

Elocution and Dramatic Action.

The Art and Science of Elocution—for, in point of fact, it is both an art and a science—is as old as civilization, and the interest of the human race therein has advanced steadily with the progress and culture of man.

The art is so fit and flexible a vehicle, alike for teaching and amusement, that it can never be driven from its place, in spite of occasional perversions. In Elocution, as in all art, without thoroughly conscientious work there can be no excellence. That correct methods of reading and speaking will come naturally is a mistaken idea, as is also the belief, far too current among intelligent people, that only “geniuses” ever attain to excellence therein. Given a knowledge of the principles of the art, together with systematic and continued training, any intelligent student of elocution may attempt its mastery with entire confidence. With the advantages now offered to this end, great encouragement is afforded to students in this important branch of education.

The Conservatory course of study is also especially designed to give students such a thorough knowledge of the principles of Elocution and such practice in the application of the same as to make them natural, refined and effective readers. The demand for elocutionists of merit is urgent. Public audiences have ceased to be satisfied with readers who, though possessing natural talents in expression, are untrained in voice, stiff in posture, ungraceful in gesture, and imperfect in articulation.

Elocution holds an important relation to singing, the modes of expression being in many things similar. Articulation and enunciation must be perfectly acquired before success can be attained in either branch. In fact, many of the exercises that develop the qualities necessary to artistic reading are equally beneficial to the student of Singing. In the higher grades of expression, Dramatic and *Æsthetic*, the divergence is even less.

An elocutionist of the first order need not necessarily be a musician; but a singer, when possessed of the qualities that go to perfect a reader, is infinitely more effective in climaxes, both in sentiment and stress.

A course of instruction in Elocution, according to individual requirements, will be obligatory upon students of the Conservatory taking a professional course in Singing.

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