

CHAPTER I

"THAT's better, Mr. Pomfret. Try it again, taking a breath before each aspirate."

"The ah-horn of the ah-hunter is ah-heard on the ah-hill," repeated Mr. Pomfret, with vicious determination and an ill grace.

"Now faster, and without so much stress on the aspirates. We want to avoid emphasising our difficulty."

The ungracious pupil of Mr. Mowbray Gore, ex-actor and now Professor of Elocution and general consultant in all oral deficiencies, repeated the teasing line as bidden with fair success and the mere stumble of transferring the aspirate from "heard," where it ought to have been, to "on," where it was superfluous.

"Good!" the Professor commented encouragingly. "Now say, 'A heart that is humble might hope for it here.'"

Mr. Pomfret, millionaire and former proprietor of the world-renowned establishment known as Samuel Pomfret & Co., did so, coming heavily to grief over the less familiar aspirates.