

Sie kammt es mit goldnem Kamme,
Und singt ein Lied dabei;
Das hat ein wundersame,
Gewaltige Melodei.

She combs it with a golden comb,
And sings at the same time a song;
That has a most wonderful,
Captivating melody.

Den Schiffer im kleinem Schiffe
Ergreift es mit wildem Weh;
Er schant nicht die Felsenriffe,
Er schant nur hinauf in der Hoh.

It arrests with a strange power
The mariner in his little craft;
He looks not at the reef of rocks below,
He looks only to the maiden.

Ied glabue die Wellen verschlingen,
Am Ende Schiffer und Kahu;
Und das hat mit ihrem Singen
Die Lorelei gethan.

In the end the waves devour
The mariner and his boat;
But the Lorelei has done it
With her wonderful singing.

A DEFECT IN OUR COMMON SCHOOLS.

Those who are at all acquainted with our common schools and who have a just conception of what the object of these schools should be, must be impressed with *some* deficiencies in them, notwithstanding the praise which our system deservedly receives.

Among the youth at school there appears to be a feeling, which is doubtless the result of a general sentiment, that unless they have a knowledge of certain advanced branches they can justly be charged with shameful ignorance; and so the study of these branches is entered upon by many before they have anything like a mastery of the rudimentary parts of education. Those who are to fill the professions or occupy positions as teachers must have a firm foundation for the superstructure, while those who are to fill the humbler walks of life and can spend but little time at school, cannot afford to take up the so called "ornamental" studies until in the rudiments they have acquired a good degree of proficiency.

But it is to the *reading* that we wish to make especial reference. That too little attention is given to this important branch of education on the part of pupils, resulting from too little value being attached to it by

teachers is painfully evident. Instances in which there is any knowledge of the *art* of reading are very rare. In the majority of cases the training received ceases with the common school, and hence the necessity of a thorough drill there. Looking at the facts as they have existed and still exist, there is perhaps little cause for wonder that those who are constantly before the public, and who have to read much, are so deplorably lacking in this much to be desired accomplishment. It is surprising, no doubt, that men in such positions are so easily satisfied with their acquirements in this direction, but it is largely due to not having their taste cultivated in youth by proper discipline. The only way to bring about the desired change is to give careful training in the common schools and awaken a feeling of the desirableness of becoming good readers; and if the matter is taken up as it should be and properly carried forward, a few years will suffice to witness most marked improvement on every hand.

It is said of Spurgeon's reading of the Scriptures, that it is like a running commentary; and so all reading should be. Regard must be paid to emphasis, rhetorical pauses, and to those valuable rules given with a view to help in the correct presentation of the thought. Where this is wanting reading is a mere repetition of words—a body without a soul.

It is to be hoped that the consequence of the comparatively little care which has been given to this matter in the past will cause the necessity of reform to emerge into such distinctness as will result in educationists adopting plans calculated to secure a new order of things, and fill our schools, our societies, our platforms, and our pulpits with *readers*, not mere *word-funnels*.

"In view of the great success of the bicycle, may it not be that the human race, by the process of evolution, will change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity through a succession of differentiations and integrations, so as to go on wheels. Doubtless it will be so if it have the proper environment"—EX.

From the above our bicyclist may yet cherish the hope that he is filling up an important link, in the yet imperfect development of the race.