

nunciation is largely a matter of imitation, it will often show one's environment. Students should notice carefully the speech of cultivated people and of educated platform speakers, and should strive to reach their standard.

It is not in the pronunciation of difficult words that one shows lack of real culture so much as in the slovenly habit of eliding syllables or the final letter of common words and of substituting one vowel sound for another in words of one syllable. such as *wus* for *was*; *git* for *get*; *fur* for *for*, etc.

ELEMENTARY SOUNDS

There are forty-four elementary sounds in the English language. By a proper combination of these elementary sounds the words of the language are made.

THE ALPHABET IMPERFECT

If the alphabet were perfect, there would be one character for each sound, and but one. The English alphabet contains only twenty-six characters, so that extra duties must be put upon some of the characters—*e.g.*, *a* has eight sounds. The twenty-six characters are not economically used, for some of them are superfluous, as *q* = *kw*, *x* = *ks*, etc. This imperfection leads to the necessity of indicating the pronunciation of words by diacritical marks in order to denote the true value of any character.

CLASSIFICATION OF ORAL ELEMENTS

The elementary sounds are either vowel sounds or consonant sounds.

The vowel sounds, or vowels, are made by the vocal cords,