

rectly, it has been with a view to such reading that the Council of Public Instruction in this Province has sanctioned the introduction of those excellent selections of oratorical and poetical readings contained in the new book of lessons now used in our public schools. The terror that fills the soul of Belshazzar, when he beholds the fiery writing on the wall, and the sublime courage of the prophet of God when, with inspired tongue, he interprets the dread mystery; the insatiable hatred of Shylock, thirsting for the blood of Antonio, in the famous trial scene, and the heavenly grace of Portia as she enforces the attributes of mercy; the Defence of the Bridge by "the dauntless three;" Clarence depicting the awful dream that "filled the time with dismal terror"; or Mark Antony with masterly power and consummate skill turning the tide of popular fury against the murderers of Cæsar—these and other selections of equal beauty and dramatic force must be read with dramatic effect, if you would delight and cultivate the imaginative faculty in your pupils, and realize to them the truth and beauty of these creations of human genius. For this analysis of dramatic character and poetic thought, so necessary to expressive reading, cannot fail to develop a taste for the higher productions of literature, a quicker apprehension of their import, and a deeper sympathy for all that is good, and noble, and lovely in life. Especially in our common schools where, if not the highest learning is to be acquired, assuredly the highest moral good is to be accomplished, is this culture demanded. There do we have the children of the toilers whose after life will be probably spent in the drudgery and dull routine of material labour. To them the creations of poetry and fiction will bring solace and hope and strength; while their delivery with dramatic effect by the gifted readers will afford such elevated entertainment in the public hall or the domestic circle as will counteract the dangerous fascinations of the theatre and the music saloon.

The reform in our teaching must commence with our first reading lessons. The first exercises in this department are purely mechanical, and aim at securing that sonorous vocalization and distinct and finished articulation which, in a multitude of other words, would allow every single word to be instantly understood. We now begin our first reading lesson by teaching our pupils to *name* the letters of the alphabet, and when this weary task, the first painful ordeal of school experience has been accomplished, we still cling to the same method to the end of the chapter. Every mis-pronounced or difficult word must be spelled by naming each letter. I have no intention to put myself in antagonism with orthodox systems. I only suggest improvement with existing materials. Cotemporary then, with these first exercises, let the teacher practice the scholar in the various *sounds* which these letters assume in the combination of words. The arrangement of the grammarians must, in such exercises, be superseded by a more philosophical system, and I know of none better for the end in view than that suggested by Dr. Rush in his eloquent and exhaustive treatise on the "Philosophy of the Human Voice," (see table.) These sounds must be uttered, with the person erect, the lungs regularly inflated—the pupil taking a full breath between the utterance of each sound, a habit