

just as he has learned to speak good English, by imitating good models. The teacher's task will be an easier one when the general culture of the community improves; but the school-master will always need to be abroad. Even in matters of articulation, we shall never reach our ideal, so far, at least, as most of mankind are concerned. If oral reading had no other claim to an important place in our school programme, it has this one, that, if properly taught, it will, in time, go far to cure many of the defects of our provincial speech.

Some excellent teachers with whom I have discussed this subject are inclined to attribute bad articulation to the very common habit of fast reading. It so happens, however, that the defect exists even when the pupil reads slowly. Fast reading, of course, intensifies it, and the first step in the remedial process is to secure the proper rate of reading. In senior classes, indeed, in which the habit of fast reading has become indurated, the slowness of the rate of reading might well be exaggerated at first.

I have not the direct knowledge that would enable me to say at what stage in the education of the public school pupil the subject of articulation is most neglected—if, indeed, there is any stage in particular. From appearances I should say that, considering its importance and the difficulties which beset it, the subject receives proper attention in few localities of the province; for few entrance classes give evidence that they have had their attention specially directed to their articulation.

While the first stages in learning to read are the most important, the pupil's vocal organs should be carefully trained at every stage. Owing to his surroundings and our linguistic tendencies, the danger of a relapse in the case of a convalescent is so great that the best teachers I have seen give unremitting attention to articulation. Distinct utterance of the proper sounds is regarded as the first essential in every reading lesson; and each lesson is often—generally, indeed—introduced with special exercises in vocal gymnastics, having, in some of the details, at least, a direct bearing on the reading lesson to follow.

I desire to emphasize the importance of this subject; for I regard bad articulation, associated, as it always is, with ignorance of the true sounds of our language, as the prime defect of the reading in all our schools.