

effort to reach the last. Reading aloud is a salutary check on the habit of reading too much and reading too fast.

It would certainly be worth while to take up the practice in families, when the conditions favor it, as an experiment. The fall and winter evenings are long, and as one looks back over those long evenings of past years he can find many hours wasted that could have been profitably devoted to reading or to listening. Reading aloud is a quiet enjoyment, to be sure, but it is an enjoyment.



### Punctuation.

**P**UNCTUATION often leads to the detection of grammatical and of rhetorical errors, and, for this reason, if for no other, should not be neglected. The object of punctuation is to show the relationship of words and of clauses, and to make their meaning to be understood clearly. The notion that punctuation points are employed for the purposes of elocution is an entirely erroneous one. The primal object of the points is to make the grammatical divisions. Unless this object is kept in view and is acted upon, grave errors are liable to ensue; and not only will the principles of elocution be violated constantly, but the meanings of the sentences used will be frequently lost or misunderstood. Remember that punctuation is entirely independent of elocution, and act upon the remem-

brance. Teach your pupils to properly punctuate all their written work.

There are many cases in which a change of points completely alters the sentiment. In proof of this, the story is told of an English statesman that freed himself from an embarrassing position by taking advantage of this fact. Having charged an officer of the government with dishonesty the statesman was required, by Parliament, under a heavy penalty, publicly to retract the accusation in the House of Commons. At the appointed time, he appeared with a written recantation which he read aloud as follows. "I said he was dishonest, it is true; and I am sorry for it." This was satisfactory; but what was the surprise of Parliament, the following day, to see the recantation printed in the papers thus: "I said he was dishonest; it is true, and I am sorry for it."

By a single transposition of the comma and the semi-colon, the ingenious slanderer represented himself to the county not only as not having made any recantation, but even as having repeated the charge in the very teeth of Parliament.



### Spelling.

**T**EACHERS would do well by giving their pupils frequent exercises in both oral and written spelling. The importance of the subject need not be urged; it may be