

# The Educational Journal

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## Editorial Notes.

WE beg leave to call the attention of our readers to Mr. Thomas O'Hagan's letter, which will be found in another column. With its general tenor and aim we must all heartily agree. The foundation of the habit in reading which is likely to persist to a greater or less extent through all the after-life is, in most cases, laid in the Public and High Schools, and it seems to us that the criticisms which Mr. O'Hagan directs against the deficiencies of the latter in this respect lie with even greater force against the Public Schools. In fact, it seems a wonder how the children who attend the Public Schools, and perhaps more particularly the large city schools, can ever acquire the ability to read aloud even passably. Is it not true that in many, if not in most, of these schools the pupils in all the more advanced classes are scarcely required to read aloud at all. The exigencies of the crowded programme do not seemingly admit of time and place for this most important exercise. We should like much to hear from some of those engaged in these schools, whether in the cities or in the rural districts, in regard to this matter. How often in the week do they, as a rule, find it possible to have lessons in oral reading?

In one particular, however, we confess to some difficulty in understanding, or, if we understand, in assenting to Mr. O'Hagan's suggestion. "Are not," he asks, "how to put the question and the elucidation of the thought the main objects in the teaching and study of literature in our High Schools to day?" We believe they are. Does Mr. O'Hagan mean to imply that, in his opinion, they ought not to be? We so far heartily concur with what we understand to be the main purpose of his timely note that we are sure that a good deal more attention ought to be paid to the vocal interpretation of literature than has ever yet been found possible. In fact, in view of the necessary school limitations, we are inclined to the opinion

that competent masters of this art ought to be specially employed for the purpose. These should be of the highest order of merit procurable, and should go from school to school at suitable intervals, to give instruction and training in articulation, enunciation, and voice-culture, such as it would be quite unreasonable to expect from the ordinary teacher. We have not now in mind the kind of thing sometimes called "elocution," which teaches the child to aim at a great variety of startling voice-effects, ranging up and down the scale all the way from a stage-whisper to a scream or shout, and accompanied with gesticulations and genuflections which are often wonderful to behold. What is needed is such natural modulations of voice and manner as are nature's best means of making clear the thoughts and the various shades of thought which are adapted to convey the meaning of the passage clearly and forcibly. What a boon would it be to society if the children could be trained under the direction of a teacher of true taste and culture at frequent intervals during the school course, to read aloud in a pleasing and impressive manner!

### THE REVISED REGULATIONS.

We have received, too late for full reproduction in this number, a copy of a circular which has just been sent out by the Minister of Education to Inspectors and High School Principals. As the information given is of importance to all members of the profession, we shall reprint it in full in next number of THE JOURNAL. Meanwhile we must content ourselves with indicating a few of its chief points.

The revision of the "Regulations," which has been for some time occupying the attention of the Education Department, is now completed. The Regulations, as revised, will be bound with the consolidated High and Public School Acts, which are intended to remain without material change for five years. As soon as the book is ready, a bound copy will be forwarded to each Board of Trustees. This

will, no doubt, in the hands of the chairman or secretary of the board, be made accessible to teachers, so that every teacher may have an opportunity to acquaint himself with it.

Teachers and students will note, as has, indeed, been already intimated in our columns, that no changes have been made that will disturb the organization or work of the schools. For the examinations of July, 1897, there will be no changes in the subjects prescribed, or the mode of conducting the examinations. Changes which will come into operation after that date are explained in the circular, and may be studied when it appears in our next number, if not previously accessible. Pupils now preparing for the Public School Leaving Examinations of 1897, or pupils preparing for the Form I. examination for that year, need make no change in their purposes. For Primary standing in 1897 the examination of Form II. must be taken, also that of Form I., or the Public School Leaving Examination, unless the candidate has received a Form I. certificate, a Public School Leaving certificate, a Commercial certificate, a District certificate, or a Third-Class certificate.

We have sometimes been asked whether the Public School Leaving Examination was likely to be permanently maintained, or to be dropped after a time. It is evident from the intimations contained in the circular that this examination is not only to be continued, but that certain provisions to come into force after the current year will materially increase its relative importance. For instance, District examinations are to be abolished and the Public School Leaving take their place. So, also, any Public School Leaving certificate which has heretofore been, or may hereafter be, awarded will have the same value as a certificate of having passed in Form I. The holder of a Public School Leaving certificate will not be required in 1897 to pass the examination of Form I. of the High School. After 1897 the Form I. examination will be abolished, and every candidate for Primary standing must hold a Public School Leaving certificate.