

clause is emphatic for the same reason, as the song in the Pilgrim's Progress

"He that is down need fear no fall,
He that is low no shame."

Bell adds that emphasis is one of the few points in which all good readers agree: one has to be sure, however, that he is a good reader.

Two papers in the Educational Circulars before referred to are from the pen of this writer, and are most valuable for teachers. Another by Legouvé, of the French Academy, is a delicious literary morsel—often egotistic, sometimes hyperbolic, but always dramatic, lively, and brilliant—after the manner of the Gallic mind. He dwells on the preponderating importance of the middle register of the voice, while conceding the advisability of cultivating also by careful practice the upper and lower registers, on the benefit of managing the breath so as never to be left without a certain store of it, and shows how one's position in reading affects this; asserts that a clear articulation may go far to atone for other vocal defects, lays down the sound maxim in questions of pronunciation that the rule is, to be always understood but never remarked, and illustrates at great length the phrasing pauses before referred to. He acknowledges that one should read as he speaks—but on condition that he speak well—whereas almost every one talks very ill. To speak in the sense used by Shakespeare in the famous advice "Speak the piece, I pray you," etc., needs an accomplished reader indeed. And even then the task is sometimes next to impossible. The reader may be excused for being at fault in places such as that instanced in this very paper of Corneille, who, on one occasion, could not explain one of his own lines, or in the kindred case of Campbell, who could write a ringing popular ode if any one could. "Tom," said one of his literary chums, "what did you mean by these lines?

"But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene."

"I'm sure I don't know now," said the poet.

Legouvé places the highest value on reading aloud, asserting that a skilful reader is a skilful critic, and that a good reading of a passage is a sort of translation of it. Blamishes that the eye may miss are brought to light by the detective power of the sensitive ear, and the revealing power of the sympathetic voice. The whole article is an intellectual treat.

Permit me another short digression. There is more connection between reading and music than most persons imagine. In commencing music you are taught to notice three things about a note, namely, its length—indicated by its shape, its pitch, marked by its position on the staff; and the sentiment, indicated by the marks of expression, *piano*, *crescendo*, *sforzando*, etc. Now these are the very things to be noted in reading. The range is narrower in speech than in song, it is true, though not so much as many fancy. We think an octave a great interval in melody, but an equal interval may easily occur in animated dialogue, only it is reached by a slide. Take, for instance, the answer of Brutus to Cassius in the well known quarrel scene. Cassius exclaims, "O gods, ye gods must I endure all this," and Brutus answers, "All this, yea more. Fret till your proud heart breaks," where we have a slide of a full octave on one short monosyllable.

Above all a feeling of sympathy with the writer must be arrived at. If this is wanting, really good reading is impossible. Slovenliness, affectation, monotony, and indifference vanish before sympathy, when the reader is absorbed in his

subject, his voice taking on the thrill which communicates itself to the nerves of the listeners, till reader and hearers are beguiled out of themselves. Every one has now and then, alas! only now and then, heard such reading, and felt its witching charm. Some are so constituted that they cannot attain to this. Such persons can never become really fine readers. Apropos of this, it is said that the great Siddons was once drilling a young actress in the part of a deserted lover. The rendering did not please the queen of tragedy, and she said, "Think how you would feel under the circumstances. What would you do if your lover were to run off and leave you?" "I would look out for another," said the philosophic young lady. "Leave me!" said Mrs. Siddons, with a gesture of intense disgust and would never give her another lesson. You see that the damsel was in the position of a would-be artist who was color blind, or an aspirant to the opera who had what is called no ear. Some wisacres think that any one can be taught anything, if the teacher be only competent, but we teachers, by sad experience know better. It is to be hoped, however, that not many parents are quite so obtuse as a patron of a boarding school, who, when told by the mistress, driven to bay, "I am afraid that your daughter has not capacity," promptly answered, "Then, I wish, Mrs. Blank, that you would import her one."

A word on our text books here. I cannot agree with the complaints uttered against them at the late meeting of the Provincial Institute. When we call to mind those very Saharas of dryness, Town's Readers, Murray's English Reader *et les genres*, where one might hunt in vain from cover to cover for a drop of mental refreshment or invigoration, and then turn to ours, we may thank God that our scholars live and learn now, and not a generation ago. The Fourth and Fifth Readers to my mind are perfect gems. If only a few lessons, say half a dozen, were taken out, with some of the miscellaneous matter belonging more strictly to the province of a spell-book, could be made for lessons of more local interest, provided it were from pens of classic excellence. Perhaps more than this could be done in the case of the Sixth Reader, in which some selections are hardly so happy as in the others mentioned. The Nova Scotia edition has supplementary lessons at the end, and we also, if judged desirable, could have them, but I doubt if the series would be much improved thereby, and my doubt is strengthened by the character of these very supplements, as well as by a careful examination of some newer series, as the Maritime Readers, and other recent rivals. The fact is, that a teacher gets attached to a text book he has long used, as to an old pair of slippers or an old house, ideas cluster round it, till there is scarce a page unassociated with some happy hit, and at last he hates to change it. A newer one might be better in the abstract, but not better for him. In this connection I will venture the suggestion that if our prescribed British History is to be made the best of, it should be used as a supplementary reader, for it is of high literary style, requiring careful attention to make it properly understood and appreciated by young people. And parts of the reader which elucidate it should be read in connection with it.

It can hardly be necessary at this time of day to suggest to trained and experienced teachers how to use these books. To do so would be to drop into trite commonplace. The home preparation and school drill, the simultaneous exercising of the children's voices in imitation of, or in concert with their instructor, beguiling the diligent out of their timidity at the