

Principal Jonah, of Woodstock, had a good suggestion about a nature study club. Does anyone else want it? A lady, this week, told me how a toad shed his skin. Does anyone else know? She gave only the report of her own observation.

FOREIGN NAMES.

J. VROOM.

The war news brings us many unfamiliar names of places. Sometimes they are spelled correctly as we see them in print, and sometimes they are misprinted. Frequently this makes little difference, as we do not know the places, and so the names have but little meaning for us in their correct form. We may look at such a name in the newspaper without attempting to pronounce it, quite content if we can find it on the map; for it will then have served its purpose as a place name by pointing out to us the place mentioned. But we must pronounce some of them at times, and we would like to get them right. This brings up the whole question of the correct pronunciation of foreign geographical names.

Where there is an accepted English name for a place, differing in spelling and pronunciation from the true local name, we must, of course, use the English form; as Antwerp, not Anvers; Vienna, not Wien. Where the foreign spelling is preserved, but there is a well established English pronunciation, we should follow the English usage. Thus Rheims should be pronounced Reems, instead of trying to imitate the French pronunciation, which would sound something like an attempt to say Rems without closing the lips. Where there is no English form in general use, we may have to make our best effort to give the native pronunciation, as nearly as we can learn it; and must expect that to be far from correct unless we speak the language of the place.

Take for instance the name of that fortress in Austrian Poland which has been more or less threatened by the Russian advance for the last two months, and which we have come to know by sight as Przemysl. The p, we are told, should be pronounced even more strongly and clearly than it usually is in English; the rz sounds like sh, or perhaps it is more correct to say that the r is silent and the z sounds like sh; the e is the Polish modified e, which should be marked with a small vertical line above the letter, and which is described as like a prolonged sound of the English short e modified by the back part of the tongue being raised toward the hard palate; (and, by the way, if the vowel were not so modified the r would be sounded, in the Polish fashion, a sound produced in the back of the mouth by the vibration of the soft palate;) the m is sounded as in English; the y like our short i; the s like sh; and the l has a value not far from the English w or y. Perhaps pshem-ish with the accent on the first syllable, is near enough to the true pronunciation. If we add the sound of the letter l as we usually pronounce it, it will be incorrect. We might need a short course in vocal gymnastics to enable us to pronounce the name so that a resident of the place would recognize it.

The new Standard Dictionary says that the awe-inspiring phrase "correct pronunciation" has no other meaning than the pronunciation usual with educated speakers. If a word is not pronounced or is pronounced very rarely by speakers of English, there is no usage, no convention, hence no standard of correctness. Let it not be supposed that the native or local pronunciation affords an ideal standard. The ideal is really the phonetic form which the word is destined to take should it become completely Anglicized. It is impossible to learn exactly how the words of a foreign language are pronounced, except by studying the language long and carefully. This being so, there is little use of meticulous exactness in giving the native or local pronunciation of foreign words that have no real currency in English.

When we look up a word in our gazetteer, therefore, we may take the pronunciation given there as approximately correct; but we must remember that it does not pretend to be quite so, and that in many cases, if the right sounds could be expressed in type, our untrained vocal organs could not reproduce them. Let us try to be as near the right as possible; and, above all, where there is no accepted English pronunciation of a word, let us not try to invent one for ourselves.

HOW TO KEEP THE PICTURE SUPPLEMENTS.

Doubtless many teachers passe-partout the picture supplements which come with the EDUCATIONAL REVIEW, to adorn the walls of their school-rooms. I have lately learned a new way of finishing these pictures. It is new to me, and although I know that many teachers have done them in this way, as I have never seen directions in the REVIEW, I will share my knowledge.

First, choose a suitable picture, not too large, that would fit on an oval plaque (I find heads look best done this way) and trim the outline neatly with scissors. Next, get a platter, one having the centre oval, about seven or eight inches long is a good size; wet your picture and platter and lay the former face down on the platter. Now mix some plaster of Paris with cold water, making the consistency of thin batter, and pour on the platter, covering picture. This should be from one-quarter to one-half inch in depth. Immediately on pouring mixture on platter, have a piece of cord or picture wire ready and press it down into plaster to make a loop to hang plaque by. Be sure to remember which part of plaque will be the top as you have no way of knowing when the mixture has been poured on.

Allow this to remain undisturbed for at least