

READING ALOUD

To be able to read aloud well is a great accomplishment, though one which of late years has been undervalued. In the days when women spent a great deal doctrine of verbal inspiration. The docof time by the fire, and took great pleasure in needlework, reading, working, and tea filled a pleasant afternoon. Many mothers read systematically every day to shyness. Half the men who read the their children, and not a few men either Bible in church simply do not try to read listened or read aloud in the evening when well. However, it is easy to be overthey had nothing better to do. Some of the latter, though they were ready readers, were impatient listeners. They wanted the book interested them the more they longed to take it out of the reader's hands. They were occasionally persons of dramatic gift, and perhaps their critical faculty for the part of audience. Generally speak- whole congregation have Bibles and can scores of people remember now with why the Lessons should be "taken as peculiar vividness and pleasure the novels and poetry which their mothers read to them in their teens. They preserve a delightful recollection of Scott, Thackeray, Even this method cannot make the readthe Brontës, and Disraeli, even though take them down from the shelves. No Epistles. A good many young people not one, we would remark by the way of par-brought up to reverence the Bible as their enthesis, "preserves a recollection" of fathers did come home from church Miss Austen. We believe she is the only declaring those chapters are nonsense. said that no one ever read her with any appreciation and read her only once. Her lovers read her "at intervals" all their

But to go back to the art of reading voice. We have, however, known readers possessed no other qualification. The effect was monotonous, and even soporific. We should say that the two most difficult things to read really well are the newspaper and the Bible. The easiest thing to Christianity. If he wants to give the read is a course of fiction. Poetry is difficult. Philosophy and other studious stuff requires little besides intelligence and his success will depend very largely upon practice. In this case the listener wants voice inflection; but surely if it is his nothing but to know what is in the book, official business to open St. Paul's mind to and not to be irritated by stumbling or his hearers the trouble should not be too confused by obvious incomprehension.

To begin with the newspaper. "But who wants to hear it read?" demands some one. Alas! there are just now a published in it, and we gather it is far more wearisome to read with your fingers than to listen. A really good newspaperreader must read fast, read clearly, and know how to skip. He must not get angry and ruffled because he does not hearer likes. No intelligent listener, however, likes padding. An eye for padding, for reiteration, for safeguard sentences, and for dullness generally is better worth having than a good voice. This sort of gems. reading should never be in the least dramatic. The only object of the reader should be to make the listener forget that and with company demands its interpre, morning's news and not ignorant of "the How much value to give to the rhythm is policy of the paper." All this is not easily done. In fact, to read a newspaper well you need to have some education, a great interest in affairs, some self-control, much tolerance, no tendency to dawdle, and no unconquerable desire to argue.

It is strange that the reading of the Bible aloud in an acceptable manner should present-apparently-almost insuperable difficulties. It is written in the concerns subjects of universal and undying interest. It is endeared to every listener by tradition and recollection. But the evidence proves it hard to read well. Men specially interested in philosophy and religion, specially trained in Hebrew and Greek literature, specially anxious to bring the truths of Scripture home to his audience, read it for the most part abominably badly. We cannot insult them by supposing their weekly task an easy one. We cannot, on the other hand, deny that the Old and New Testaments offer extraordinary scope for fine reading. The task of the curate at the lectern is like the task of the executant before the piano. The one has great literature before him. the other great music. The audience waits for his interpretation. As a rule, with many marked exceptions, the curate runs through his work in such a mechanical and uninterested manner as would empty a concert-hall if imitated by his brother-artist. He reads heroic passages as though they were dull, meditative passages of the highest inspiration as though they were parish notices, arguments as cut-and-dried snippets of dogmatism, and shrewd proverbs as sacred matism, and shrewd proverbs as sacred ago I got the cords of my left wrist nearly poetry. How can he like to seem so indifferent to the Book whence his Creed that I had no use of my hand, and tried and his ritual have been digged? Of other Liniments, also doctors, and was receiving no benefit. By a persuasion course he would say that he was not in- from a friend I got MINARD'S LINIdifferent, that reverence for the sacred text as a whole forbids any effort to empletely cured me, and have been using MINARD'S LINIMENT in my family phasize the secular beauty of its parts.
The argument is not perhaps quite so first used it, and would never be without ISAAC E. MANN, mands an act of worship. All such acts tend in time to become mechanical and

perstitious. The Reformers thought to do away with such acts. They dreaded their degeneracy into mere hocus pocus. earch the Scriptures, they urged, and away with crosses and candles, prostrations and bells and beads. At first men put their whole hearts and souls into the reading of the Bible. Then they began to read it as a duty; then as a sort of ritual. They minced it up into texts. and administered it to themselves and others in convenient form. Such superstition was the inevitable result of the a custom, a custom endeared by laziness. ecclesiastical vanity, and self-conscious critical. Sacred droning may be very dull, but it remains true that great literature should not be read aloud like little to get on faster, they said, and the more literature. Some reverence for its greatness should appear, and a colloquial tone may well be very offensive to an audience bound to its seats. The way to avoid that, however, is surely not to determine to as well as their impatience unfitted them destroy the sense. It is true that the ing, however, women read the best, and read for themselves, but that is no reason read" and run through without the slightest apparent interest in order to give the people the rest of sitting down for a while. ing of the Gospel of none effect, but it they may confess that they never now makes nonsense of whole chapters of the great English writer of whom it might be It is a terrible pity, even from a literary point of view, that countenance should be given to such ignorance. Take, for instance, the early chapters of the First Epistle to the Romans. Carelessly read verse by verse, with pauses between the aloud. The first essential is a pleasant artificial divisions and no regard to the eager style and breathless parenthesis of who fancied their own reading, and who the Apostle, and we defy the listeners to make head or tail of them. If any one will read them out aloud to himself he will find an apology for natural religion of immense value to the preacher of modern whole sense to an audience, he will need to practise diligently, and remember . that

great. Light is often thrown upon obscure passages by reading them aloud. Modern critics seem to regard Browning as both good many men amongst us who want clearer and less great than did those of very much to hear it read. Braille is not the last generation. On the other handupon his obscurity, deprecated the extravagant praise of him, and refused to read him have now revised their judgement. They say that while they do not always understand, they are constantly agree with what is said. The very bits forced to admire. Let them cease huntwhich rouse him may be those which his ing for illusions and try reading aloud. They will find the delightful passages longer and the jarring and dark ones infinitely less than than they imagine as they glance down the page in search of

Poetry ought, we believe, to be read

aloud. Its orignal connexion with song he has not got the print before him, to tation by the voice. Again, no one wants avoid his instinctive comment of "Oh get to be quick over poetry. Those who like on!" and to leave him familiar with the it at all will listen to it with patience. of course the first question which the reader must put to himself. The present writer always listens with greatest pleasure to those who overemphasize rather than underestimate the rhyme. He knew, however, one most gifted reader who gave it no emphasis at all. He was a parson and a real lover of the poets, and, it is undeniable that he read well; but one of his readers at least was always disfinest English of the finest period. It tracted by the mental effort to preserve the music of the piece. The Victorians, led by Tennyson, went to the other extreme. Their poetry-reading became a sort of chant. The intensity of their enjoyment of the words before them was evident, and did sometimes perhaps communicate itself to their hearers. From a distance the sound was most peculiar; ndeed it was irresistibly comic. Those not accustomed to hear it wondered what on earth the sounds portended-whether they came from a man or an animal, and witnessed to pleasure or distress. A selfconscious generation is not likely to follow their example. All the same, we think, they erred upon the right lines. Poetry read to oneself may give full measure of pleasure to the really poetic. Some musical people find the greatest delight in reading a score. But the mass of the world wants to hear the sounds, not only mentally to interpet their indication-Lyrical poetry at least should be in some sense set to music, even if it be only the music of a good reading-voice.-The Spectator

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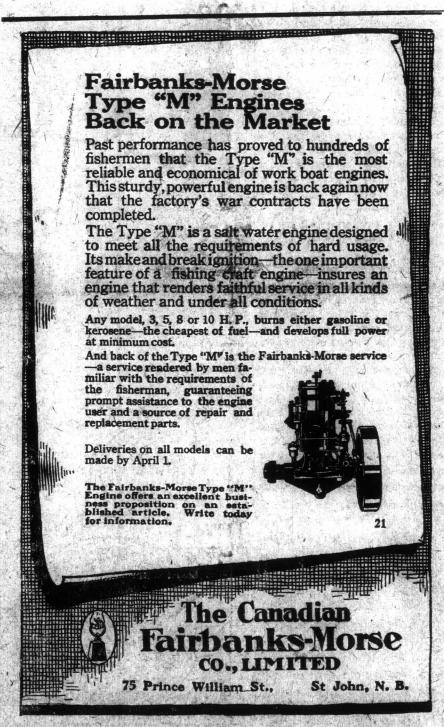
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July

5:12 7:57 11:44 0:02 5:49 6:10 28 Mon 5:12 7:56 0:08 12:32 6:39 6:58 5:13 7:56 0:50 1:18 7:27 7:45 30 Wed 5:14 7:55 1:37 2:03 8:13 8:31 31 Thur 5:15 7:54 2:25 2:49 8:58 9:16 for St. John direct, returning 2.30 same

5:17 7:52 3:14 3:37 9:42 10:02 2 Sat 5:18 7:50 4:04 4:27 10:27 10:50 The Tide Tables given above are for the Port of St. Andrews. For the following places the time of tides can be found

by applying the correction indicated, which is to be subtracted in each case: Grand Harbor, G. M., 18 min.

Seal Cove, Fish Head, Eastport, Me., L'Etang Harbor, 8 min. 10 min. 7 min. 13 min.

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Readers who appreciate this paper may give their friends the apportunity of seeing a copy. A specimen number of THE BEACON will be sent to any address in any part of the world on application to the Beacon Press Company, St. Andrews, N. B.

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