

LESSON XXV

GESTURE. THE CLENCHED HAND

ALL students have probably noticed that when people become very angry, and wish to make things very emphatic, they shake their fists at one another. This fact gives rise to one of the most powerful gestures that an orator can use, — that is, the *clenched hand*.

The *clenched hand* is formed by folding all the fingers into the palm of the hand, and firmly locking them there



FIG. 43. The correct form of the clenched hand.



FIG. 44. A wrong form of the clenched hand — with the thumb doubled under.



FIG. 45. A wrong form of the clenched hand — the thumb at the side of the hand.

by passing the thumb over the knuckles, — generally over the second joint, or knuckle, of the middle finger. (See Fig. 43.)

CAUTION. — Do not double the thumb under, as shown in Figure 44.

CAUTION. — Do not allow the thumb to be out at the side of the hand, as shown in Figure 45.

The *clenched hand* is used in *hate, anger, revenge, defiance*, and in many cases where it is desired that some-



FIG. 46. Striking across the body with the fist — a wrong use.



FIG. 47. The correct use of the fist gesture — striking straight out.

thing shall be *especially emphatic*. It is a very strong gesture, and should not be used often.

CAUTION. — In the use of the Clenched Hand, do not forget the stroke. In many cases, the spring at the wrist will develop into a slight rebound, but do not neglect the stroke.

CAUTION. — Do not strike sidewise across the body, as shown in Figure 46, but strike straight out, as in Figure 47.

Examples :

I defy you!

You are a coward!

My lords, you cannot conquer America. What is your present situation there? We do not know the worst; but we know that in three campaigns we have done nothing and suffered much. Besides the suffering, perhaps total loss, of the northern force, the best appointed army that ever took the field, commanded by Sir William Howe, has retired from the American lines. He was obliged to relinquish his attempt,

and, with great delay and danger, to adopt a new and distant place of operations. We shall soon know, and in any event have reason to lament, what may have happened since.

As to the conquest, therefore, my lords, I repeat, it is impossible. You may swell every expense and every effort still more extravagantly; pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and barter with every little pitiful German prince that sells and sends his subjects to the shambles of a foreign prince. Your efforts are for ever vain and impotent, — doubly so from this mercenary aid on which you rely. For it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your enemies, to overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder; devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty! If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, I never would lay down my arms — never, — never, — never!

— WILLIAM PITT.

EXERCISES

NOTE. — In these exercises extend the forward foot its whole length or more, keeping both feet, however, flat on the floor. When making gestures to the left, have the left foot forward.

50. Give the Clenched Hand with the right hand toward the floor obliquely in front of you to the right; toward the wall; toward the ceiling. Repeat three times.

51. Repeat Ex. 50, except put the gesture in front of you.

52. Execute Ex. 50 and Ex. 51 with the left hand to the left and in front of you.

53. Execute gestures with both hands clenched toward the floor obliquely to the right in front, toward the wall, and toward the ceiling. Do the same directly in front; also to the left. Don't forget to change feet when you make the gestures to the left.

54. Try gestures with each hand, and with both, to the following counts, striking on the black figures:

1, 2, 3, 4 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

1, 2, 3 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 9, 10, 11, 12.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4.

Be vigorous in your counting, as if you were angry.

55. Try the Clenched Hand, with one and both hands, in all sorts of positions and directions. Say aloud the words that come to your mind when you make some of these gestures.

LESSON XXVI

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF POSITION

THE student has thus far known positions merely as mechanical arrangements of the feet. By this time he may begin to study their significance.

Position A. — The positions described in Lesson I, as already stated, are the ordinary positions. They are used for *narration, description, and all ordinary thoughts* where there is no great emotion.

Position B. — When position A is enlarged by stepping out farther with the forward foot, and allowing the back heel to leave the floor, it becomes stronger, and is used for *solicitation, entreaty, earnestness, and appeal*.

In addition to these, the student may by this time feel



FIG. 48. Columbus. See note, p. 106.



FIG. 49. A position for dignified oratorical utterance. The Niehaus statue of Garfield at Cincinnati. From Lorado Taft's *American Sculpture*, by permission.

the need of still more emphatic positions, especially when he is making gestures, and below a few are given.

Position A Major. — Exactly like the position described in Lesson I is another position in which the forward foot is placed its full length in advance, instead of half its length. See Figure 49.

NOTE. — In this position, because the feet are farther apart, there is a tendency to put the weight either on the front foot or the back foot. The student may do either, provided he always keeps the weight more on the front foot in aggressive moods.

This position may be used to denote anything *bold, lofty, dignified, heroic, or impassioned*.

Position B Major. — An enlarged form of the Position B is also often used, in which the forward foot is extended twice its own length instead of once its own length. When the weight is on the forward foot, the front knee is bent, and when the weight is on the back foot, the back knee is bent. The weight may be on either foot. See Figs. 50 and 51 for valuable studies in this and other positions.

This position, when the weight is on the forward foot, is used for *courage, defiance, aggression, and strength*. When the weight is on the back foot, it signifies *awe, fear, dread, amazement, terror*, etc. Examples :

POSITION FOR APPEAL OR WELCOME

Oh, save me, Hubert, save me ! my eyes are out,
Even with the fierce looks of these bloody men.

— SHAKESPEARE.

Welcome, Cassius ! Welcome, friends !

— SHAKESPEARE.

POSITION FOR DEFIANCE

Here I stand for impeachment or accusation. I dare accusation.

— GRATTAN.



FIG. 50. A study in position. A scene in *Monsieur Beaucaire*.



FIG. 51. A study in aversive gesture. A scene in *Leah Kleshna*.

Go home, if you dare, — go home, if you can, — to your constituents and tell them that you voted it down. — CLAY.

VERY AGGRESSIVE POSITION, FORWARD

The right honorable gentleman has called me “an unimpeached traitor.” I ask why not traitor, unqualified by any epithet! I will tell him! It was because he durst not! It was the act of a coward who raises his arm to strike, but has not the courage to give the blow.

— GRATTAN.

Brutus. And let me tell you, Cassius,
You yourself are much condemned to have an itching palm,
To sell and mart your offices for gold to undeservers.

Cassius. I an itching palm!
You know that you are Brutus that speak this.

Brutus. The name of Cassius honors this corruption,
And chastisement doth therefore hide his head.

Cassius. Chastisement! — SHAKESPEARE.

SHRINKING POSITION, BACKWARD

O, look! methinks I see my cousin's ghost
Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
Upon a rapier's point. — SHAKESPEARE.

EXERCISES

56. Take the following positions in order:

- Position A, with the right foot forward.
- Position A, with the left foot forward.
- Position B, with the right foot forward.
- Position B, with the left foot forward.
- Position B Major, forward, to the right.
- Position B Major, forward, to the left.

57. Take the following in order:

- Position A, with the right foot forward.
- Position A, with the left foot forward.
- Position A Major, with the right foot forward.
- Position A Major, with the left foot forward.

58. Take the following in order :

Position A, with the right foot forward.

Position B Major, forward, to the right.

Position B Major, backward, to the left.

Repeat the last two rapidly one after the other. Use the opposite positions also.

59. Take the following in order :

Position A, with the right foot forward.

Position B Major, forward, to the right.

Repeat this, stamping with the forward foot and imitating a sword thrust. Use the opposite positions also.

60. Repeat Ex. 59, using the sword thrust on the forward foot, and the hands spread, as if in terror, on the back foot.

Note on Fig. 48, p. 103. The Bartlett statue of Columbus. From Lorado Taft's *American Sculpture*, by permission. Mr. Taft says of this statue, "It shows us the discoverer in a new light; no longer the gentle dreamer, the eloquent pleader, the enthusiast, nor yet the silent victim in chains, but a hero of might and confidence hurling proud defiance at his calumniators."

LESSON XXVII

PITCH

THE SLIDE

Now that the student has noticed the upward and downward slides of the voice, it may be well to give a few simple cases of their use.

As a general rule, it may be stated that the *Rising Slide* accompanies all *incomplete* mental states, while the *Falling Slide* accompanies *completed* ones.

SPECIAL CASES

CASE I. — Where one's mind is not quite made up in regard to something, the voice often takes a rising slide.

I think I shall *gō*.

Well, — let me see.

CASE II. — All clauses and expressions in sentences where the thought is not complete without something that follows take the rising slide.

The instructive lesson of *hī*story, teaching by *exā*mple, can nowhere be studied with more *prō*fit, or better *prō*mise, than in this Revolutionary period of America. — SPARKS.

In every enlightened *ā*ge, eloquence has been a controlling *fā*ctor in human affairs. — STANTON.

Sans *tē*eth, sans *ē*yes, sans *tā*ste, sans everything. — SHAKESPEARE.

CASE III. — Surprise, implying "Is it so?" takes the rising slide.

Let them out! No!

You! Where in the world did you come from?

NOTE. — When the question has left the mind, and one is fully settled that it is "You," then the slide will take the other direction.

CASE IV. — Questions that can be answered by "Yes" or "No" take the rising slide.

Are you going?
Is he there?
You are to be there?
He is a soldier?

NOTE. — When it is desired to make a question very emphatic, the rising slide may be given on all the principal syllables. Example:

Me, there, in the dark prison?

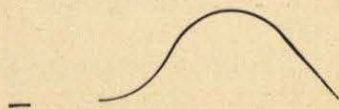
CASE V. — The names of persons addressed, if something more is immediately to follow, take the rising slide.

John, come here.
Fellow Citizens, I am here this evening, etc.

CAUTION. — Rules are treacherous things. In all cases get back to life and the real thought intended. "How would this person have said this under these circumstances?" and "What do I really mean?" are good questions to ask yourself. They will generally determine the inflection correctly.

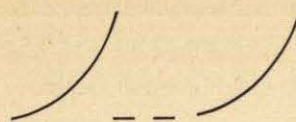
EXERCISES

61. Give the word *hurrah* with a curve of voice something like the following:



Repeat several times, making the slide very plain.

62. Give the words "Oh! Is it you?" with a course of voice something like this.



Repeat several times.

63. Commence the following at lowest pitch, giving to each word a short rising slide on each successively higher pitch; aim at smoothness, and gradually increase the length of inflections:

Can
honor's
voice
provoke
the
silent
dust
or
flattery
soothe
the
dull
cold
ear
of
death?

Can
storie^d
urn
or
animated
bust
back
to
its
mansion
call
the
fleeting
breath?

64. Repeat the following with falling slides:

Can
honor's
voice
provoke
the
silent
dust
or
flattery
soothe
the
dull
cold
ear
of
death?

LESSON XXVIII

PITCH — Continued

THE SLIDE — Continued

In the last lesson, it was learned that the *falling slide* is used to denote *completed mental states*. Below are given a few simple cases.

CASE I. — The end of a sentence, when the thought is complete, takes the falling slide.

He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

CASE II. — Clauses, phrases, and words, when occurring in a series, may be made more emphatic by giving each the falling slide :

Clauses :

They have discovered that political equality does not result in social fraternity ; that under a democracy the concentration of greater political power in fewer hands, the accumulation and aggregation of greater amounts of wealth in individuals, are more possible than under a monarchy ; and that there is a tyranny more fatal than the tyranny of kings.

— J. J. INGALLS.

Phrases :

To elevate the morals of our people ; to hold up the law as that sacred thing, which, like the ark of God of old, cannot be touched by irreverent hands ; to frown upon every attempt to displace its supremacy ; and to unite our people in all that makes home pure and honorable, as well as to give our energies to the material advancement of the country : these services we may render every day. — BENJAMIN HARRISON.

Words :

The application of steam to locomotion on land and sea, the cotton gin, electric illumination and telegraphy, the cylinder printing press, the

sewing machine, the photographic art, tubular and suspension bridges, the telephone, the spectroscope, and the myriad forms of new applications of science to health and domestic comfort, to the arts of peace and war, have alone rendered democracy possible. — J. J. INGALLS.

CASE III. — Questions that cannot be answered by “Yes” or “No” take the falling slide.

Who were there?
I pray you, who is he?
Why do you go away?

CASE IV. — Exclamations and commands take the falling slide.

Farewell, sweet child, farewell! — MACAULAY.

Oh! the side glance of that detested eye!
That conscious smile! that full insulting lip!
It touches every nerve; it makes me mad! — BAILLIE.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May! — WORDSWORTH.

EXERCISES

65. Practice the following with strong inflection and volume:

Ship ahoy!
Forward the light brigade!
Charge, Chester, charge!
On, Stanley, on!
The foe! They come! They come!
To arms! They come! The Greek! The Greek!

66. Extend the arms horizontally in front; rotate the hands from the wrists without moving the fingers. First start the hands inward and after eight counts reverse them.

LESSON XXIX

PLANES OF GESTURE

IN watching a skillful orator, one notices that on certain sentiments his gestures seek a high plane, while on certain others they seek a low plane. When should a gesture be made upward, and when downward? This is governed by definite laws, which are given below.

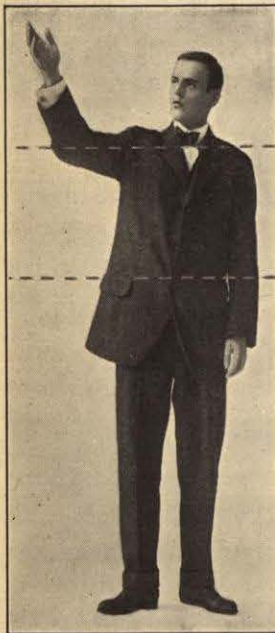


FIG. 52. The planes of gesture.

All the different gestures, ranging from that of the hand pointing straight upward to that of the hand pointing straight downward, may be divided into three zones, or planes: The *upper zone* or *plane*, the *middle zone* or *plane* and the *lower zone* or *plane*. These occupy each about one third the distance covered, the middle zone, perhaps, being a little narrower than the other two.

The *upper zone* is used to denote things that are *joyous, hopeful, triumphant, patriotic, poetical, spiritual*, etc. Examples:

God bless our country's flag! And God be with us, now and ever,
God in the roof tree's shade and God on the highway, God in the wind
and waves, and God in all our hearts! — HENRY WATTERSON.

While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that, in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise! God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind! When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the last time, the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, with fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original luster, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured; bearing for its motto, no such miserable interrogatory as, "What is all this worth?" nor those other words of delusion and folly, "Liberty first, and Union afterwards"; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart, "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!" — WEBSTER.

The *middle zone* is used for *narration, description, address, welcome, command, conciliation*, etc. It is the zone most generally used for all the relations that a man bears to his fellow-men. Examples:

The time is come, the tyrant points his eager hand this way;
See how his eyes gloat on thy grief, like a kite's upon the prey;
With all his wit, he little deems that, spurned, betrayed, bereft,
Thy father hath, in his despair, one fearful refuge left;
He little deems that in this hand, I clutch what still can save
Thy gentle youth from taunts and blows, the portion of the slave;
Yes, and from nameless evil, that passeth taunt and blow, —
Foul outrage, which thou knowest not, — which thou shalt never know.
Then clasp me round the neck once more, and give me one more kiss;
And now, my own dear little girl, there is no way but this!

— MACAULAY.

"Halt!" — the dust-brown ranks stood fast;

"Fire!" — out blazed the rifle blast. — WHITTIER.

Within our own territory, stretching through many degrees of latitude and longitude, we have the choice of many products and many means of independence. The government is mild. The press is free. Religion is free. Knowledge reaches or may reach every home. What fairer prospect of success could be presented? What means more adequate to accomplish the sublime end? — STORY.

The *lower zone* or *plane*, is used for things *emphatic, forceful, determined*; also for *gloom, doubt, hate, revenge, murder*, etc. Examples :

I loathe ye in my bosom,
I scorn ye with mine eye,
And I'll taunt ye with my latest breath,
And fight ye till I die! — PATTEN.

But you, wretch! you could creep through the world unaffected by its various disgraces, its ineffable miseries, its constantly accumulating masses of crime and sorrow; — you could live and enjoy yourself while the noble minded were betrayed, — while the nameless and birthless villains trod on the neck of the brave and long-descended: you could enjoy yourself like a butcher's dog in the shambles, fattening on garbage, while the slaughter of the brave went on around you! This enjoyment you shall not live to partake of: you shall die, base dog! — and that before yon cloud has passed over the sun!

EXERCISES

67. Give the following sentences with gestures in the proper planes.

He generously extended the arm of power to ward off the blow.
Thou tempting fiend, avaunt!
I repel the base insinuation!
Aspire to the highest and noblest sentiments.
Prevail in the cause that is dearer than life,
Or be crushed in its ruins to die.

68. Execute the hand with the palm down, the hand with the palm up, and the clenched hand, singly with each hand, and then with both hands, in all the zones, obliquely to the right, in front, and obliquely to the left. Write out the sentiments that occur when you do this, and bring them to class. You may give the words, if you prefer them to the sentiments. Tell where each gesture was made for each set of words.

LESSON XXX

SPEECH MELODY

It must be evident to the student, from what has gone before, that the voice in speaking is continually taking steps and slides up and down, in various combinations. This is called the Melody of Speech. Two combinations of the slides are given below.

Contrasts. — Wherever there are two terms contrasted, the first takes the rising slide, and the second the falling slide. If there is a choice given between three, the first two take the rising and the last the falling. Examples :

S̄ink or sw̄im, līve or dīe, survīve or p̄erish, I give my hand and heart to this vote. — WEBSTER.

Will you go to the theater, to the party, or to the beach?

Interrupted quotation. — Often such phrases as "he said," or "said he with embarrassment," etc., interrupt a quotation. In such cases let the slides of the interrupting words have the same direction as that on the last preceding word of the quotation. Of course the slides need not be as long. Examples :

"Now, Fred," said the trapper, "the time is sartinly come for us to show the grit that's in us."

"How far behind is John Norton?" said the man on the wharf.

GENERAL LAW OF MELODY

Many more laws for the use of the steps and slides could be given, but usually the mind of the student will determine

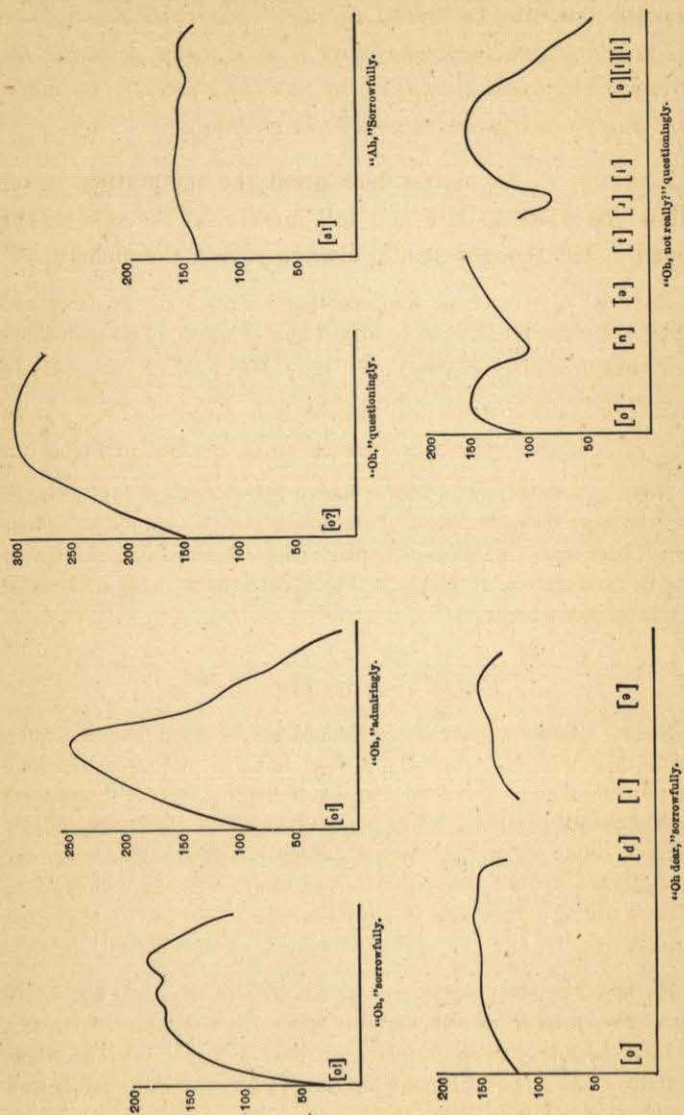


FIG. 53. Some speech waves. From E. W. Scripture's *Experimental Phonetics*.

each case rightly without further rules. The following general law may be found of use. *The voice descends on the relatively unimportant parts of a sentence to make the strong rising slides, and ascends on the relatively unimportant parts to make the strong falling slides.*

CAUTION. — No matter how great the temptation, never allow the voice to rise and fall merely for the sake of the sound. The thought should always govern the melody.

NOTE 1. — It sometimes happens that a word has the rising and falling slides combined, so as to form a kind of wave. This may either be a wave upward (\frown), or a wave downward (\smile). In some cases, even, more than one wave is found (\sim), or (\sim). Examples of a few such waves are seen in Figure 52.

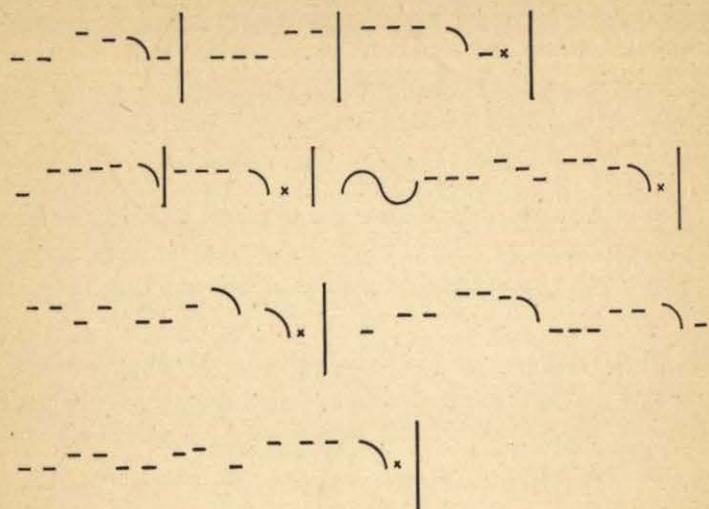
NOTE 2. — Often, too, a slide is started downward, but as it nears its end, the next thought comes to the mind, and the end of the slide is turned back up. Or the opposite may take place, and a slide *started up* may be *turned down* at the end. These cases often occur at the close of clauses in a sentence.

EXAMPLES OF MELODY *

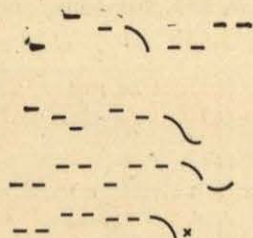
NOTE. — To save space, the selections will be given first, and afterwards their melody, indicated by short lines for the steps and long lines for the slides. It will be a saving of the pupil's time if the same method is used in class. It has the advantage, too, of showing plainly whether a slide or a step is meant, which cannot be done when the words themselves are arranged. Be sure to get a line for each syllable, or there will be a great deal of confusion when you come to read your melody.

He has done the murder: no eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The secret is his own, and it is safe. Ah, Gentlemen, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner where the guilty can bestow it, and say it is safe. — WEBSTER.

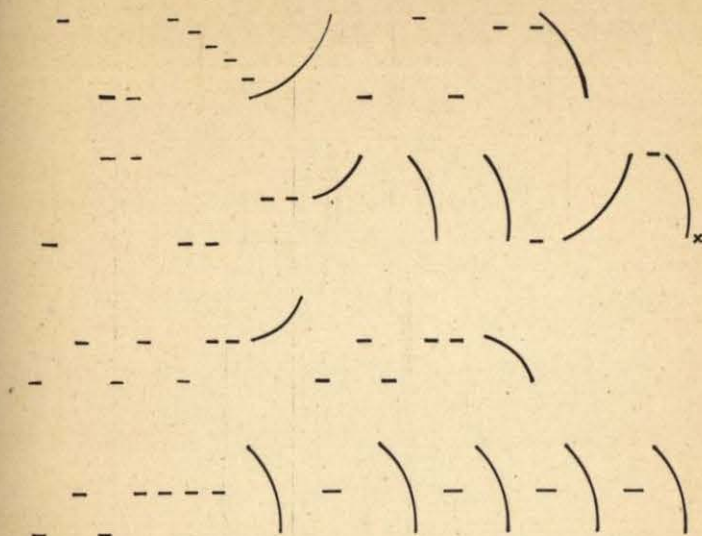
* See footnote at the bottom of page 84.



The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.



Still at the bayonet's point he stood, and strong to meet the blow:
And shouted, 'midst his rushing blood, "Arm! Arm! Auvergne!
The foe!"
The stir, the tramp, the bugle call, he heard their tumult grow:
And sent his dying voice through all, — "Auvergne! Auvergne! The
foe! The foe!"



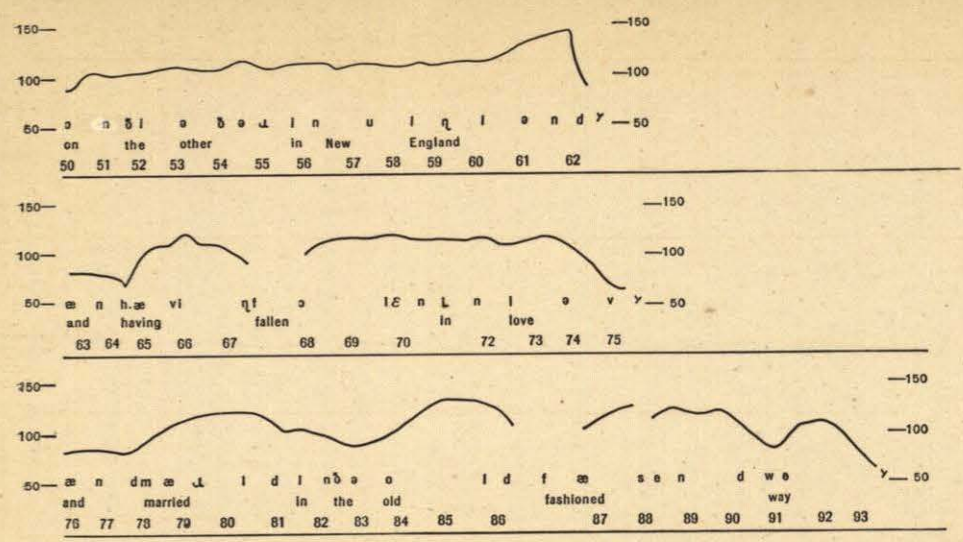
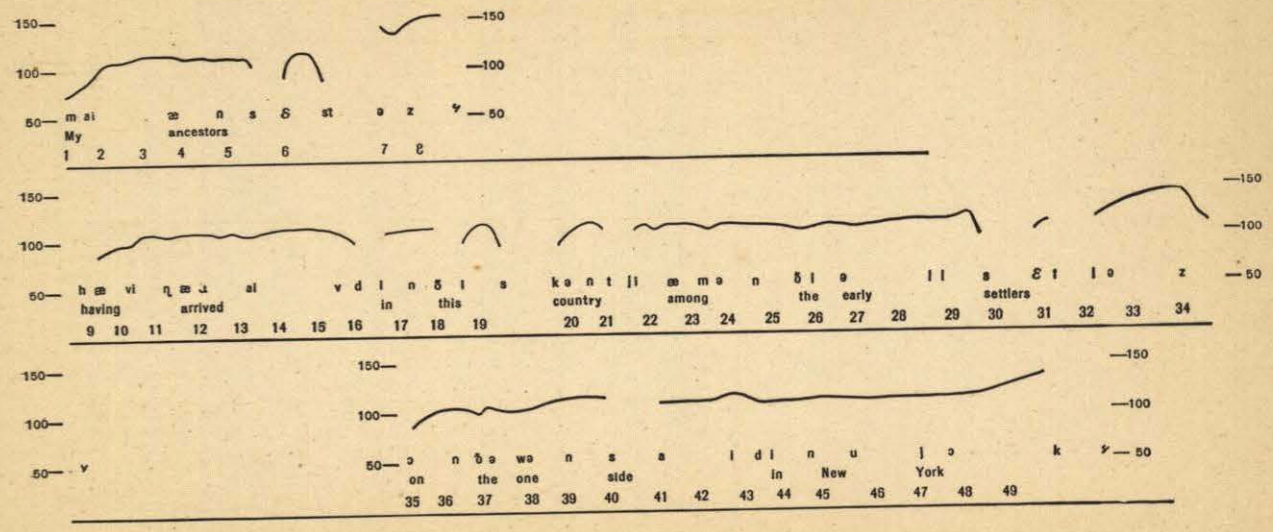
EXERCISES IN WRITING MELODY

1. Write out the melody for one of your high school yells.
2. Write out the melody for some two stanzas of a poem that you know or can get out of a book.
3. Write out the melody for some one of the oratorical extracts found in this book.

TO THE TEACHER. — It might be well to have one student write out on the blackboard the melody for a stanza, and then have some other student read it as written.

My an-ces-tors, ha-ving ar-rived in this coun-try a-mong the ear-ly sett-lers
on the one side in New York on the oth-er in New Eng-land, and ha-ving fall-en in
love, and mar-ried in the old fash-ioned way.

FIG. 54. Musical notation of Figure 55.



Melody of Beginning of "Speech on Forefathers' Day"

FIG. 55. Some speech waves. From E. W. Scripture's *Experimental Phonetics*, published by the Carnegie Institution, Washington, D. C. (See p. 122.)

Prof. Scripture in describing the speech melody represented in Fig. 55 says :

"We note that in the first phrase the melody rises somewhat suddenly at the start according to the typical convex form of the American sentence. Instead, however, of completing the convexity it suddenly rises at the end. The average tone is rather low. . . . The evenness of the melody gives it solemnity, the steady rise through the phrase gives it pomposity, the sudden rise at the end makes it somewhat brusque and challenging. . . .

"In the fifth phrase the melody is of a different kind. There is more flexibility and the convexity is completed by a low fall. In the sixth phrase there are four strong subordinate convexities for the four emphatic units, 'married,' 'old,' 'fashioned,' 'way.' These are fused to a phrase with very flexible melody. The phrase ends with a fall in melody and a pause, although it needs the words 'without regard to race or creed' to complete it. These last two phrases are in contrast to the first four. The evenness is replaced by great flexibility, the rise at the end is replaced by an exaggerated fall.

"The entire effect of such a melody is distinctly humorous — an effect that is increased by the very low tones employed, especially at the end (going as low as nearly 50 vibrations a second). It is a common device of humor to imitate solemnity in its chief traits and to change one of them into an inconsistency. Here the effect is that of a staid humor of a mild degree. . . . Throughout the record the melody is one that is appropriate to the ceremonial oration, with a constant humorous twist to it. The unusually long pauses between the phrases, with the low and monotonous pitch, aid in the ceremonious expression."

LESSON XXXI

FAULTS IN SPEECH MELODY

As the skillful opera singer excels the unpracticed vocalist in his execution of melody, so the person that has had training in speech melody will excel the one who has not, and for the benefit of the student a few of the common faults in speech melody are set down below.

Before giving these, however, it may be well to state the general truth, *that every speech note is a slide, that it passes from one degree of pitch to another without being held appreciably at any point.* This does not at all conflict with what has been said about steps, for, in taking steps, the voice simply stops one note (which is a slide, of course) and starts in at a new place to make another note (which is also a slide). The slides mentioned in previous lessons are merely the important slides, and it must be understood that *every speech note is in reality a slide.*

Do not confuse song notes and speech notes. — With the foregoing truth in mind, the student is now cautioned against the use of song notes in speech. In a large room, or sometimes in a small one, there is a tendency to prolong a word or syllable on one plane of pitch, giving a sort of *calling* effect. This turns the speech note into a song note, for this is just the difference between song and speech: *Song stays on one degree of pitch, on one note, while speech must be going either up or down, and does not stay in one place.* The best way to avoid song notes in speech is to talk to one of the front seats just as you would talk to a friend; then, keeping the same slides, talk