

PREFACE.

The object of this work is to supply the schools of the Province with a course of systematic training in the culture of the speaking voice, and instruction in correct and expressive reading. The first sections of the book embrace all exercises that tend to develop and improve the vocal organization, and to improve the ear. The voice and the ear are the important agents in the music of speech; and as the voice of youth is flexible, and in the best condition for direction and culture, and the ear is quick to appreciate all the variations of tone which give expression to speech, a system of culture founded upon scientific principles cannot fail to be beneficial, and to give to our system of teaching to read some of the qualities of a true art.

These exercises as a species of vocal gymnastics are also of the first importance, as they bring into vigorous and healthy action the muscles around the chest, and those important organs, the heart, the lungs, the throat, and all the agents which combine to produce voice.

The exercises upon the vowels and consonants which are associated with the vocal exercises are founded upon the true phonetics of the language. Pronunciation is subject to all the influences of bad examples and provincial corruptions. If speech is to be correct and refined, and the true sounds of a language preserved and established, the teacher must be guided both by the approved sounds of the letters, independent of local customs, and by the action and position of the organs used to utter sounds. This method places pronunciation on a scientific basis, and protects it against the attacks and corruptions of

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