

As the mirror through the eye shows the bloom of health, the shadows and furrows of sickness care and grief; so may the voice, its vices and virtues, be reflected to the consciousness through the ear.

Whether we are conscious or unconscious of the fact, speech is something that has to be learned. People do not take into account the fact that articulate speech is an artificial acquisition and not at all a gift of the gods; that speech is produced by the most subtle and and complicated machinery which acts by means of nerves and muscles. It is only by imitation and constant practice that the child succeeds in pronouncing even the simplest words or acquires a mastery of that phonetic apparatus bestowed on him by nature.

In school great attention is paid to writing and very little to articulation. The child is shown the position which he is to take, and how he is to hold his arm and fingers to form the first letters, while very little heed is given to the position of the muscles to express orally what he thinks. He imitates mechanically and carelessly the first person who comes along—be he a good or a bad exemplar. The young can be trained in correct utterances when the organs are supple. What we lack is an intelligent recognition on the teacher's part of its importance. Instead of regarding it as remote or fanciful, as is largely done, it should be counted among the first essentials of a child's education.

All agree that the voice is the index of the mind. It is surpris-

ing that this most powerful gift is the one usually neglected by a race of creatures whose main object seems to be attractiveness towards one another. Voice is vital like the organs which produce it and depends upon the observation of natural laws for the essentials of its life and growth. What greater mark of culture is there than a well modulated voice? But how rarely is it found in our classrooms! What King Lear said of Cordelia may be commended to all ladies:

"Her voice was ever soft, gentle and low
An excellent thing in woman."

Apostrophising the wonders of the human voice, Longfellow in "Hyperion" recognizes it as the organ of the soul which reveals itself only in the voice. The soul of man is audible not visible. When Cleopatra impetuously asks the messenger as to the attractions of Octavia, her rival with Antony, she said:

"Didst hear her voice? Is she shrill tongued or low voiced?"

Madam, I heard her speak. She is low voiced."

"Ah! that's not good. I've lost my Antony," was Cleopatra's answer.

Frederick the Great, Carlyle says, had a fine toned voice; that it was musical even in swearing.

The hard, cold voice is produced by unemotionality. Why do we notice it so often in the teacher? It is because we deal so continually with hard facts and barren ideas instead of warm, living feelings and our emotional nature is stifled within us? Thought without emotion hardens the nature and through that the voice, but emo-