

expressive delivery. Rant and declamation and bombast, too often satisfy audiences whose ears have never been tuned to catch the finer tones and undulations of finished utterance, and to enjoy that truthful and artistic delivery, which realizes to the mind by acts and tones of voice, the conceptions of genius. Reading in its highest cultivated form, has a charm which is not surpassed by that of music, and an accomplished reader is really capable of commanding and sustaining the interest of an audience longer than the most accomplished singer; while as an intellectual power for mental culture, it may rank with the best studies for this object. As its demands in the reading of fiction or poetry are incessant upon the imagination, it develops and invigorates that faculty, and realizes to him who has pursued its study much of the power and many of the pleasures peculiar to genius; while the analysis of thought, necessary to a thorough understanding of the subject, involves in its full extent the whole art of criticism on language.

Not less important than these mental claims of the art when rightly cultivated, are its social and moral influence. Every man is not destined to be an orator, but all may exercise the power of reading aloud in the family circle, and many may possess the gift of public reading, by which large masses of human beings may be entertained, and improved, and made familiar with the great thoughts and creations of genius. In this respect reading as an art, may be made an instrument of delight and refinement in no respect inferior to music. In most of those mixed entertainments called penny readings, the musical element not only is the largest, but is by far the best rendered; because, however imperfect we may yet be as a nation in our musical culture, the study of music is far more general than that of elocution as an art, for expression. "To sing by ear," is a reproach amongst musical people; but almost all without ex-

ception, who read, "read by ear." They are mere imitators in the best case. They have no fixed principles of art to guide them; and, on the whole it must be admitted that the reading part of the programme is a very dull and unattractive feature.

Sensible of the supreme delight which an accomplished reader can give to his audience, and mindful of the wonderful triumphs of the theatre in its highest representatives, and assured on the best evidence that true elocution is an art, with a sound science for its basis, I submit to the readers of the ONTARIO TEACHER in this, and following papers, an outline of the methods by which especially by public school teachers, with whom altogether lies the reform, reading may be cultivated as a true art. Good reading presents certain characteristics. 1st. It must be understood without any effort by the hearer. 2nd. It must be a truthful expression of thought or passion enshrined in the language. The qualities necessary, to make the language understood or heard, are distinctness and completeness of utterance; and these qualities for their full development require constant and systematic attention from the very commencement of school studies. Childhood presents the very best conditions to make the culture successful. The voice is flexible, and the vocal organs, plastic and full of energy, can be educated to give a full tone and an admirable finish to every word. The practice must commence with letters, and not with their names but their sound. The vowel sounds may take the precedence of the consonant, because their full toning has an excellent effect on voice culture. Let the teacher arrange the words in the following order:—

*a* as in *calm*, *o* as in *tone*, *a* as in *tale*, *oo* as in *cool* and *ee* as in *eel*. Standing before his or her pupils let them be instructed to *inhale through the nostrils*,—not closing the mouth, but slightly pressing the tongue against the palate;—and when the