

not material. These experiences come to the real teacher.

Some of the things I have said, I find in a few verses written by John Bretnall. They are worth repeating:

THE TEACHER

"If I but had my chance amid this world of stress
Wherein men press and plot and grasp,
Crowd virtue back, court their own prejudice,
I'd set a new apprenticeship for life,
Within the scheme to train the youth
I'd make for wiser purpose, content, plan.
Life would be learned in doing,
Things taught as they are,
Opening a way to stop our waste,
Cure social misfits, hold back the flood of hu-
man tears,
All this I'd do if I but had my chance—And
knew the way.

I have my chance,
Each day there come to me some souls
Unnurtured to the world. My opportunity,
My work shall be to find their need
And help survey a path
That leads to the supply;
Then give them learning as a life to live
Not as a garment to be worn,
Help them gain courage, endurance, fairness, in-
quiry.

From out the mass, mayhap, that here and there
Shall come a life equipped with skill
To heal some gap in industry,
Divide in honesty the shares of gain,
Help law learn justice,
Or build a better breed of men.
I may inspire some soul to seek
The magic of the Universe,
Reach out a hand to grasp
The harp of science, pluck its strings,
Till from their throbbing tunes
Some deep secret of the Master Mind,
Another thought of God made new to man.

The race turns slowly but it travels far.
Though small the angle,
Its rays, extended, wide diverge,
A latitude dividing right from wrong.
Though small my part,
I, too, may touch redemption for the race.
Some spark that I shall kindle may burn on
To glow in life, to gleam in immortality.¹

¹John Bretnal in *The Journal of the National Education Association*, April, 1931.

A. R. MEAD

Life is only a school in which the wiser men are, the longer they go on learning.

—SIR WILFRED GRENFELL

"HER VOICE WAS . . . SOFT"

WE HAVE read with a good deal of sympathy the advertisements of various salesmen offering to teach the correct use of English. The institutions they represent are the beauty shops of language. Here the poor aint's and he dont's and we was's and ought ofs go in to be stretched and lifted and smoothed until the speaker can open his lips without toads falling out of them. We are, frankly, a little skeptical of the results often promised, for the idea is too commonly expressed that a little grammar and spelling will accomplish what really needs a mental development. Good English comes from a good mind, and no other. And if the mind is good and the English irregular there may be merit in its irregularity.

But another kind of cultural beauty shop, if it exists, has few customers. The thronging girls on the noon-hour streets of a great city are hysterically aware of the need—

Still to be neat, still to be dressed
As if you were going to a feast.

And they patronize, we suspect, the grammar shops occasionally, for an overheard conversation will sometimes have an almost priggish correctness in the selection of words. But, O the voices! And O the enunciation! The Darwinian idea that fine clothes, like fine feathers, are sex appeals and nothing else was much too simple. A good share of this finery has nothing to do with sex. It is an attempt to assert the social position of the wearer in a great anonymous civilization where the individual must assert or be unknown. The hat says, "I am not too poor"; the dress, "I have some taste"; the shoes, "I know style when I see it." This is what advertisers call, in its inverted form, the snob appeal, but the term is harsh. Put a strange chicken in a chicken yard and watch; it after awhile begins to plume and strut a little, as if to say,

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"I myself am somebody, I am one of you and not of the lowliest!" In a village everyone is known. Strutting is useless. But in a city, the anonymous he or she must hang out some signal to the crowd, some advertisement of native worth. The female signals the male, but not only the male; she informs her betters in taste, in style, in spending money, that she herself has points which they can appreciate.

How strange then that language, and particularly voice, has been so neglected. For there is no worse advertisement than bad speaking. It is like the scent of the fox; the bearer cannot escape from it, all the neighborhood is aware. Character, temperament, personality, are elusive and hard to come at; clothes tell the story quickly, though only a part of it; but the voice, that most characteristic of all human attributes, seems to be the essential person himself, shedding the husk of bought adornments, telling as much of the truth as can be told in a brief contact, saying far more than the words. Let her spend her mornings at the beautifiers, her afternoons at the dress-makers, and still one word will betray her. She may have a good heart, and a sterling character, and a passable mind, and still that rasp and slide over the English vowels, that choke on the consonants, and breath nasally sharpened, will undo all her promises. It takes a more than passable beauty to make up for squawks and shrillings, which is one reason perhaps why so many girls nowadays seem to prefer to do their hugging by daylight.

Indeed, a worldly wise adviser of sensitive youth would certainly urge upon the socially minded more care in speaking and in their choice of books. For if one can tell a little about character and all about looks from the face, it is the book on the table, or the magazine under the arm, or the newspaper being read, that reveals the mental status to a curious observer; it is the voice which denotes, more sharply and on

the whole more accurately than anything else, a cultural classification, and distinguishes the golden from the gilded.—*The Saturday Review of Literature.*

AN UP-TO-DATE FAIRY TALE

ONCE upon a time, my dears, far up on the Statistical Mountains, with their beautiful bell-shaped curves, and on those lovely benches which clever people call the Learning Plateaux, there dwelt the queerest race of boys and girls imaginable. They belonged to the fairy people, of course, and had no fathers and mothers, but they were very carefully brought up by wise old men with long gray beards and thick spectacles who were called Scientists.

You will wonder what kind of fairies these boys and girls were. They were neither elves nor gnomes; they were not related to Mother Goose or to Peter Pan; they were neither afraid of Bears nor Spiders. Indeed, they didn't believe in any fairies except themselves, because the wise Scientists had brought them up that way.

They were called Norms, and sometimes Modes or Medians; but I think they liked best to be called Norms, because it is such a dignified name. You see, there had been Norms since the beginning of the world, but until the Scientists began taking care of them, they had wandered about very unhappily, and had always hidden themselves in caves and dark forests. But that was all changed, my dears, when the Scientists found them a comfortable home of their own in the Statistical Mountains.

The Norms were odd in many ways; their bodies were vague and not a bit like those of ordinary boys and girls. Sometimes they were big and beautiful, and sometimes they were small and crooked, because their appearance depended upon which Scientist had been taking care of them last. Every once in a while they vanished altogether,