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And chokes us with keen anguish—*then* declares,
With voice conformed, her great interpreter,
The changing passions of the fervid soul.

§ 80. The passions have their own peculiar language of mystical signs.

In the preceding quotation from one of the greatest masters of art, we have set forth, not only the indispensable necessity of feeling in order to power in elocution, but also the great reason for this necessity; namely, because the passions have their own peculiar language of mystical signs.

1. *These signs consist of all the different qualities of voice, changes of pitch, inflection, articulation, time, force, and emphasis, together with all the infinitely various expressions of the countenance, and all the positions and motions of the body.*

In fact, each several passion, mode of feeling, and state of mind, has its own peculiar dialect, so to speak, of this symbolical language. For these signs, whether addressed to the ear or the eye, are very different, not only for the different passions, but also for their ever-varying degrees of intensity, and for all their modifications and blendings with each other; and they vary still further in persons of different temperaments, culture and circumstances. This language, therefore, constitutes a most copious, significant and expressive part of delivery. For it is by means of it that the emotions and passions of the soul communicate themselves from one person to another, along with the intellectual operations.

indeed, but often independently, and without the intervention of thought.

2. *Examples.*

The following examples, somewhat modified, are taken from an anonymous work of the last century, referred to by Walker in his *Elocution*, and following which he has given us between seventy and eighty similar examples of this mystical language of the passions. The signs here imperfectly indicated are only a few out of an almost infinite variety, by which these passions, in their innumerable degrees and modifications and blendings with other feelings, may be manifested.

(1.) The passion of anger expresses itself in some persons by a flush, in others by a livid paleness of the countenance. It wrinkles the forehead, and contracts the eyebrows. It flashes with a fierce light in the eyes, expands the nostrils, gives rigidity to the muscles, clinches the fists, stamps the foot, and violently agitates the whole body. Its words are sometimes rapid, noisy and harsh, with the voice pitched high; sometimes the voice is on the lowest key, the words slow, and the articulation much hardened. Violent and vindictive passion will often force out the breath, imperfectly vocalized, in a sharp hissing sound. The first Napoleon, it is said, when very angry, hissed out his words so as to be nearly unintelligible.

(2.) The passion of sorrow, when not excessive, renders the countenance pale and dejected, with the eyes cast down, and suffused with tears. The arms hang

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loosely at the sides, the hands are open, the fingers spread, and all the muscles of the body are relaxed. The voice is low and plaintive, the words slow, and frequently interrupted with sobs and sighs. When the passion is violent, it distorts the countenance, as if with pain, wrings the hands, beats the breast, tears the hair, and sometimes throws the body at full length on the ground; often it raises the voice in loud complainings, even to shrieks and screams. Overwhelming sorrow is still and silent: it suppresses the tears and the voice, and renders the countenance dull and heavy, as if all the faculties were stupefied.

(3.) The passion of love, in different degrees of timidity, expresses itself by approaching or shrinking from its object. When in doubt of the reception it shall meet with, its approaches are made with much hesitation, confusion of manner, and sometimes trembling. Blushing and paleness succeed each other in the countenance. The voice is low and soft and tremulous. The articulation is broken and confused, according to the strength of the passion, and the lack of self-control. When declaring itself, or pleading with great importunity, it may easily bring the lover to his knees. The eyes are now either turned away, or fixed upon the object, and the speech is either rapid and voluble, or confused and broken. When secure of its object, it gives a smile to the lips, a serene glow to the countenance which seems to radiate light, a liquid brilliancy to the eyes, and a tenderness of expression and grace to all the motions of the body.