

ascertained without the utterance of any voice ; and practically the way that reading is taught seems based altogether upon the idea that any management of the voice has nothing to do with. The only reason that boys are made to read aloud, in most cases, is for the teacher's sake, but not that they may be taught to manage their voices. The conveyance of ideas from the page to the brain is all that is assumed necessary. I do not say that this is the explanation that most men would give, if they were asked to make an explicit statement of what they understand by reading, but I do say that this is the current floating opinion as implied by their practice. And I also say that this practice does not cover one half that ground that belongs to the art of reading. And further, that even in these narrow limits which are assigned to it, there is a great loss from not proposing higher ends. According to the old proverb, "He shoots higher who aims at the moon, than he who aims at a tree."

This subject has recently attracted considerable attention. Early in the past year it was discussed in the English literary papers, the scent being given them by the establishment of prizes for reading in the University of Cambridge. It was amusing to observe the differing opinions which were urged in different quarters, as to the advisability of these prizes ; and the differing grounds on which the opinions were based. Some objected, on the ground that the University was going out of her established way, and that it was beneath her proper dignity to give prizes for so artificial an acquirement. Others gravely asserted that the introduction of prizes for reading was simply the introduction of a premium for humbug ; and they foresaw in it the loss of English honesty and bluntness. The Saturday Review, on the whole, approved of the measure, and for a characteristic reason : It would not be unite such a bore—they argued—when the clergy were taught properly to read, to go to church ; for the chances would be in favour, then, of the service being intelligibly read, and of the sermon not being shuffled through.

We, in this country, are perhaps inclined to place more importance upon a correct practice of reading aloud than is the case in England. The reason of this may not be hard to discover. It lies, I believe, in a difference of national character. The English character has more of that quietness and disregard of everything that may be looked on as showiness, which belongs to conscious and proved solidity and worth. It is essentially undemonstrative. From the nature of the case, the Americans—in which term I include both the peoples on either side of our great lakes—are necessarily more self-assertive and demonstrative. And hence, comes that tendency which is to be repressed as far as possible, to regard external accomplishment as of equal if not greater importance