

INTRODUCTION.

ness in all matters of arrangement, of inquest, and of argumentation." "Writing," says Lord Bacon, "makes a correct man;" and the author of the Essay on Criticism asserts, that

"True grace in writing comes from art, not chance,  
As they move easiest who have learnt to dance."

"He that begins with the calf," says Mr. Locke, "may carry the ox, but he, that will go at first to take the ox, may so disable himself as not to be able to take the calf after that." On the same principle, it is recommended that an attention to the subject of composition should be commenced early in life. Exercises of a simple character prepare the mind for higher exertion; and readiness and facility in the lower departments of writing enable the student to apply himself without reluctance to those mightier efforts by which the progress of intellectual culture is most rapidly advanced.

The words of Horace may here be recommended to particular attention:

"Sumite materiam qui scribitis æquam  
"Viribus."

Or, in the translation of Mr. Francis:

"Examine well, ye writers, weigh with care,  
What suits your genius, what your strength will bear."

*Inspection Henry Marching order  
to all except shelter tents  
Night*

AIDS

TO

ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

I.

OBJECTS AND THEIR PARTS.

The first step to be taken in writing composition is to obtain ideas. The second is the proper expression of the idea when obtained. To acquire ideas, it is necessary to cultivate habits of observation; to use the eyes not only in noticing entire objects, but also their different parts; to consider their qualities, uses, operations, and effects; together with their relation to other things. The mind employed in such processes acquires materials for its own operations, and thoughts and ideas arise as it were spontaneously.

For the first exercise in composition, therefore, it is proposed that the student be required to enumerate the parts of some visible object, according to the following

*Example.*

A HOUSE.

Its parts are

- |              |                  |                    |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------|
| The inside,  | The wainscot,    | The parlors or     |
| The outside, | The stairs,      | drawing rooms      |
| The doors,   | The fire places, | The wash room,     |
| The entry,   | The mantel,      | The bathing room,  |
| The rooms,   | The chimney,     | The inner doors,   |
| The ceiling, | The closets,     | The wood shed,     |
| The walls,   | The kitchen,     | The out buildings. |

*Exercises.*

In a similar manner enumerate the parts of the following objects

A carriage.	A sheep.	A book.
A ship.	A cat.	A kite.
A church.	A landscape.	A cow.
A tree.	A school-room.	A goat.
A map.	A watch.	A dog.
A horse.	A clock.	A picture.

## II.

## OBJECTS, THEIR QUALITIES AND USES.

The parts of a visible object having been noticed, the next step to be taken is the enumeration of its qualities and uses according to the following

*Example.*

GLASS: It is hard,	inodorous,	insoluble,
solid,	colorless,	dry,
smooth,	heavy,	fusible,
bright,	uninflammable,	thick or thin,
transparent,	durable,	long,
brittle,	stiff,	short,
cold,	inflexible,	wide,
tasteless,	water proof,	useful.

Its uses :

For windows to admit light :

For spectacles to assist sight :

For useful vessels, such as tumblers, pitchers, decanters, wine-glasses, jelly-glasses, bottles, phials, inkstands, lamps, and lamp-glasses, chandeliers, handles of doors and drawers, vases, cups, and ornaments, such as beads, drops, prisms, &c.

*Exercises.*

In the same manner enumerate the qualities of the following objects.

Wood.	Sugar.	A lamp.
Iron.	Salt.	Ivory.
Lead.	Sponge.	A pin.
Silver.	A desk.	A chair.
Gold.	Wool.	A table.
A feather.	Cotton.	A penknife.
A pen.	Wax.	A quill.
Water.	Whalebone.	An inkstand.
Leather.	A horn.	Ice.
Paper.	Chalk.	Snow.

## III.

## OBJECTS, THEIR PARTS, QUALITIES, PROPERTIES, USES AND APPENDAGES.

The parts, properties, and uses of visible objects having now been considered, the two processes may be united, in the consideration of the parts, qualities, properties, uses and appendages, as in the following

*Example.*

A PEN consists of the quill,	pith,	surfaces,
shaft,	nib,	groove,
feather,	shoulders,	inside, and
laminae,	skin,	outside.

<i>Qualities.</i> The quill is transparent,	smooth,	elastic,
round or	bright,	yellowish,
cylindrical,	hard,	horny,
hollow,	glossy,	tough.

The shaft is opaque,	white,	hard,
angular,	stiff,	grooved

The pith is white,	porous.	soft,
spongy	elastic.	light.

The use of the pen is to write down what we have seen, read, or thought, and thereby to preserve what would probably soon be lost, if intrusted to the memory alone. What is once written can be read, or preserved for future information, and thereby we can learn what our friends who are absent, and even those who are dead, have seen or said.

*Exercises.*

Enumerate the parts, qualities, and uses of the following objects

A book.	A work-box.	A knife.
A house.	A saw.	A wing.
A tree.	A chisel.	A fin.
A table.	A plane.	The hand.
A bureau.	A ball.	The arm.
The contents of a box.	A kite.	The foot.
A secretary.	A dressing-case.	The eye.
A plate.	A sofa.	The ear.
A barrel.	A chair.	The nose.
A lamp.	A lock.	The mouth.
A candlestick.	A key.	The human face

IV.

EVENTS.

The object of this lesson is to teach the learner to describe, in easy sentences, any circumstances which happen to himself and others.

He should be directed to write the incident just as he would relate it to his parents or a young friend; and after he has thus written it, to revise it carefully, to see whether any of his words are mis-spelt, and whether he has used the very words which he intended to use.

*Example.*

On returning home yesterday, I saw a man severely beating a horse. I stopped a moment to ascertain the cause; and perceived that one of the wheels of the wagon had sunk deep

in the mire, and the poor animal was exerting all his strength to drag the heavy load, while the cruel driver was mercilessly beating the unfortunate creature because he could not proceed.

*Exercise.*

In a similar manner, the learner may describe the following events

The meeting of a beggar in the street.  
 The overturn of a carriage.  
 The passing of a procession.  
 The sailing of a ship.  
 The catching of a fish.  
 The capture of a bird.  
 The raising of a kite.  
 A fire.  
 The raising of a building.

V.

OBJECTS AND EVENTS.

The object of this lesson is to accustom the learner to combine the results of the preceding lessons.

The same directions should be given to him as are presented in the last lesson; and it will be proper to enforce the directions with regard to the spelling, and the proper use of words, in every exercise.

*Example.*

As my brother was riding in the country, he saw a beautiful, large house, painted white, with green blinds. In the front of the house was a small flower-garden, and the bright tulips, all in full bloom, presented a brilliant show. The rose bushes were not yet in flower; but the lily of the valley was dropping its modest head, while it perfumed the air with its delicious fragrance. At the back of the house were a number of fruit trees, in full blossom, among which was the peach tree, with its beautiful pink flowers. Some boys were seen

clustering around a willow near the brook, busily engaged with their knives. One was cutting the small leaves and scions from a large branch, which he had just taken from the tree for a whip, while another was busily engaged in making a whistle. As my brother approached the house, the boys, mistaking him for the owner, immediately scampered away; some hiding themselves among the bushes, while the more active leaped over the high stone wall, to escape being caught. It appeared that these boys were truants from a neighboring school-house, and the little rogues were fearful, not only of being caught in trespassing upon private ground, but likewise lest they should be carried into the presence of their master, to be corrected for playing the truant.

*Exercises.*

In the same manner the learner may describe the following objects and events;

Boys fishing from a bridge.  
 Girls dressing their dolls.  
 A tree blown down by a tempest.  
 Boy driving cows or sheep to pasture.  
 Horses running at large.  
 A dog, in a state of madness, biting passengers in the street.  
 A lion, elephant, or tiger broken loose from its cage.  
 A menagerie, with the postures and employments of the wild animals.  
 A museum, with dancing puppets.  
 A public concert.  
 An exhibition of paintings and statuary.

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VI.

NAMES.

The object of this exercise on names, is to prepare the student for a future exercise on definitions. How it is to be performed will be readily seen from the following

*Examples.*

What is the name which is applied to false or undeserved praise?

*Answer.* Flattery.

By what name do we call the delaying of that which we know cannot be finally escaped or avoided?

*Answer.* Procrastination.

By what name do we designate that animal which has two horns, a long tail, and cloven feet, and that affords beef, butter, and cheese?

*Answer.* The Cow.

By what name do we designate the restraint of appetite and passion?

*Answer.* Temperance.

*Exercises.*

What name is given to the reverence of God?

What name is applied to an effort of genius and art, producing an association of exalted and brilliant ideas in language harmoniously arranged?

A general coincident feeling between two persons?

Habitual inactivity both of mind and body?

That tranquil state of mind in which the agitations of anxiety and disappointment are no longer felt?

That state of mind which suffers no dismay from danger?

The dissolution of corporeal existence?

The resolution to persist in any undertaking that has been commenced?

The time after sunset?

That God is present every where, and that he knows all things?

A habit of being pleased?

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VII.

SIMPLE DIALOGUE, OR CONVERSATION.

Young persons are seldom at a loss for topics of conversation, when left unrestrained to themselves. But as soon as they are required to write what is called a *composition*, they feel at a loss what to say. This arises from no inability to form ideas, nor from want of words to express them; but rather from a vague apprehension that something is required of them, which they have never done before; and to which they know not how to address themselves. The cultivation of the habits of observation, to which allusion has already

been made in the first exercise, will help them wholly out of the difficulty; especially, if they be informed, that the art of writing is nothing more than the art of expressing with the hand, in signs which present themselves to the eye, that, which with their voice, they convey to the ears of others. In other words, that in their early attempts at writing composition, they may write down in letters, what they would say to their companions in their common conversations.

To cultivate the habits of observation, the following dialogue, from the pen of Dr. Aikin, is presented; with the recommendation that it be read to the young student, or that he be required to read it carefully, in order that he may learn to use his eyes aright, and attentively observe what passes before them.

#### THE TUTOR AND HIS PUPILS.

*Eyes and no Eyes; or, the Art of Seeing.*

"Well, Robert, where have you been walking this afternoon?" said a tutor to one of his pupils, at the close of a holiday.

*Robert.* I have been to Broom-heath, and so round by the windmill upon Camp-mount, and home through the meadows by the river side.

*Tutor.* Well, that is a pleasant round.

*Robert.* I thought it very dull, Sir; I scarcely met with a single person. I would much rather have gone along the turnpike road.

*Tutor.* Why, if seeing men and horses was your object, you would, indeed, have been better entertained on the high-road. But did you see William?

*Robert.* We set out together, but he lagged behind in the lane, so I walked on and left him.

*Tutor.* That was a pity. He would have been company for you.

*Robert.* O, he is so tedious, always stopping to look at this thing and that! I would rather walk alone. I dare say he is not got home yet.

*Tutor.* Here he comes. Well, William, where have you been?

*William.* O, the pleasantest walk! I went all over Broom-heath, and so up to the mill at the top of the hill, and then down among the green meadows by the side of the river.

*Tutor.* Why, that is just the round Robert has been taking, and he complains of its dullness, and prefers the high-road.

*William.* I wonder at that. I am sure I hardly took a step that did not delight me, and I have brought home my handkerchief full of curiosities.

*Tutor.* Suppose, then, you give us an account of what amused you so much. I fancy it will be as new to Robert as to me.

*William.* I will do it readily. The lane leading to the heath, you know, is close and sandy, so I did not mind it much, but made the best of my way. However, I spied a curious thing enough in the hedge. It was an old crab-tree, out of which grew a great bunch of something green quite different from the tree itself. Here is a branch of it.

*Tutor.* Ah! this is a mistletoe, a plant of great fame for the use made of it by the Druids of old in their religious rites and incantations. It bears a very slimy white berry, of which birdlime may be made, whence the Latin name, *Viscus*. It is one of those plants which do not grow in the ground by a root of their own, but fix themselves upon other plants; whence they have been humorously styled *parasitical*, as being hangers on, or dependents. It was the mistletoe of the oak that the Druids particularly honored.

*William.* A little farther on, I saw a green woodpecker fly to a tree and run up the trunk like a cat.

*Tutor.* That was to seek for insects in the bark, on which they live. They bore holes with their strong bills for that purpose, and do much damage to the trees by it.

*William.* What beautiful birds they are!

*Tutor.* Yes; they have been called, from their color and size, the English parrot.

*William.* When I got upon the open heath, how charming it was! The air seemed so fresh, and the prospect on every side so free and unbounded! Then it was all covered with gay flowers, many of which I had never observed before. There were at least three kinds of heath, (I have got them in my handkerchief here,) and gorse, and broom, and bell-flower, and many others of all colors, of which I will beg you presently to tell me the names.

*Tutor.* That I will, readily.

*William.* I saw, too, several birds that were new to me. There was a pretty grayish one, of the size of a lark, that was hopping about some great stones; and when he flew, he showed a great deal of white above his tail.

*Tutor.* That was a wheat-ear. They are reckoned very delicious birds to eat, and frequent the open downs in Sussex, and some other counties, in great numbers.

*William.* There was a flock of lapwings upon a marshy part of the heath, that amused me much. As I came near them, some of them kept flying round and round, just over my head, and crying *pewit* so distinctly, one might almost fancy they spoke. I thought I should have caught one of them, for he flew as if one of his wings was broken, and often tumbled close to the ground; but, as I came near, he always contrived to get away.

*Tutor.* Ha, ha! you were finely taken in, then! This was all an artifice of the bird's, to entice you away from its nest; for they build upon the bare ground, and their nests would easily be observed, did they not draw off the attention of intruders, by their loud cries and counterfeit lameness.

*William.* I wish I had known that, for he led me a long chase, often over shoes in water. However, it was the cause of my falling in with an old man and a boy, who were cutting and piling up turf for fuel; and I had a good deal of talk with them, about the manner of preparing the turf, and the price it sells at. They gave me, too, a creature I never saw before—a young viper, which they had just killed, together with its dam. I have seen several common snakes, but this is thicker in proportion, and of a darker color than they are.

*Tutor.* True. Vipers frequent those turfy, boggy grounds pretty much, and I have known several turf-cutters bitten by them.

*William.* They are very venomous, are they not?

*Tutor.* Enough so to make their wounds painful and dangerous, though they seldom prove fatal.

*William.* Well—I then took my course up to the windmill on the mount. I climbed up the steps of the mill, in order to get a better view of the country round. What an extensive prospect! I counted fifteen church steeples; and I saw several gentlemen's houses peeping out from the midst of green woods and plantations; and I could trace the windings of the river all along the low grounds, till it was lost behind a ridge of hills. But I'll tell you what I mean to do, if you will give me leave.

*Tutor.* What is that?

*William.* I will go again, and take with me Cary's country map, by which I shall probably be able to make out most of the places.

*Tutor.* You shall have it, and I will go with you, and take my pocket spying-glass.

*William.* I shall be very glad of that. Well—a thought struck me, that, as the hill is called *Camp-mount*, there might, probably, be some remains of ditches and mounds, with which I have read that camps were surrounded. And I really believe I discovered something of that sort running round one side of the mount.

*Tutor.* Very likely you might. I know antiquaries have described such remains as existing there, which some suppose to be Roman, others Danish. We will examine them further when we go.

*William.* From the hill I went straight down to the meadows below, and walked on the side of a brook that runs into the river. It was all bordered with reeds, and flags, and tall flowering plants, quite different from those I had seen on the heath. As I was getting down the bank to reach one of them, I heard something plunge into the water near me. It was a large water-rat, and I saw it swim over to the other side, and go into its hole. There were a great many dragon-flies all about the stream. I caught one of the finest, and have got him here in a leaf. But how I longed to catch a bird that I saw hovering over the water, and every now and then darting down into it! It was all over a mixture of the most beautiful green and blue, with some orange color. It was somewhat less than a thrush, and had a large head and bill, and a short tail.

*Tutor.* I can tell you what that bird was—a kingfisher, the celebrated halcyon of the ancients, about which so many tales are told. It lives on fish, which it catches in the manner you saw. It builds in holes in the banks; and is a shy, retired bird, never to be seen far from the stream where it inhabits.

*William.* I must try to get another sight at him, for I never saw a bird that pleased me so much. Well, I followed this little brook, till it entered the river, and then took the path that runs along the bank. On the opposite side, I observed several little birds running along the shore, and making a piping noise. They were brown and white and about as big as a snipe.

*Tutor.* I suppose they were sand-pipers, one of the numerous family of birds that get their living by wading among the shallows, and picking up worms and insects.

*William.* There were a great many swallows, too, sporting upon the surface of the water, that entertained me with their motions. Sometimes they dashed into the stream; sometimes they pursued one another so quickly, that the eye could scarcely follow them. In one place, where a

high, steep sand-bank rose directly above the river, I observed many of them go in and out of holes, with which the bank was bored full.

*Tutor.* Those were sand-martins, the smallest of our four species of swallows. They are of a mouse-color above, and white beneath. They make their nests and bring up their young in these holes, which run a great depth, and by their situation are secure from all plunderers.

*William.* A little farther, I saw a man in a boat, who was catching eels in an odd way. He had a long pole with broad iron prongs at the end, just like Neptune's trident, only there were five instead of three. This he pushed straight down into the mud, in the deepest parts of the river, and fetched up the eels sticking between the prongs.

*Tutor.* I have seen this method. It is called spearing of eels.

*William.* While I was looking at him, a heron came flying over my head, with his large flapping wings. He alighted at the next turn of the river, and I crept softly behind the bank to watch his motions. He had waded into the water as far as his long legs would carry him, and was standing with his neck drawn in, looking intently on the stream. Presently he darted his long bill as quick as lightning into the water, and drew out a fish, which he swallowed. I saw him catch another in the same manner. He then took alarm at some noise I made, and flew away slowly to a wood at some distance, where he settled.

*Tutor.* Probably his nest was there, for herons build upon the loftiest tree they can find, and sometimes in society together, like rooks. Formerly, when these birds were valued for the amusement of hawking, many gentlemen had their *heronries*, and a few are still remaining.

*William.* I think they are the largest wild birds we have.

*Tutor.* They are of great length and spread of wing, but their bodies are comparatively small.

*William.* I then turned homeward across the meadows, where I stopped awhile to look at a large flock of starlings, which kept flying about at no great distance. I could not tell, at first, what to make of them; for they rose all together from the ground, as thick as a swarm of bees, and formed themselves into a kind of black cloud, hovering over the field. After taking a short round, they settled again, and presently rose again in the same manner. I dare say there were hundreds of them.

*Tutor.* Perhaps so; for, in the fenny counties, their flocks are so numerous, as to break down whole acres of reeds by settling on them. This disposition of starlings to fly in close swarms was remarked even by Homer, who compares the foe flying from one of his heroes, to a cloud of starlings retiring dismayed at the approach of the hawk.

*William.* After I had left the meadows, I crossed the cornfields in the way to our house, and passed close by a deep marl-pit. Looking into it, I saw in one of the sides a cluster of what I took to be shells; and, upon going down, I picked up a clod of marl which was quite full of them; but how sea-shells could get there I cannot imagine.

*Tutor.* I do not wonder at your surprise, since many philosophers have been much perplexed to account for the same appearance. It is not uncommon to find great quantities of shells and relics of marine animals even in the bowels of high mountains very remote from the sea.

*William.* I got to the high field next to our house just as the sun was setting, and I stood looking at it till it was quite lost. What a glorious sight! The clouds were tinged with purple and crimson, and yellow of all shades and hues, and the clear sky varied from blue to a fine green at

the horizon. But how large the sun appears, just as it sets! I think it seems twice as big as when it is over head.

*Tutor.* It does so; and you may probably have observed the same apparent enlargement of the moon at its rising.

*William.* I have; but pray what is the reason of this?

*Tutor.* It is an optical deception, depending upon principles which I cannot well explain to you, till you know more of that branch of science. But what a number of new ideas this afternoon's walk has afforded you! I do not wonder that you found it amusing; it has been very instructive, too. Did you see nothing of all these sights, Robert?

*Robert.* I saw some of them, but I did not take particular notice of them.

*Tutor.* Why not?

*Robert.* I do not know. I did not care about them; and I made the best of my way home.

*Tutor.* That would have been right, if you had been sent on a message; but, as you only walked for amusement, it would have been wiser to have sought out as many sources of it as possible. But so it is; one man walks through the world with his eyes open, and another with them shut; and upon this difference depends all the superiority of knowledge the one acquires above the other. I have known sailors who had been in all the quarters of the world, and could tell you nothing but the signs of the tippling-houses they frequented in the different ports, and the price and quality of the liquor. On the other hand, a Franklin could not cross the Channel without making some observations useful to mankind. While many a vacant, thoughtless youth, is whirled throughout Europe, without gaining a single idea worth crossing a street for; the observing eye and inquiring mind find matter of improvement and delight, in every ramble in town and country. Do you, then, William, continue to make use of your eyes; and you, Robert, learn that eyes were given you to use.

The preceding dialogue, if it has been attentively read, will probably enable the young student to write simple dialogues or conversations, similar to that presented in the following

*Example.*

IALOGUE BETWEEN CHARLES AND HENRY, ABOUT DOGS.

*Charles.* Whose dog is that, Henry, which I saw in your yard yesterday?

*Henry.* He belongs to my uncle, who bought him, when he was very young, of a poor boy in the street. The boy appeared very destitute, and uncle bought him rather out of compassion for the boy, than because he wanted the dog.

*Charles.* Is he good for any thing,—has he been trained?

*Henry.* O yes; he is a very valuable animal. Uncle would not sell him at any price. He is an excellent water

dog, and knows more than many boys of his own age. The other morning he was sitting in a chair at the window, from which he had been accustomed to look at the boys, as they were playing in the street, and, finding that he could not see through the window, on account of the frost on the glass, he applied his warm tongue to one of the panes, and, licking the frost from the glass, attempted to look out; but, the spot which he had cleared being only large enough to admit one eye, he immediately made another, in the same manner, for the other eye, by which he was enabled to enjoy the sight as usual.

*Charles.* That was very remarkable. But your uncle did not teach him to do that.

*Henry.* No; that was rather an operation of instinct than of training. But he will carry bundles, stand on two legs, find articles that are hidden, fetch things from the water, and is also well trained for hunting.

*Charles.* He is a water-dog, then, is he not?

*Henry.* O yes. He is very fond of the water himself, but will not allow others to go into it. Uncle has a fine situation at Nahant, on the water's edge, and many of his friends go there to bathe. But uncle is obliged to tie up *Guido*, the dog, when any one wishes to bathe; for the animal will not allow any one to go into the water, if he can prevent it.

*Charles.* That is very selfish in him. What do you suppose is the reason that he is unwilling that others should enjoy a thing, of which, you say, he is himself so very fond?

*Henry.* O, he has a good reason for that, as well as for every thing else he does. The reason is, that, one day, my little brother, George, was standing on a kind of wharf, built of stones, near the bathing place, and, happening to stoop over too far to look at some eels, that were gliding through the water below, he lost his balance and fell in. Nobody was near but Guido, and he immediately jumped into the water, and held George up by the collar till some one came to his assistance. When the servant man, John, came to help George out of the water, Guido had nearly dragged him to the shore; but he found it rather hard work, for George is very fleshy, and, of course, quite heavy; and, although Guido has a good opinion of himself, and doubts not his ability to drag any one else out of the water, yet he reasons very

soundly, and thinks it much less trouble to prevent people from going into the water, than to drag them out when they have got in.

*Charles.* No wonder that your uncle values him; he is certainly a very valuable dog.

*Henry.* O, I could tell you a hundred stories about him, which would surprise you. The other day, George brought home a bundle from Miss Farrar's, for my sister Caroline, which he threw down on a chair in the entry, and then ran off to play. Caroline was in her chamber, and, hearing George come in, spoke to him from her room, not knowing that he had gone out, and requested him to bring it up stairs. Guido was lying on the rug by the fire in the parlor, and, hearing Caroline call for the bundle, immediately jumped up, and, taking the bundle in his mouth, carried it up stairs and dropped it at Caroline's feet.

*Charles.* I should be very happy to have such a dog, but mother is so afraid of a dog's running mad and biting us children, that she will not allow us to keep one.

*Henry.* Father says, that there is no fear of a dog's running mad, if he has plenty of water. He says, that the reason that we so seldom hear of a dog's running mad here in Boston is, because water is plenty here, and dogs can always get at it, if they have once found their way to the Frog Pond on the Common.

*Charles.* What is the name of that disease which people have who are bitten by mad dogs?

*Henry.* It is called *hydrophobia*, which is a Greek word, and means "fear of water." Dogs, when they are mad, cannot bear the sight of water; they will not drink; and therefore, whenever a dog *will* drink, you may be sure that he is not mad. When a person is bitten by a mad, or rabid animal, he expresses the same dread of water, and hence the disease is called, as I said, *hydrophobia*.

*Charles.* I thank you, Henry, for giving me all this information. I shall tell it all to mother, and as I have often heard her say, that your father is a very sensible man, perhaps she may overcome her fear of hydrophobia, and allow brother James and me to keep a dog.

### Examples.

In the same manner the learner may write a simple dialogue about the following subjects:

A cat.	A walk.	A Sunday School excursion.
A fox.	A pair of skates.	A holiday visit.
A horse.	A tree.	An evening party.
A watch.	A kite.	A wedding.
A dress.	A book.	A funeral.
A ride.	A bonnet.	A baptism.
A meeting-house.	An excursion on the water.	The celebration of an anniversary.
A school.	A lesson.	A visit to a printing office.
A sled.	A new year's present.	
An evening party.	A walk about the city.	
A sleigh-ride.	An excursion into the woods.	

## VIII.

### WORDS.

Sentences consist of words, and words are used to express thoughts or ideas. The ideas which they express depend on their connexion with other words. Sometimes the same word will signify an action, an object, a quality, or an attribute. Thus, in the sentence "I shall *present* the book to Charles," the word "present" signifies an action. If I say "the book will then be a *present*," the word "*present*" will signify an object, and is a noun or name. But, if the sentence be, "Charles must be *present* when the book is given," the word "*present*" will signify an attribute, and is an adjective.

The proper use of words, and the correct understanding of them, constitutes one of the greatest difficulties in written language. It is therefore highly important that every writer be careful to use the proper word to express the idea which he wishes to communicate; and when he is required to use a word, that he endeavor thereby to express no other idea than that, which the word is intended to convey.

The Dictionary is however a very unsafe guide to the proper signification of words, because their meaning is so materially affected by the connexion in which they stand.



There are many words, the sound of which is exactly similar to the sound of other words that are spelt very differently. In using such words there is little danger of their being mistaken the one for the other, because, as has just been said, we are guided by the connexion in which they stand. But in writing them, many mistakes are frequently made, on account of the want of early attention to the subject of orthography. The object of this lesson is to afford an exercise in the use of such words as are both sounded and spelt alike, and of those which have the same sound and are spelt differently.

The remark may here be made that the change of a single letter, or the removal of the accent, frequently alters the entire character of a word. Thus the words *advise* and *practise*, which are verbs, expressing an action, by the change of the letter *s* to *c*, become *practice*, and *advice*, which are nouns. Again, the words *comment*, *increase*, are verbs; while *comment*, *in'crease*, &c. are nouns. In the use of such words, the student should be accustomed to note the word, in his early exercises, by the proper accent.

*Example.*

"I saw with some surprise that the Muses, whose business was to cheer and encourage those who were toiling up the *ascent*, would often sing in the bowers of pleasure, and accompany those who were enticed away at the call of the passions. They accompanied them, however, but a little way, and always forsook them when they lost sight of the hill. The tyrants then doubled their chains upon the unhappy captives, and led them away without resistance, and almost with their own *assent*, to the cells of Ignorance or the mansions of misery."

*Johnson, slightly altered.*

*Example 2d.*

"The bold design  
Pleased highly those infernal states, and joy  
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full *assent*  
They rose."

*Milton, Paradise Lost, B. 2d.*

"He hath deserved worthily of his country; and his *ascent* (*namely, to the highest honors, &c.*) is not by such easy degrees as those who have been supple and courteous to the people."

*Shakspeare, Coriolanus, Act 2d, Scene 2d.*

*Exercises.*

Air, ere, heir; devise, device; altar, alter; trans'fer, transfer'; palate, pallet, palette; fane, fain, feign; bear, bare; bore, bear; council, counsel; coarse, course; ceiling, sealing; drawer, drawer; eminent, imminent; canon, cannon; freeze, frieze, frize; gnaw, nor; hoard, horde; horse, hoarse; heal, heel; haul, hall; key, quay; lead, led; lyre, liar; manor, manner; mien, mean; meat, meet, mete; pare, pear; peas, piece; practice, practise; assent, ascent; rite, right, write, wright; rose, rows; vein, vain; rain, rein, reign; raise, rays, raze; size, sighs; slay, sleigh, slaie; their, there; vale, veil, vail; white, wight; way, weigh, whey; you, yew; fare, fair; deer, dear; hue, hew; high, hie; hole, whole; seen, scene, seine; stile, style; straight, strait; waist, waste; bell, belle; sell, cell; herd, heard; wring, ring; aught, ought; lessen, lesson; profit, prophet; cholera, collar; well, (*a noun*), well, (*an adverb*); perfume, perfume'; subject; subject; object, object'; im'port, import'; pres'ent, present'; absent', ab'sent; sur'vey, survey'; fer'ment, ferment'; tor'ment, torment'; insult', in'sult; com'pact, compact'; con'cert, concert'; dis'count, discount'; rec'ord, record'; ex'tract, extract';\* bow, beau; berry, bury; bough, bow; capitol, capital; cask, casque; censor, censor; claws, clause; site, cite, sight; clime, climb; complement, compliment; creek, creak; flue, flew; blew, blue; fort, forte; frays, phrase; herd, heard; slight, sleight; wave, waive.

OF PHRASES, CLAUSES, AND SENTENCES.

When names, whether proper, common, or abstract, are joined to their subjects by means of connecting words, but without a verb, the collection is called a *phrase*. As, The extent of the city; The path up the mountain; The house by the side of the river.

If the connecting word be a verb, the assemblage of words

\* There are about sixty words in the English language that are thus distinguished by the accent alone. See *Rice's Composition*, page 21st