

common teacher, who has not time, even if he had the patience, to reduce the unruly rules to order. Moreover, it is plain that a system of this kind is liable to become, in the hands of an unskilled teacher, highly injurious to the advancement of his class.

But why should we go to the trouble of carrying water to our pupils, when they can just as easily drink at the spring itself? Why give them dry rules when they can more easily have recourse to nature and custom, from which their rules themselves have been obtained?

Whately, in a chapter on elocution, says very pertinently: "Suppose it could be completely indicated to the eye in what tone each word and sentence should be pronounced, according to the several occasions, the learner might ask: But *why* should this tone suit the awful, this the pathetic, this the narrative style? Why is this mode of delivery adopted for a command, this for an exhortation, this for a supplication? etc. The only answer that could be given is, that these tones, emphases, etc., are a part of the language; that nature, or custom, which is a second nature, suggests spontaneously these different modes of giving expression to the different thoughts, feelings and designs which are present to the mind of any one who, without study, is speaking in earnest his own sentiments. Then, if this be the case, why not leave nature to do her own work? Impress but the mind fully with the sentiments, etc., to be uttered, withdraw the attention from the sound and fix it on the sense, and nature or habit will spontaneously suggest the proper delivery."

Here, then, I will give the basis of the system of elocution which appears to me the best, the most effective and the easiest, because the simplest, that can be employed by school-teachers.

"First, lead the pupil to get at the sense of the passage; then lead him to find the proper and natural way of expressing the thoughts and sentiments which he has almost made his own, couched as they may be in the words of another."

I come next to the consideration of the three qualities of good reading, and of the means of producing these qualities. And here I may state that I have not written an essay on each point (which could very well be done), and shall trust the minds of my hearers to supply a great deal which might be said, but said, perhaps, unnecessarily. Thus I shall not enter upon a lengthy disquisition on what intelligent reading is, but shall advance at once to the consideration of the means of bringing it about.

I have, however, one remark to make on the nature of intelligent reading which at first seems paradoxical. Intelligent reading is not necessarily true reading, as far as the real sense of a piece is concerned. The reader, to read intelligently, must not necessarily understand the piece he is reading, but he must at least seem to his hearers to understand it. To illustrate this statement, place in the hands of two most accomplished readers Othello's famous vindication of his conduct before the senators, and it is not at all likely that certain passages of the speech will have the same impression on the minds of the hearers when rendered by each reader. This of course, results from the mental attitude assumed by each reader towards these passages; yet the hearers, in each case, may be equally impressed with the truth as represented. Hence the utility of the teacher listening, with his own book closed, to a pupil reading. He is often thus enabled to judge better of the degree of intelligence with which that pupil reads.

Now, it cannot be denied that he only who properly understands a passage can properly interpret its sense to others by reading. But it does not follow that a pupil who has mastered the sense will also be able to convey that sense to others. This would assume that reading is very easily taught, whilst experience informs us that the reverse is the case. When a child even of tender years, makes known his wants, he has his attention riveted on the matter, not on the form; he thinks only of his wants, not of the words or the mode of uttering them. These things are of secondary importance, and he leaves them to display themselves; and yet with what perfect expression are they delivered! This, then, is the natural process. With reading it is entirely different. He is apt to think first of that which meets his eye, the characters and the words, and of the way in which they are to be spoken; and, until he has withdrawn his attention from these and centred it on the sense, truly intelligent reading is impossible. From this we are led to infer that the pupil, before attempting to read, should be able to pronounce every word easily and at sight, and should have a full knowledge of their meaning in the context. Then he must be trained to read with his thoughts and attention fixed on the sense to the neglect of words, inflections, emphases, etc. Many little

ways of securing this result will doubtless present themselves to your minds after a little reflection. I have barely time to make even a suggestion.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

I. Wrong inflection—"Mother, may I go on the hill with my handsleigh?"

II. Wrong emphasis—"Oh, mother! my MAP was the nicest of all."

The teacher, by preliminary questioning on the substance of the lesson, can do a great deal towards directing the attention of the class to the sense as well as to the spirit of the piece.

(To be continued.)

ENTRANCE LITERATURE.

THE SHIPBUILDERS.

Ontario Readers, old series, page 67.

AUTHOR'S LIFE.

John Greenleaf Whittier was born December 17, 1807, at the homestead near Haverhill in Essex County, Massachusetts. Like most American boys of that time he had but scanty schooling. A Quaker by birth and of Puritan surroundings his reading was limited almost entirely to the Bible, the Pilgrim's Progress, and the weekly newspaper. He lived at home until he was eighteen years of age, working on the farm, and employing the otherwise idle hours in the little shoemaker's shop which belonged to the homestead. His writings indicate that he did not relish beyond what boys do generally, the manual, homely labor of the farm and the workshop, but to it, no doubt, may be traced much of that interest which he has always taken in, and the sympathy he has ever shown with, working classes. His "Songs of Labor," including *The Shipbuilders, The Shoemakers, The Fishermen, The Lumbermen, The Huskers, The Corn Song and The Drovers*, teach that the "working hand makes strong the working brain," and that honest toil fosters a "manlier spirit of content." His poetry throughout is characterized by boldness, energy, and simplicity, often united with tenderness and grace. At twenty-two years of age he was appointed editor of "The American Manufacturer," having previously sent poems to "The Haverhill Gazette." In 1831 he published in prose his *Legends of New England*. *Mogg Megone*, published in 1836, draws attention to the relation held between the Indian and the settlers. His sympathy was always with the oppressed, and "while he found an object of pity in the Indian, his profoundest compassion and most stirring indignation were called out by African slavery." The following quotation from lines written on reading the spirited and manly remarks of Governor Ritner, of Pennsylvania, on the subject of slavery, shows what a powerful advocate the slave had in Whittier; greater perhaps was his influence in bringing about emancipation than that of all other poets combined:

"Thank God for the token!—one lip is still free—
One spirit untrammell'd, unbending one knee!
Like the oak of the mountains, deep-rooted and firm,
Erect, when the multitude bend to the storm.

* * *
"Right onward, oh, speed it! wherever the blood
Of the wrong'd and the guiltless is crying to God;
Wherever a slave in his fetters is pining;
Wherever the lash of the driver is twining.

* * *
"The pure German pilgrims, who first dared to brave
The scorn of the proud in the cause of the slave;
Will the sons of such men yield the lords of the South
One brow for the brand—for the padlock one mouth?
They, sater to tyrants? They rivet the chain,
Which their fathers smote off, on the negro again?