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BAD ARTICULATION.

BY JOHN LEATH.

It shows itself in various ways, some of which I will illustrate, thus : *wus* for *was*, *fur* for *for*, *git* for *get*, *runnin'* for *running*, *'n* or *un* for *and* (not once in a hundred times is *and* fully pronounced); *las' steps* for *last steps*, *mus' go* for *must go*, *winda* for *window*, *thish year* for *this year*, *azh usual* for *as usual*, *las' chear* for *last year*, *unaty* for *unity*, *opporchunty* for *opportunity*, *juty* for *duty*, *Henery* for *Henry*, *Febuary* for *February*, *figger* for *figure*, *visable* for *visible*, *spur't* for *spirit*, *bar'n* for *baron*, *pote* and *pome* for *poet* and *poem*.

Now, what is the cause of this bad articulation, which is almost universal and is one of the worst defects in reading?

It is, in the first instance, a *national*, not merely a *provincial*, defect; and this increases the difficulty of the situation. Every uncultured Briton has the defect, and some cultured ones, too. The natural tendency in speaking is to draw back the tongue with its tip pointing in an upward direction, whilst there is a strong disinclination to push the lips out and use them in articulation. Another noticeable tendency in our speech, which contributes to bad articulation, is the increase of accent at the expense of the unaccented syllables. This I need not illustrate. The unaccented syllables are but indistinctly heard, or, as it has been facetiously put, they are swallowed. Having regard also