

**The Art of Reading.**

In one of his speeches the great Macready said "that it would not be out of place if he made some reference to the art by which they endeavored to convey to their hearers not only the words, but the inner feelings of the heart. It might appear to some that he set too high an estimate in dignifying that as an art in which no one confessed a deficiency. Every one could read; but he asked, could every one listen to their reading. For his own part, one of the greatest of intellectual luxuries, was to listen to the powerful reading of the eloquent utterances of their great writers. Let him put in a word for reading as an accomplishment which required as much time and practice for its acquirement as the music of their first composers." From this high authority we are enabled to determine the position which elocution holds among the other professions and accomplishments. Ranking equal with music in point of time necessary for acquirement, and in artistic merit; and the profession is dignity and importance.

The art of reading may be understood as that system of rules which teaches us to pronounce written composition with justness, energy, variety and ease. Agreeably to this definition, reading may be considered as that species of delivery which not only expresses the sense of the author, so as barely to be understood, but which, at the same time, gives it all the force, beauty and variety of which it is susceptible. Not a mere mechanical rendering, but in every word there should dwell a living spirit.

In many of our present readers we find a false tendency. Educated it may be in the theory, their hearts are not taught to act, nor are their imaginations developed to the full requirements of the art. They utter mechanically the words before them, with a possible pleasing effect upon those who are capable of judging the true merits of the rendering, but with an ordinary critic it must be considered the simple jangle of a machine. We can pay no greater compliment to such readers than that their popularity will never extend beyond a certain point, which is the limit of their circle of friends.

In elocution we find a grand and noble study; one which develops our higher and better nature, and sheds its influence through body and soul. The young man who studies elocution at the same time studies nature, and obtains a grand insight into its many mysteries. To some it might seem long and tedious, but to the poetic nature it is pleasing and profitable, and to all it much more than compensates for the time and labor expended in its acquirement.

In social life we find both its origin and perfection, inasmuch as conversation may be regarded as the foundation of our speech. It is the germ whence must issue all the powers of expression within the possibility of our nature. We come in contact with our friends in voice and manner. It is here our thoughts and feelings come into service. We render ourselves agreeable to our friends largely as our voice and manner are pleasing and attractive. Our influence and usefulness in any social relation must then depend upon the culture of these qualities.

Let me add a word to its importance as an accomplishment. We find many who study the art of music as an accomplishment; but how many do we find who study the art of reading for the same purpose? In the home circle, in the social group, and even on the platform its power and influence are enduring. We never tire of listening and enjoying its pleasing effect, and are many times surprised at the intensity of expression to which the voice and heart can be cultivated. We have noticed that in the social circle, readings are sought and valued as highly as the renderings of the best musicians.—[Homestead.

**Farm Life.**

It is a common complaint that the farm and farm life are not appreciated by our people. We long for the more elegant pursuits, or the ways and fashions of the town. But the farmer has the most sane and natural occupation, and ought to find life sweeter, if less highly seasoned, than any other. He alone, strictly speaking, has a home. How can a man take root and thrive without land? He writes his history upon his field. How many ties, how many resources he has; his friendships with his cattle, his team, his dog, his trees; the satisfaction in his growing crops, in his improved fields;

his intimacy with Nature, with bird and beast, and with the quickening elemental forces; his co-operations with the cloud, the sun, the seasons, heat, wind, rain, frost. Nothing will take the various social distempers which the city and artificial life breed, out of a man like farming, like direct and loving contact with the soil. It draws out the poison. It humbles him, teaches him patience and reverence, and restores the proper tone to his system.

Cling to the farm, make much of it, put yourself into it, bestow your heart and your brain upon it, so that it shall savor of you and radiate your virtue after your day's work is done.—Scribner.

**A Healthful Practice.**

Loosen the clothing, and standing erect, throw the shoulders well back, the hands behind and the breast forward. In this position draw slowly as deep an inspiration as possible, and retain it by an increased effort for a few seconds; then breathe it gradually forth. After a few natural breaths, repeat the long inspiration. Let this be done for ten or fifteen minutes every day, and in six weeks' time a very perceptible increase in the diameter of the chest and its prominence will be evident.



**Chrysanthemum Coronarium "Flore Pleno."**

The Chrysanthemum is one of the prettiest late autumn and early winter flowers grown. In November and December there is nothing that will make such a cheerful display. They are mostly all of fall growth, and should therefore be well thinned out in the beds in order to have them look well. The best way is to get young plants in the spring and sink the pots into the soil up to the rim. Take them into the house in October or November, and you will have a fine display of bloom for two or three months. There are different classes of Chrysanthemums, white, different tints, and yellow, and different shades of red, and in order to get good double flowers the best of seed should be procured and sown in a fine loamy soil, and when a few inches high transplant in such a way as will suit your own taste either in pots or in the open ground; the best way is in pots. The plant being quite hardy, can be grown without any difficulty.

This interesting flower has not received half the attention in this country that it deserves.

FRUITS are of different degrees of digestibility. Those of a hard texture, as some kinds of apples, melons, apricots, several sorts of fleshy plums, and all immature fruits, are difficult of digestion. But strawberries, raspberries, currants, gooseberries, cherries, peaches, nectarines, bananas, melting pears, mulberries, figs, grapes, melons and apples, when fully ripe, are most easily dissolved in the stomach. Yet there is nothing that equals good ripe apples—they take the place of food, and produce brain and muscle. All ripe fruit moderately eaten is wholesome, particularly as correcting the grossness of animal food; but an excess of it may be productive of numerous diseases, and nettle-rash on children is often thus occasioned. So you see there is nothing so good but that we may have too much of it, notwithstanding the saying: "You cannot have too much of a good thing."

**How We Came to Travel.**

I was sitting on the deck of a Savannah steamship, which was lying at a dock in the East River, New York. I was waiting for young Rectus, and had already waited some time, which surprised me, because Rectus was, as a general thing, a very prompt fellow, who seldom kept people waiting. But it was, probably, impossible for him to regulate his own movements this time, for his father and mother were coming with him to see him off.

I had no one there to see me off, but I did not care for that. I was sixteen years old, and felt quite like a man; whereas Rectus was only fourteen, and couldn't possibly feel like a man—unless his looks very much belied his feelings. My father and mother and sister lived in a small town, some thirty miles from New York, and that was a very good reason for their not coming to the city just to see me sail away in a steamship. They took a good leave of me, though, before I left home.

Rectus's father and mother lived in New York. Samuel Colbert was his real name, and the title of Rectus he obtained at school by being so good. He scarcely ever did anything wrong, which was rather surprising to the rest of us, because he was not sickly or anything of the kind. After a while we got into the way of calling him Rectus, and as he didn't seem to mind it, the name stuck to him. The boys generally liked him, and he got on quite well in the school,—in every way except in his studies. He was not a smart boy, and did not pretend to be.

I went right through the academy from the lowest to the highest class, and when I left the professor, as we called our principal, said that I was ready to go to college, and urged me very much to do so. But I was not in any hurry, and my parents agreed with me that after four years of school-life, I had better wait a while before beginning a new course.

I thought over things a good deal for myself, and a few months after I left the academy I made up my mind to travel a little.

I had some money of my own, which I thought I would rather spend in travel than in any other way, and as it was not a large sum, and as my father could not afford to add anything to it, my journey could not be very extensive. Indeed, I only contemplated going to Florida and perhaps a few other Southern States, and then, if it could be done, a visit to some of the West India islands, and as it was winter-time, that would be a very good trip.

Soon after the matter was all planned and settled father had to go to New York, and there he saw Mr. Colbert, and of course told him of my plans. That afternoon old Colbert came to my father's hotel and proposed to him that I should take his son with me. He had always heard, he said, that I was a sensible fellow, and fit to be trusted, and he would be very glad to have his boy travel with me. And he furthermore said that if I had the care of Samuel—for of course he did not call his son Rectus—he would pay me a salary. He had evidently read about young English fellows traveling on the continent with their tutors, and I suppose he wanted me to be his son's tutor or something like it.

When father told me what Mr. Colbert had proposed, I agreed instantly. I liked Rectus, and the salary would help immensely. I wrote to New York that very night accepting the proposition.

When my friends in the town and those at the school heard that Rectus and I were going off together they thought it an uncommonly good joke, and they crowded up to our house to see me about it.

"Two such good young men as you and Rectus traveling together ought to have a beneficial influence upon the whole community," said Harry Alden; and Scott remarked "that if there should be a bad storm at sea he would advise us two to throw everybody else overboard to the whales, for the other people would be sure to be the wicked ones." I am happy to say that I got a twist on Scott's ear that made him howl, and then mother came in and invited them all to take supper with me the Tuesday before I started.—St. Nicholas, for November.

Little Boy—"Mamma, what relation is auntie's new baby to me?" Mamma—"Your first cousin, dear." Little Boy—"Well, ma, who is my last cousin?" (Ma collapses.)

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