciation (which word, by the bye, is very frequently called, by even decent people, *pronunciation*) ought to be such as is commonly practised in the ordinary conversation of well bred companies. Their method of pronouncing words, you must make yourself acquainted with, for it is the standard of pronunciation for the time, and there is a kind of fashion in this, as there is in almost everything else. Many words spoken twenty years ago were pronounced differently ten years after, and some of these are at this time pronounced unlike what has been practised at any other period.

Whatever impropriety there may be in this continual fluctuation in the mode of uttering words, still that is a matter you may lament, but cannot rectify of yourself. Your business, as a speaker is to pronounce in such a manner as not to offend your audience; and the only way you can do this is to speak the language according to common custom.

If any friend of yours has had greater opportunities than you have had of making themselves acquainted with the elegant mode of pronouncing, you ought not to be ashamed of asking their advice, whenever you entertain doubts respecting the proper pronunciation of any word; and if you can persuade them to be present whenever you speak in public, for the purpose of setting down those words in their mind that you pronounce wrong, and afterwards tell you of them, you will thereby be able, in a short time, to correct yourself in such improprieties, and bring your speech to that polish and refinement, to attain which is one of the most important objects that can possibly engage your attention.

To keep your voice up to the end of a sentence

Many people have a most viscous habit of gradually and regularly falling the voice as they proceed in a sentence, and when they come to the last word it is hardly intelligible. This error you ought particularly to avoid. Your tone must be kept up upon the pronunciation of the last word of a sentence as audibly as in any other part. This rule induced Garrick (who cautiously attended to it himself) at the hour of levity, when he was super-intending a rehearsal, to give an actress, who was not remarkable for her strict observance of virtue, the following advice: "My good Madam, the close of your sentences will not be heard by half the audience. For heaven's sake, let your voice be audible to the end – I am sure you must know how absolutely necessary it is to keep up your end".

The instruction was good and the way in which he worded it created a titter among the surrounding performers.

Action (aka Delivery)

Delivery is by most writers called action, but it appears to derive the one name from the voice and the other from the gesture, for Cicero calls action sometimes a language, as it were, and sometimes

the eloquence of the body. Yet he makes two constituent parts of action, which are the same as those of delivery—voice and motion. We therefore can use either term indiscriminately.
(Quintilian)

Action is one of the most important parts of oratory. The ancient orators considered it so essential a qualification, that Demosthenes declared, that it combined, in itself, all the other qualities of elocution; and Tully was of the same opinion when he said, that it had the sole power and principal command of speech, and that it was the eloquence of the body. [Quintilian](#) wrote more upon it than any other writer of former times, and with greater judgement.

Many of his rules may be read, even at the present time, with considerable advantage, although he has confined his instructions solely to the Bar. Several things, however, he recommends the practice of, that cannot now be used, such as “beating the brow, the head, the breath and thigh. These motions in his time were much admired, but in ours could not be endured. (CB comment – so basically use your judgement. But Quintilian is definitely worth a read).

Hints reflecting Action to those who wish to speak gracefully in public

Action is so generally allowed to be absolutely necessary in the good delivery of a speech, that every person who expresses his sentiments in public, is sure to practise it, but for the most part in so awkward, so inelegant, and so inexpressive a manner, that the eye of the auditor being disgusted and repelled, to use the late Dr Johnson’s expression, at the picture before him, the matter delivered, however ingenious and to the purpose, fails of its effect. How to meliorate advocates in this particular, as well as in others, is the grand object of this little treatise; although I shall content myself with merely giving such hints as I am convinced will, when called forth into use, be found of essential practical service.

In order to correct bad habits, and attain an elegant and expressive action in speaking, I particularly recommend the choice of such company as are considered by the world as well bred and polished in their manners. Attend closely to the method with which they express themselves and when you return home, endeavour to call back your recollection to such parts of their action that most forcibly engaged your attention, and afforded you the greatest pleasure. Make a point also, of remembering the sentences or expressions that gave rise to them, and try to repeat them (if before a mirror the better) in the same manner that pleased you, and by so doing it will be in your power to compare your own method with those of other people, and correct yourself accordingly. If any one of your acquaintances is more particularly distinguished for the elegance of their manners than the others, be frequently with them, closely and attentively watch their every motion, action and gesture, and thus, by having a pleasing and graceful picture before your eyes, you will, by endeavouring to imitate what you admire, rid yourself of whatever bad habits you may have, and become, in time, of such an elegant standard.

I shall here introduce a few rules, that may assist you in the attainment of the object before us.

How to use the hands in action

The hands are the chief instruments of action and can be used in as many ways as there are things which they are capable of signifying. We make use of them in

- Accusing
- Acquitting
- Promising
- Threatening
- Pleading
- Admiring
- Swearing etc

and, in fact, in representing almost everything we speak of, and which require so many different actions of the hands. It was their general use that made Quintilian say, that the other parts of the body, most materially assist the advocate that speaks, but the hands, as it were, speak themselves. The principal thing, however, is to move them with grace and elegance. The following rules may be of some service.

First – use no action at the beginning of your speech

You must make use of no action when you begin to speak, at least but very little, unless you make a kind of abrupt commencement, which sometimes happens, as was the case in a speech of the late Lord Chatham, in the House of Lords, on the 20th January 1775, on a motion made by him for removing his Majesty's forces from Boston:

I rise with such astonishment to see these papers (the whole of the American papers, just then delivered in at the table by Lord Dartmouth, at the command of his Majesty) brought to your table at so late a period of this business; papers, I am sure, the contents of which are already known, not only to every noble lord in this House, but almost to every person in this Kingdom who has made American affairs in the last an object of enquiry; yet now, in the very tail of this business, when measures should be long since determined on, we are furnished with an empty parade of parchments – to tell us what? Why, what the world knew before – that the American force, under injuries, and irritated wrongs, stripped of their inborn rights and dearest privileges, have resisted, and entered into associations for the preservation of that blessing to which life and property are but secondary considerations.

Here, pointing at the papers above alluded to, was without doubt very proper, as well as absolutely necessary; but without this abrupt beginning and the allusion to a particular object before him, it would have been wrong to have made use of any action whatever, for exordiums (opening speeches) in common ought to be spoken gently and without any motion.

Secondly, never clap your hands

You ought never to clap your hands (in court); nor ought clergymen to thump the pulpit or beat the breast, for these appear too much like the manners of an enthusiastic ranter or mountebank (aka flamboyant charlatan/con man).

Third – Action mostly with the right hand – Instances where the left alone may be used

Most of your actions ought to be with your right hand, and whenever you make use of the left, let it only be to accompany the other, and never lift it up so high as the right. To use the left hand alone is what you must particularly avoid, excepting when you speak of the left hand and the right hand by name. For instance:

The Sovereign Judge of the world will make a separation between the good and the bad in the last day of judgment, placing the just on his right hand and the wicked on his left.

Here, it is not only allowable, but necessary to make such action according to the distinction, marking one of them with the right hand alone and the other with the left hand.

Fourth – to place the right hand on the breast – if left handed how to manage

The right hand is naturally placed on the breast whenever the speaker talks of himself, with respect to his faculties, his passions, his heart, his soul, his conscience. But it must be done by only laying the hand gently upon the breast, and not violently beat it, as some people do. You must everywhere avoid making use of the left hand alone, with the exceptions we have made. But there are some people naturally left handed and cannot forebear using the left hand by itself, because they have been accustomed to it since infancy. In this case, I cannot advise better than to let all their action (gestures) be with both hands together, for then they will not offend the eye of the spectator with the left hand alone.

Fifth – Action from the left to the right

Your action (gestures) ought to pass from the left to the right and generally end to the right, but not in a violent manner. Whenever the sense will permit it (and for the most part it will) lay your hand down with great gentleness and moderation.

Sixth – when action (gestures) advisable, to begin it when you begin to speak

You must begin your action, when you are to use it, with your speech, and end it with it again; for it would be ridiculous either to begin your gestures before you had opened your mouth, or to continue after you had done speaking.

Seventh – Motion of your hands to suit the thing spoken of

The movement of your hands must always answer the nature of the thing you speak of; which Shakespeare alludes to when he says:

“Suit the action to the word, the word to the action”

It would be ridiculous to stretch out the arm at full length when you repeat the words “Come in” or bring your hand towards you when you say “Go back” or clasping your hands together at the words “Separate them” or open your arms at “Close it” or hang them down when you mention “raising” or hold them up at the words “Cast him down”. All of these would be contrary to reason, and expose you to the laughter and derision of your hearers.

Eighth – action must suit the figures (of rhetoric) you make use of

Upon all perturbed parts of your speech, the action of the hands is particularly necessary to suit the heat and the passion of the figures of rhetoric you make use of.

Ninth – The hands never, or seldom, higher than the eyes

When you lift up the hand it ought seldom, if ever, to be raised higher than the eyes, and not lower than the breast, although there are many that are very extravagant in this respect, clergymen in particular, who sometimes raise the hand so high, as if threatening the heavens, and at other times hanging it dangling down over the pulpit, as if it were dead. This is more the method of a violent enthusiast, than a polished and dignified declaimer.

Tenth – your arms not to be stretched out sideways from your body, but a certain distance.

You ought not to stretch out your arms sideways, farther than half a foot at most, from your body, or else your action will be quite out of your own sight, which is wrong, unless you turn your head aside to see it, which is ridiculous.

Eleventh – Raise your hand in swearing, exclamations etc

You must raise your hand in swearing, and in exclamations, so that the action may suit the expression, and both of them agree to the nature of the thing.

Twelfth – not to use too much action (gestures)

You must not make use of action at every place, for although it is true, the hands should not be idle, still this does not mean that they should be in continual motion. This would be below the gravity, character and dignity of an advocate, and would reduce them to the level of a mimic, or those performers who play in pantomimes.

Thirteenth – Some actions not to be attempted by the hands

There are some actions that must not be attempted by the hands, nor must you try to put yourself in the posture of those that make use of them. Such as fencing, making a bow, presenting a musket, or playing upon any musical instrument.

Fourteenth – When you talk for another person, what gestures to use

Whenever you make use of the rhetorical figure prosopopoeia (personification) in which you introduce another person speaking, you must take care not to use any gestures that would be improper for the personified person to use, and not agreeable to the state and condition in which you represent him.

There are many other things respecting the action of the hands, that might be here set down, and which been more copiously mentioned by others; but as I intend this treatise merely as a manual for the student, to contain such useful hints as may be more immediately necessary to him in the practice of speaking, I shall here close my observations on this subject.

Person (body) – How it ought to be managed

Many people keep their bodies in continual motion, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, or regularly move backwards and forwards, as if oratory consisted in nothing else but perpetual agitation. This is so unmeaning, absurd and ungraceful, that every speaker ought to break himself of it, if they find themselves inclined to it. On the other hand, it is as bad to stand immovable as a statue, during the whole time you are speaking, without any change of posture whatever, as nature and reason point out the necessity of sometimes making a motion with the body, to correspond with and give strength and vigour to the sentiment. This occasional change of the body is as indispensable, to a certain degree, as to the various changes of a discourse, and the different inflections of the voice; the whole, if appropriately combined, affording the highest satisfaction, and setting everything off to admiration.

The Head – how to manage it

It is needless to say here what gestures and signs, what innumerable hints and examinations the head is capable of making, as everybody is acquainted with them already. As in refusing, granting, confirming, admiring and a few thousand other instances. A few things, however, respecting its regulation, we think proper to mention. First, the head ought not to be extravagantly stretched out, as this is a mark of haughtiness and arrogance. Secondly, it ought not to hang down upon the breast, as in so doing, the voice is considerably injured, being rendered less clear, distinct and intelligible. Thirdly, it ought not to lean towards the shoulder, for that shows a languor and a faint indifference, but on the contrary, it ought to be continually kept up, as it were, modestly erect, a state and position that nature requires. Fourthly, it is not handsome for the head to continue always fixed in one immovable posture, as if you had no joint in your neck, nor is it, on the other hand, pleasing, for it to be continually moving, or throwing itself about at every turn of expression, an error too commonly practised. But to avoid both these awkward extremes, it must turn softly and gently upon the neck, if the nature of the sentiment permits it – not only to look upon those that are directly before your eyes in the middle of an assembly, but also to cast a look, now and then, upon those who are situated on either side of you, sometimes on the right hand, sometimes on the left; and after you have done this, to return again to such an easy and becoming posture, as your voice may be heard without the smallest difficulty by the greatest part of your auditors. It must be here

added, that the head ought always to be turned on the same side with the other actions of the body, excepting only when they exerted upon things we refuse, as for instance when the poet says:

"I will not take the proffered kindness"

Or upon things we detest and abhor, as in

"Take him away, he is loathsome to my sight"

These must be expressed by an action of the right hand, while the head, at the same time, is turned to the left. Many other examples might be given.

The Face – Hints respecting its management when speaking

Of all the parts of the head, it is the face that gives the greatest life and best grace to action; so great care ought to be taken that there is nothing disagreeable and unpleasant in it. It is the part most exposed to view, as an attentive audience have continually their eyes fixed upon it. It is therefore essentially necessary that, as the regulation of the features is of the highest importance to a speaker, he or she should carefully attend to the proper adjustment of them in private, before they make a display of them in public. The smallest irregularity or imperfection in the face is immediately taken notice of by everybody, and according to its enormity your speech is proportionably lessened in its effect.

In order to improve yourself in this particular, a mirror may be recommended; but I am persuaded that nothing can be half so advantageous as the assistance of a friend, who will carefully observe the common motions of your countenance, and frankly, and without reserve, inform you of whatever they see disagreeable or offensive to the eye, so that you may thereby easily correct it afterwards by yourself, (and here a mirror may be useful) or, in your friends presence, if not unpleasant to you. Still, however, all the movements of the face ought to be adjusted to the subject you treat of, the passion you would express, or make others feel, and the quality of the persons to whom you speak.

The eyes – how to regulate their motion

When you are speaking, you ought always to be casting your eyes upon some or other of your auditors, and rolling them gently about from this side to that, with an air of regard, sometimes upon one person and sometimes upon another, and not fix them, as is often the case, upon one spot alone. This is a dull and stupid habit, and throws a lifeless stupor over your auditory, when to look them modestly and decently in the face, as is done in familiar and common conversation, would keep them alive, and ensure their attention to whatever you say. Your whole aspect should always be pleasant, and your looks direct, never severe or sour, unless the passion or sentiment requires it, and then your feelings will soon dictate a change. In this case, your imagination throws an expression into your eyes that corresponds with your sensations, and the passions are depicted in your looks, as soon as the heart is affected.

How to draw tears from your own as well as your auditors eyes

Whenever you are afflicted with a violent grief for your own misfortunes, or touched with great compassion for the misfortunes of another, the tears will start in your eyes. This made the ancient actors apply themselves, with much care and attention, to the acquiring of a faculty of moving their imaginations to the power of weeping and shedding tears in abundance, whenever the occasion required; and they succeeded so well in this particular, and brought it to such perfection, that their faces used to be all over blurred with crying after they came off the stage. They accomplished this by various methods, but the most effectual was the following. They contrived to employ their imaginations upon some real private afflictions of their own, that lay very much at heart, and not upon the fictions of the play before them. There are many instances, handed down to us by historians, of the astonishing effects this produced. The advocate who would wish to attempt it, ought to form within themselves a very strong idea of the subject of the passion, and the passion itself will then certainly follow of course, ferment immediately in the eyes, and affect the spectators with the same tenderness. Passions are wonderfully conveyed from one person's eyes to another's, the tears of the one melting the heart of the other, and creating a visible sympathy between their imaginations and aspects (CB note – Marshall Hall, one of the great criminal law advocates, was renowned for crying during his trials, though it is worth remembering that back then trials were more theatrical than they are now)

Of lifting up the eyes, or casting them down

It is plain you must regulate this according to the nature of the thing spoken of. For if you speak of Heaven, and the celestial powers, you ought, without doubt, to lift up your eyes towards heaven, but you talk of the earth and terrestrial things, you must, of course, cast them down on the ground. You must also govern the eyes according to the passions, so as to cast them down upon things of disgrace and contempt which you are ashamed of, and to raise them on things of honour, which you can talk of with credit and confidence. You ought likewise, more particularly to turn up your eyes towards that by which you swear, and to life the hand up in the same action.

Eyebrows – How they should be managed.

These should not be, on the one hand, altogether immovable, or too full of motion on the other. You must not raise them both, as many people do when speaking of anything with eagerness or anxiety; nor should you life up one and cast down the other, but for the most part they ought to remain in the same posture and equality in which nature has placed them. However, they are permitted to move sometimes, and it is fit they should, when the passions require it. That is to say, to contract them in sorrow, to smooth and dilate them in joy, and to hang them down whenever you would wish to delineate modesty and humility.

The mouth – how to manage it

You must take special care not to let your mouth go in the least awry or uneven, as it is in the highest degree vulgar and disagreeable. Do not project the lower lip, as some people do, but

let both them be nearly even; and when you occasionally stop in your speech, leave off with the mouth a little open.

The lips - not to bite them

You ought never to bite your lips, excepting when the passion demands it; and even then it is more adapted to the actor than the orator. Some persons have a trick of licking them with the tongue, which is exceedingly low and ill-bred.

Lastly - the shoulders

There are many who shrug up the shoulders almost at every expression, which is very unmeaning or at best has but an appearance of poverty. Historians relate that Demosthenes was addicted to this custom, but that he got rid of it by using himself, for a long time, to declaim in a confined space, with a dagger suspended over his shoulders, so that as often as he shrugged them up the point pricked them and thereby put him in mind of his error. By this method he, at last, effectually corrected himself of the habit (CB note - don't try this at home!)