

Physical Culture.

The object of gymnastic exercises in connection with the study of elocution, is to develop the various parts of the body so that it becomes a perfect instrument by means of which the thoughts and feelings of the speaker are conveyed rapidly and with subtle power to the audience he addresses. But their value as an educational resource does not end here. All physical culture tends to develop muscular and nerve strength; the body is systematically developed and good health promoted. A course of training which can secure these ends would in itself be valuable, but where, as in elocution, the feelings and thoughts of the speaker have to depend for expression upon a thorough control of the voice, and also, to a large extent, on the movements of the body, the value of the physical exercises, by which these in great measure are secured, becomes doubly important. The end sought by physical training is the acquisition of a graceful and dignified deportment, an easy grace of manner by which all appearance of self-consciousness is avoided, and the attainment generally of the ability to express by gesture and attitude, the thoughts which are impressed upon the mind. To all readers and speakers such a course of physical training is invaluable. The course is divided into three parts.

FIRST—SWEDISH GYMNASTICS.

Having for their object, strength, dignity of carriage and grace of bearing. This system is now universally acknowledged to be the best, one of its features being light calisthenics and a graduated scale of exercises, becoming more taxing and difficult, only as the strength of the pupil increases.

SECOND—DELSARTE ÆSTHETIC GYMNASTICS.

Having for their object the removal of all stiffness and awkwardness of gesture and attitude, and preparing the body for the performance of its true office, the manifestation of soul. This feature of the work receives special attention, and as far as possible the endeavor is to conform to the principles of the great master. It is well to bear in mind, however, that Delsarte left no complete work behind him, all that was left being innumerable isolated notes discovered after his death. These notes have been collected and published by various pupils of Delsarte, who, by the way, often differ so widely in their interpretation as to be positively antagonistic. It is therefore plain that such a term as the "Delsarte Method of