

**SCHOOL READING
BY GRADES;
FOURTH YEAR**

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School Reading by Grades; Fourth Year by James Baldwin

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JAMES BALDWIN

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SON. READ. FOURTH YEAR.

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PREFACE.

THE paramount object of this book, no less than of the lower numbers of the series, is to help the pupil to become a good reader. To be a good reader, one must not only be able to pronounce all the words in a given lesson, but he must have so thorough an understanding of the selection to be read that he involuntarily makes the thoughts and feelings of the author his own. An exercise in reading should, therefore, always be a pleasure to those who participate in it. It should never in any sense be regarded as a task. Children who like to read are pretty sure to become good readers; and the easiest way to teach reading is to make every recitation full of interest and a source of delight. But this is not all. Careless habits must be avoided. Distinct enunciation and correct pronunciation must be insisted upon and secured. It is not enough that the reader himself understands and is interested. He must make his hearers understand also, and that without effort, and he must give them such pleasure that they shall not soon become weary of listening to him.

The lessons in this volume have been prepared and arranged with a view towards several ends: to interest the young reader; to cultivate a taste for the best style of literature as regards both thought and expression; to point the way to an acquaintance with good books; to appeal to the pupil's sense of duty, and strengthen his desire to do right; to arouse patriotic feelings and a just pride in the achievements of our countrymen; and incidentally to add somewhat to the learner's knowledge of history and science and art.

The illustrations will prove to be valuable adjuncts to the text. Spelling, defining, and punctuation should receive special attention. Difficult words and idiomatic expressions should be carefully studied with the aid of the Word List at the end of the volume. Persistent and systematic practice in the pronunciation of these words and of other difficult combinations of sounds will aid in training the pupils' voices to habits of careful articulation and correct enunciation.

While literary biography can be of but little, if any, value in cultivating literary taste, it is desirable that pupils should acquire some slight knowledge of the writers whose productions are placed before them for study. To assist in the acquisition of this knowledge, and also to serve for ready reference, a few pages of Biographical Notes are inserted towards the end of the volume. The brief rules given on page 6 should be learned at the beginning, and carefully and constantly observed.

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TO THE YOUNG LEARNER.

To be able to read well, there are several simple rules which you should remember and try to observe :—

Before attempting to read any selection aloud, read it to yourself in order that you may acquaint yourself with its difficulties.

If there is any part of it that you do not comprehend, read it again and try to get at its meaning.

Study to understand every peculiar expression and every difficult word.

From the Word List at the end of this volume, or from a dictionary, learn the meaning of every difficult word.

Practice reading aloud to yourself at home.

Try to discover and correct your own faults.

Be sure to pronounce, clearly and properly, every syllable and every word.

If any combination of sounds is hard to articulate, practice pronouncing it until you can speak it properly and without effort.

In reading aloud try to read in the same natural tones that you use in talking. Be careful to avoid all strained, harsh, or discordant tones.

Remember that good reading is only conversation from the book, and that it should always give pleasure to both the reader and his hearers.

Avoid all careless habits of expression.

It will be easier to read well if you sit or stand with your head erect and your shoulders thrown well back; then you can breathe easily, freely, and naturally, and it will not be hard to speak each word clearly and properly.

Try so to render each thought or passage as to interpret, in the most natural and forcible manner, the meaning intended by the author.

Study to appreciate the beauty, the truthfulness, the appropriateness of that which you are reading.

Ask yourself constantly : " Am I reading this so well that my hearers are pleased and interested ? "

Try to improve every day.

SCHOOL READING.

FOURTH YEAR.

DANIEL WEBSTER'S FIRST SPEECH.

On a farm among the hills of New Hampshire, there once lived a little boy whose name was Daniel Webster. He was a tiny fellow, with jet-black hair and eyes so dark and wonderful that nobody who
5 once saw them could ever forget them.

He was not strong enough to help much on the farm; and so he spent much of his time in playing in the woods and learning to know and love the trees and flowers, and the harmless wild creatures
10 that lived among them.

But he did not play all the time. Long before he was old enough to go to school, he learned to read; and he read so well that everybody was pleased, and no one grew tired of listening to him.
15 The neighbors, when driving past his father's house, would stop their horses in the road, and call for Dannie Webster to come out and read to them.

At that time there were no children's books, such