

powers to do this. But the frequent study of such passages would create the taste and develop the imaginative power. Such culture was especially desirable in our Common Schools. There we had the children of the toilers, whose after-life, destined to the drudgery of material labour, would be elevated and brightened by the enjoyment flowing from this culture. Correctness of utterance was doubtless the first object to be aimed at. But even in this respect our system was marked by lasting defects, and unintelligible, indistinct utterances pervaded alike the speech of private life, of the forum and of the pulpit. The cause and the remedy lay with the teacher. We drill our pupils to name the letters, and never teach them to practice the sounds. Here was the cause. Every difficult word is spelled—every correction made by spelling; while the defect was all the while in the sound; and there should be the remedy. Let the vowels and the consonants be sounded on the philosophical method proposed by Dr. Rush. Mr. Lewis then referred to outlines of that system written on a black-board, and gave vocal illustrations on it. Correct utterance required correct vocalization and finished articulation; and although it was customary to laugh at the Englishman for neglecting his "h's," Americans and Canadians were guilty of a far greater abuse of vowels and consonants. Every mis-pronounced word should be corrected by sounding the elementary sounds, and teachers would find it an excellent practice, securing great distinctness and carefulness to make the pupil sound the elements and syllables of words backwards. But all this finish of utterance would be lifeless sound without the music of intonation. In childhood, the voice was read by its intonation, proclaiming in its modulations every thought and feeling; but the teachings of the school, and the examples of instructors of every kind perverted the gifts of nature. Let the first exercises in reading be associated with some of the practice of the music master. Let the pupil be practised in vowels' sounds by a system of musical notation, regard being paid to the swell of the voice and to full purity of tones, while constant attention should be paid to the culture of the ear in distinguished pitch and force of voice. In addition to this practice, whispering practice in utterance would not only be found valuable in securing distinctness, but in giving strength to the vocal organs. Probably one of the most important elements of good reading, the power of inflexion. No reading or speaking could be expressive without it. In childhood it was admirably developed; but here again, the dull drone of the school-room, and the monotones of home, and public reading, destroyed or perverted the natural tone to such a degree, that very few educated persons could tell when they used a rising or a falling inflexion in their speech. The method of practice, to preserve or recover the natural flexibility of the voice, was to run through the gamut by concrete or unbroken sounds, taking first the vowels and syllables and words for the exercise. The practice should vary from ditones to the full octave, and the pupil trained to distinguish between ditones, thirds, fifths, and octaves. Above all expel from the school the wretched monotones and sing-song with what we hear with utter disgust of scholar and visitor—the drone of the first lessons, which once established, disfigured all the reading of the future life. Mr. Lewis then gave some of the principles of intellectual reading, especially for guidance in the use of emphasis, inflexion, and rhetorical pauses. All these conditions of good reading being secured, the study and thorough understanding of what was read became necessary. It was not enough to explain the immediate passage to be read. The intelligent teacher would make himself familiar with the sources whence these selections were made, and those who drank deep enough from the hallowed fountain would find in the study a rich reward. Let none think the objects too high for the Common School. What he urged was the culture of the noble mother tongue—the language of home, of labour, of the Senate, and the house of God. To use it well in utterance, was to do it the best service. Public reading had a new field of usefulness before it. It was to be made the interpreter of a literature scarcely yet known to the common people. With the teacher lay the making of the future orator and reader. Not in learned theological halls, but in common schools was the improvement to commence and be advanced to sure success. They knew not what high office they were preparing their pupils to fill; for here, as elsewhere, men have, unawares, entertained angels. This improvement was necessary to the pupil, and would exalt the solemn ministrations of religion; while, in supplying the private circle and public hall with the intelligent and delightful enjoyment of good reading, we should lessen the dangerous attractions of dramatic entertainments, and strengthen the task of the people in the direction of virtue and refinement. Dr. Nelles congratulated the meeting on having had the opportunity of listening to so admirable an address. Mr. Dixon, stated that the New York Association had sent one of their members as a deputation—Mr. Barker—last year President of the New York State Convention. The President introduced Mr. Barker who, after a few general re-

marks, said, he agreed with the principles laid down by the essayist. In their schools in New York the reading was in general miserable; they could cipher and construe, but they could not read. Three things were the essentials of good reading: a cultivated voice, a cultivated intellect, and a cultivated soul; with these any man would be a good reader. Mr. Barker then gave a sample of how he read, and he usually read, he said, just as he talked. The pieces were, "Ordering a Picture," and "Denis Green on his Flying Machine." Mr. McCabe, L.L.B., moved thanks to Mr. Barker for his address, which was heartily adopted. Mr. McCallum thought that neither Mr. Lewis nor Mr. Barker had gone to the root of the matter. They had shown what good reading was, but they had not shown how the process was to be arrived at in school. He thought the evil was a domestic one, and the cause of so much bad reading was the teaching and impressions the child received from its mother. The remedy, therefore, could only be arrived at by educating the mothers. He deprecated the idea of too much time and labour being devoted to any one subject. Good elocution was good; but good intelligence was better. And he thought a thorough appreciation of the meanings of words was peculiarly important. He suggested that the paraphrasing system was a very valuable one. Mr. Dixon thought the reason for so much bad reading amongst children was bad teaching on the part of the teacher. He did not agree with the essayist that music and reading were so closely connected as the essay indicated. Relative to what had been said about the importance of English literature, too much had been said about it. It had not the position the essay gave; for German literature was highest; French stood next, and English literature was only third. The best reading he had ever heard was in Oswego Normal School, where not the analytical, but the imitatory system was carried on. Mr. Tamblin urged that the monotone, so characteristic of school readings, was not acquired at home, but in the school. That was undoubted, and he should like to have any one illustrate how it was to be avoided. He did not see how children could be made to comprehend these abstruse systems, and how the interest, so frequently referred to, could be originated amongst children, and that interest maintained and kept in a class, say of twenty or thirty pupils. He thought sufficient time was not given in the Grammar Schools to the teaching of reading. Mr. Treadgold thought the intellectual system should be adopted, and every word should be thoroughly explained to the child before he reads it, and then he would read both intelligently and with interest. He thought the alphabet should be mastered by every child before coming to school. Teaching the alphabet was a purely mechanical operation, and no man by any possibility could make it a philosophical one. Mr. Alexander did not see, with the time their children had to attend school, how so much time could be devoted to reading as had been indicated by some of the members. Mr. Brine, who said the question resolved itself into three questions—When, where, and how. As to the last, he argued for a more general introduction of singing into schools, as a help to producing good reading; and held imitation to be the most efficacious means by which readers will attain to be good readers. It had been said by one member of the Convention that there was no philosophy in teaching the alphabet. True, there were some teachers who did not apply much philosophy either to teaching the alphabet philosophically, or anything else; but still teaching the alphabet might be made, and ought to be made, a philosophical process. And if we had a little more philosophy among us, we would have better readers and better scholars all over. Mr. Miller also advocated a greater attention to the musical education of the children of Ontario. Another good help was to devote an afternoon once a week to special readings and declamation, the pieces being selected by the children, according to their peculiar tastes. He thought, likewise, that public exhibitions, if properly conducted, might be made a powerful means to develop the faculty of reading. Mr. Dingman observed that timidity was a great impediment to good reading among children. Mr. McGann thought the lack of the study of physical science lay at the bottom of the evil. Mr. Scarlett held, that, if a child was allowed to leave the first and second books without having imbibed the principles of good reading, the evil would never be remedied. He also held that imitation should be extensively employed. The teacher should be a good reader himself, and hold up to his pupils a high model. Then when one child excelled another, he should be put forth as something for the rest to imitate, and thus the emulative principle would be developed, and much good would be accomplished. Mr. Watson referred to the objection raised by some against exhibitions, believing that they attracted the children away from their other studies. Mr. Lewis, in reply, did not think the last objection valid. For the evil referred to arose from the fact that the training in these cases did not begin till a week or two before the examination or exhibition. But if they carried the system out as a system, that would be obviated. He had been taxed with introducing too many subjects in