

THE  
HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH WORD-BOOK

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I.—ORTHOEPY.

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1. ORTHOEPY, literally, "right speaking," depends mainly upon correctness in articulation, or the uttering of the sounds that make up words, and in accent, or the laying special stress upon a particular syllable.

I.—SOUNDS AND LETTERS.

2. To practise articulation intelligently, we should know something of the means by which speech is produced. We all know that the lungs act much like a pair of bellows, forcing the breath up through the wind-pipe. Now at the upper end of the wind-pipe is a kind of box, the larynx, commonly called "Adam's apple," which contains two cavities. These are separated by a pair of membranes, which in speaking can be tightened so as to leave only a narrow slit between them. When this happens, the breath as it passes up sets these membranes, the vocal chords, as they are called, vibrating like the strings of a harp, being itself made sonorous, and, if the tightening lasts long enough, distinctly musical. The breath thus made sonorous is called "voice."

3. After leaving the larynx, the breath (or the voice) passes through the pharynx, a continuation upwards of the œsophagus, or gullet, behind the mouth and the nose. The pharynx is swelled out by the breath, when checked for a moment, and gives force to the bursting forth of the breath that follows, producing the sound.

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T is vibration the pupil can feel by putting his finger on his "Adam's apple" while sounding vowels or b, g, d, z, and other voiced consonants, whereas it is not felt in sounds g p, t, s, etc.