

## HOW TO TEACH READING TO A SENIOR CLASS.

CONDENSED NOTES OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE STRATHROY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION—1874.—BY J. T. WOOD, LOBO.

Good reading is an accomplishment of inestimable worth ; no subject of study in the whole curriculum of our Public Schools can outweigh it in importance. It is an accomplishment which crowns its fortunate possessor with daily enjoyment, enriches him with constant acquisition of knowledge, makes his society a delight to those around him, and enables him, even in solitude, to enrich his mind, by holding social converse with those who have "gone before;" whose names have been indelibly inscribed on the roll of literary fame, because of the beautiful thoughts they have embodied in our noble English tongue—that language which, to-day, conveys to the multitude of earth's inhabitants, the loftiest inspirations of genius, and the most abstruse truths of philosophy—"which goes with Freedom, Thought and Truth, to rouse and rule the world."

We may justly feel proud of the tongue we speak, and we should be ambitious to read and speak it well. Its music and cadences sound along the surf-worn shores of Albion, its adopted mother land; or float among Jura's crags or Mona's hills ; go where we will—there, we shall find our own good Saxon tongue, to cheer and bless mankind. The poet has embodied a great deal in those two words—"cheer" and "bless;" and the Teacher who, (in connection with reading), would cheer and bless mankind in general, and his pupils in particular, must faithfully improve those vocal powers and capacities—that wonderful physiological mechanism of voice, which his Creator has given him to this end ; for, to insure success in teaching reading, the teacher himself must be what he would have

his pupils become ; he must be as far as possible—an elocutionist.

There is a vast difference between having pupils read a lesson, and teaching them how to read it—between telling them of their errors, and showing them by *example*, how to avoid those errors.

The first great requisite, then, in teaching reading is that the Teacher should thoroughly prepare himself for his work and bring all his "ingenuity and ability, his earnestness and energy," to bear for the attainment of success.

The subject of Elocution is very properly divided into two branches, Physiological and Intellectual ; the former, comprehending the culture and management of the voice, and the latter comprehending the Study of the Author's thought and language, together with the application of principles, leading to expressive and effective delivery.

In teaching reading, the successful teacher will not fail to give due attention to the first named department—in which, Articulation, Accent, Emphasis, Inflection, Pitch, Force, Tone, Time, &c., will be separately and severally taught and practised. There will be thus a great diversity of exercises—which we may call "vocal gymnastics," the purpose of which will be "to bring the vocal organs under control, to increase their power, and to improve the tone and purity of the voice. Music will lend its aid, to a considerable degree in this department. For valuable exercises and information in both the Physiological and intellectual branches of Elocution, the reader is referred to the "Dominion Elocutionist," by R. Lewis, though the judicious and painstaking teacher will frame such exercises for himself,