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ENGLISH IN THE SCHOOLS.*

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The nearness of an object often embarrasses the beholder and prevents him from forming a proper conception of it.

This difficulty is of a nature to be especially felt by one who would write or speak of his own language. He may be quick to detect the faults of others and yet at the same time unconsciously make mistakes of his own. The contact between himself and his subject is so close that it is not always practicable for the writer to give first place to the thing of first importance and keep other things at their proper distance in the back-ground. Moreover, in the active age in which we live, people are either in such haste to become rich or so intently bent upon riding particular hobbies that they do not stop to think upon such a commonplace thing as manner or style in speech as long as the speaker can make himself understood. Hence, we have become indulgent towards error and slovenliness of expression, and sometimes even seem to derive a sort of democratic gratification from playing fast and loose with all rules of grammar and notion of style. Formerly slang was associated in our minds with the locality of the prize-ring and

* A paper read before the Teachers' Convention held in Sherbrooke in October, 1895.