

will be perfect;" (2) that "the child has acquired the perfect power of emphasis, pronunciation, enunciation, articulation, accent and pauses;" i.e. the full power of educated expression; (3) that "any attempt to teach emphasis by imitation hinders the power to emphasize in oral reading;" (4) that "defective articulation can be cured by following exactly the process by which a child learns to articulate." On these astounding propositions we can remark but briefly: (1) "If the thought is in the mind the emphasis will be perfect." That is, understand a thought and you will be able to express it with perfect delivery. Why? Has the child learned to talk with the best possible expression? If he has so learned, he has learned it by imitating others; his power of elocution has been thus far trained; why stop at the beginning of its development? Again, if the principle is true, how comes it that there are so few good speakers in the world; and good readers fewer still? A child comprehends the thought: "O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome, knew ye not Pompey?" But will he deliver it with "the perfect power of emphasis"? Are the numerous bad readers and speakers at the school-desk, in the pulpit, at the bar, illiterate clowns who never grasp the thoughts they so imperfectly express? Dr. Whately instances a clergyman of his acquaintance who read the passage in Matthew: "Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel or under a bed?" as if there was no alternative but bed *or* bushel. Did the clerical reader know the meaning of the passage? Without doubt; yet, like tens of thousands whom he typifies, he had not acquired the power to convey to others the "thought that was in his mind."

(2) "The child has acquired the perfect power of emphasis, etc., etc."

What a precocious child! But from whom did he acquire it? From Nature? Yes, but from educated Nature,—Nature trained by art; from his cultured "environment," or not at all. How did he acquire this blessed power? Why, by Nature's method—by imitation—from his first imperfect articulation, till his last alleged exhibition of "perfect power in melody and harmony" and all the rest of it: there is no other way given under Nature's power. And yet, we are told that

(3) "Any attempt to teach emphasis by imitation, hinders the power of emphasis in oral reading." We hope no teacher will adopt this absurdity as a principle in teaching. The child's first articulation is an attempt to imitate the sounds he hears from his mother or his nurse. By the closest attention to the sounds he hears, by continuous drilling from his natural teachers, by slow and toilsome effort he wins a partial control over the organs of speech, and at last can express his simple thinkings somewhat as his loved instructors do. If he never hears, he will never imitate, if he never imitates, he must remain an *in-fans*—a non-speaking and therefore almost a non-thinking child. Why then should the mode of training which "Nature" suggest for the years of infancy suddenly become unnatural when we begin the more systematic training of the school-room and the college? Is there no continuity in Nature's processes? Without doubt it is possible to attempt too much through imitation; without doubt, too, it is impossible for the child who never hears good models to acquire an excellent delivery. "If the thought is in his mind"—but how are you going to put it there? There is many a noble sentiment that can be communicated to the child with all its educating power only by the voice