

Figure.	Mount.	Motion.	Teach.
Form.	Open.	Rebel.	Tolerate.
Fury.	Peace.	Remark.	Tradition.
Grace.	Potent.	Represent.	Tremble.
Harm.	Prefer.	Secret.	Value.
Humor.	Presume.	Spirit.	Vapor.
Imitate.	Proper.	Subscribe.	Vivid.
Indulge.	Pure.	Suffice.	Wit.
Moral.	Reason.		

## XVI.

## SYNONYMES.

Synonymes are words having precisely the same meaning. The number of words, in any language, which are strictly synonymous, are few; but, as was stated in the last lesson, in the English language there are many instances of words, derived from different sources, expressive of precisely the same idea. Thus, the words *swiftness* and *velocity*, *womanish* and *effeminate*, *building* and *edifice*, *fewness* and *paucity*, *brotherly* and *fraternal*, *fatherly* and *paternal*, *motherly* and *maternal*, *yearly* and *annual*, *height* and *altitude*, are words of precisely the same import.

Although, with exceptions of the kind just enumerated, the words strictly synonymous are few, yet it is often the case that one word of similar meaning may be substituted in a sentence for another, without materially altering the idea intended to be expressed. Thus, in the sentence, "I *design* to show the difference in these words," the word *design* may be changed into *intend*, *purpose*, *propose*, or *mean*; thus.

I *design* to show the difference in these words.

I *intend* to show the difference in these words.

I *purpose*, *propose*, or *mean* to show the difference, &c.

The word *show* may, in like manner, be changed into *explain*, *point out*, or *illustrate*; the word *difference* may be changed into *distinction*, and *expressions* may be substituted for *words*, without materially altering the meaning of the sentence.

Such exercises as these give a command of language to the student, and are of great use as a preparation for exercises in prose, as well as verse. But to the poet especially a familiar acquaintance with expressions of similar meaning is absolutely indispensable. Confined as he is to certain rules, it is often the case, that a long word must be substituted for a short one, or a short one for a long, in order to produce the necessa-

ry succession of syllables to constitute the measure, or the harmony, of his verses.

It has been stated, that few words are strictly synonymous. Although, in the sentence just recited, namely, "I *design* to show the difference in these words," it has been observed, that the words *intend*, *purpose*, *propose*, or *mean*, may be substituted for *design*, without materially altering the sense, yet it must be understood, that the words themselves are really different in meaning. The word *design* properly signifies to *mark out*, as *with a pencil*; *purpose* signifies to *set before one's mind as an object of pursuit*; *mean* signifies to *have in the mind*; *propose* properly implies to *offer*, and *intend* expresses the *bending of the mind toward an object*.\*

The words *difficulties*, *embarrassments*, and *troubles*, are often used as words of precisely similar signification; but there is, in reality, considerable difference in their signification. The three terms are all applicable to a person's concerns in life, but *difficulties* relate to the *facility* of accomplishing an undertaking, and imply, that it is not *easily* done. *Embarrassments* relate to the confusion attending a state of debt, and *trouble* to the pain which is the natural consequence of not fulfilling engagements or answering demands. Of the three words, *difficulties* expresses the least, and *troubles* the most. "A young man, on his entrance into the world, will unavoidably experience *difficulties*, if not provided with ample means in the outset. But, let his means be ever so ample, if he have not prudence, and talents fitted for business, he will hardly keep himself free from *embarrassments*, which are the greatest *troubles* that can arise to disturb the peace of a man's mind."

The words *difficulty*, *obstacle*, and *impediment*, although frequently used as synonyms, have nice distinctions in their meanings. *Difficulty*, as has already been observed, relates to the *ease* with which a thing is *done*; *obstacle* signifies the thing which *stands in the way* between the person and the object he has in view; and *impediment* signifies the thing which *entangles the feet*. All of these terms include in their signification, that which interferes either with the actions or views of men. The *difficulty* lies most in the nature and circumstances of the thing itself; the *obstacle* and *impediment* consist of that which is *external* or *foreign*; the *difficulty* interferes with the completion of any work; the *obstacle* interferes with the attainment of any end; the *impediment* interrupts the progress and prevents the execution of one's wishes; the *difficulty* embarrasses; it suspends the powers of acting or deciding; the *obstacle* opposes itself; it is properly met in the way, and intervenes between us and our object; the *impediment* shackles and puts a stop to our proceeding; we speak of encountering a *difficulty*, surmounting an *obstacle*, and removing an *impediment*; we go *through difficulty*, *over an obstacle*, and *pass by impediments*. The disposition of the mind often occasions more *difficulties* in negotiations, than the subjects themselves; the eloquence of Demosthenes was the greatest *obstacle* which Philip of Macedon experienced in his political career; ignorance in the language is the greatest *impediment* which a foreigner experiences in the pursuit of any object out of his own country.

\* The student who wishes a fuller explanation of the difference between these words is referred to that very valuable work entitled, "English Synonymes explained in Alphabetical Order, with copious Illustrations and Examples drawn from the best Writers, by George Crabb, of Magdalen Hall, Oxford."

The following instances show a difference in the meaning of words reputed synonymous, and point out the use of attending, with care and strictness, to the exact import of words.

*Custom, habit.* Custom respects the action; habit, the actor. By custom, we mean the frequent repetition of the same act; by habit, the effect which that repetition produces on the mind or body. (By the custom of walking often in the streets, one acquires a habit of idleness.)

*Pride, vanity.* Pride makes us esteem ourselves; vanity makes us desire the esteem of others. It is just to say, that a man is too proud to be vain.

*Haughtiness, disdain.* Haughtiness is founded on the high opinion we entertain of ourselves; disdain, on the low opinion we have of others.

*Only, alone.* Only imports, that there is no other of the same kind; alone imports being accompanied by no other. An only child is one that has neither brother nor sister; a child alone is one who is left by itself. There is a difference, therefore, in precise language, between these two phrases: "Virtue only makes us happy;" and "Virtue alone makes us happy."

*Wisdom, prudence.* Wisdom leads us to speak and act what is most proper. Prudence prevents our speaking or acting improperly.

*Entire, complete.* A thing is entire when it wants none of its parts; complete when it wants none of the appendages that belong to it. A man may have an entire house to himself, and yet not have one complete apartment.

*Surprised, astonished, amazed, confounded.* I am surprised with what is new or unexpected; I am astonished at what is vast or great; I am amazed at what is incomprehensible; I am confounded by what is shocking or terrible.

*Tranquillity, peace, calm.* Tranquillity respects a situation free from trouble, considered in itself; peace, the same situation with respect to any causes that might interrupt it; calm, with regard to a disturbed situation going before or following it. A good man enjoys *tranquillity*, in himself; *peace*, with others; and *calm*, after a storm.

In a similar manner, differences can be pointed out in the words *conquer*, *vanquish*, *subdue*, *overcome*, and *surmount*. *Conquer* signifies to seek or try to gain an object; *vanquish* implies the binding of an individual; *subdue*

signifies to give or put under; *overcome* expresses the coming over or getting the mastery over one; *surmount* signifies to mount over or to rise above any one. Persons or things are *conquered* or *subdued*; persons, only, are *vanquished*. An enemy or a country is *conquered*; a foe is *vanquished*; people are *subdued*; prejudices and prepossessions are *overcome*; obstacles are *surmounted*. We *conquer* an enemy by whatever means we gain the mastery over him; we *vanquish* him, when by force we make him yield; we *subdue* him by whatever means we check in him the spirit of resistance. A Christian tries to conquer his enemies by kindness and generosity; a warrior tries to *vanquish* them in the field; a prudent monarch tries to *subdue* his rebel subjects by a due mixture of clemency and rigor. One may be *vanquished* in a single battle; one is *subdued* only by the most violent and persevering measures.

William the First *conquered* England by *vanquishing* his rival, Harold; after which he completely *subdued* the English.

*Vanquish* is used only in its proper sense; *conquer* and *subdue* are likewise employed figuratively, in which sense they are analogous to *overcome* and *surmount*. That is *conquered* and *subdued* which is in the mind; that is *overcome* and *surmounted* which is either internal or external. We *conquer* and *overcome* what makes no great resistance; we *subdue* and *surmount* what is violent and strong in its opposition. Dislikes, attachments, and feelings in general, either for or against, are *conquered*; unruly and tumultuous passions are to be *subdued*: a man *conquers* himself, he *subdues* his spirit. One *conquers* by ordinary means and efforts, one *subdues* by extraordinary means. It requires determination and force to *conquer* and *overcome*; patience and perseverance to *subdue* and *surmount*. Whoever aims at Christian perfection must strive with God's assistance to *conquer* avarice, pride, and every inordinate propensity; to *subdue* wrath, anger, lust, and every carnal appetite, to *overcome* temptations, to *vanquish* the tempter, and to *surmount* trials and impediments, which obstruct his course.

The nice distinctions which exist among some words commonly reputed synonymous having now been pointed out, the student may proceed to the exercises of this Lesson according to the following

#### Example.

The words *vision*, *way*, *formerly*, *weaken*, *unimportant*, *see*, and *think*, are proposed; and it is required to find a list of words, having a meaning similar to them respectively.

*Vision*, apparition, phantom, spectre, ghost.

*Way*, manner, method, mode, course, means.

*Formerly*, in times past, in old times, in days of yore, anciently, in ancient times.

*Weaken*, enfeeble, debilitate, enervate, invalidate.

*Unimportant*, insignificant, immaterial, inconsiderable.

*See*, perceive, observe, behold, look at.

*Think*, reflect, ponder, muse, imagine, suppose, believe  
deem, consider.\*

In the sentences which follow, it is required to change the words as in the following examples. The student will notice that every change of words will, in most cases, produce some corresponding change in the idea; but, as the object of the exercise is to give him a command of language, it is not

\* It may here be remarked that phrases, as well as words, may be expressed by appropriate synonymes. Technically speaking, the term synonyme is generally applied to simple terms. But a compound term or phrase may be sometimes expressed by a synonymous word; and a simple term may be also expressed by a synonymous phrase. It will be unnecessary to present in this place, any list of words for the pupil to be exercised upon, as the living teacher, or the pupil himself, may easily select them from any volume at hand. But it may here be remarked that exercises on synonymous phrases may be considered as more valuable than those on simple terms, because they may generally be expressed with greater precision. But the value of exercises of both kinds is clearly and forcibly set forth by Mr. Murray, in the 'Exercises' appended to his larger Grammar, in the following language:

'On variety of Expression. Besides the practice of transposing the parts of sentences, the compiler recommends to tutors, frequently to exercise their pupils, in exhibiting some of the various modes in which the same sentiment may be properly expressed. This practice will extend their knowledge of the language, afford a variety of expression, and habituate them to deliver their sentiments with clearness, ease, and propriety. It will likewise enable those who may be engaged in studying other languages, not only to construe them with more facility into English, but also to observe and apply more readily, many of the turns and phrases, which are best adapted to the genius of those languages.'

A few examples of this kind of exercise, will be sufficient to explain the nature of it, and to show its utility.

The brother deserved censure more than his sister.

The sister was less reprehensible than her brother.

The sister did not deserve reprehension so much as her brother.

Reproof was more due to the brother, than to the sister.

I will attend the conference, if I can do it conveniently.

I intend to be at the conference, unless it should be inconvenient.

If I can do it with convenience, I purpose to be present at the conference.

If it can be done without inconvenience, I shall not fail to attend the conference.

I shall not absent myself from the conference, unless circumstances render it necessary.

I propose to be present at the conference, if I can do so consistently with my other engagements.

I purpose to be at the conference, unless I am prevented by other avocations.

Unless I am restrained by other imperative duties, I shall certainly be at the conference.

I will be at the conference if nothing unforeseen prevents.

If I am master of my own time I will not neglect the conference.

I shall by no means absent myself from the conference if I can possibly attend it.

deemed important in these Exercises to exact strict verbal accuracy.

*Example 1st.*

He continued the work without *stopping*.

He continued the work without *resting*.

He continued the work without *cessation*.

He continued the work without *intermission*.

He continued the work without *delay*.

He continued the work without *leaving off*.

He continued the work without *interruption*.

He continued the work without *obstacle*.

He continued the work without *impediment*, &c.

*Example 2d.*

He is free from *care*.

He is free from *solicitude*.

He is *exempted* from *anxiety*.

He is *without concern*, &c.

*Example 3d.*

I found that he was an enemy.

I found that he was a foe.

I found that he was an adversary.

I found that he was an opponent.

I found that he was an antagonist.

*Exercises.*

Law and order are *not remembered*.

On that *elevated* ground where the *verdant* turf looks *dark* with *fire*, yesterday stood a noble *house*.

*Thinking* deeply on the nature of my *existence*, the contradictions I had *suffered* filled me with *humbleness*.

I began to *think* that there was some *deception* in the sensation conveyed by my eye.

How loved, how valued once avails thee not,

To whom *connected* or by whom begot;

A *pile* of dust is all remains of thee,

'T is all thou art and all the *great* shall be.

The boy *translated* the book to my lodgings, and *conveyed* a *chair* to the table; and I sat down with the intention of *bringing* the first chapter, which *holds* a very interesting story from the French into the English language, in a style suitable to *fetch* the author's meaning clearly to every *intellect*.

We get up from our *thinkings* with hearts softened and *conquered* and we come back into life as into a shadowy *vista* where we have "disquieted ourselves in vain."

Thus he went on until the sun *drew near* to his *mid-day* and the *augmented* heat, preyed upon his *force*. He then *cast round* about him, for some more *commodious* path.

Charity, like the sun, *rubs up* every object on which it shines. He who is *used* to turn aside from the world, and *hold communication* with himself in retirement will sometimes at least hear the *veracities* which the world do not *speak of to him*. A more sound *teacher* will *elevate* his voice and *rouse up* within the heart those *hidden* suggestions which the world had overpowered and *put down*.

Among all our *bad* passions there is a strong and intimate *joining*. When any one of them is *taken as a child* into our family it seldom *sakes* us until it has fathered upon us all its *relations*.

The Creator endowed man with a *lofty* countenance and directed him to look up to heaven.

In the following extracts the student may alter the words in *Italic*, so as to complete the rhymes; as in the following

*Example.*

Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue,  
Than ever man pronounced or angel *chanted*;  
Had I all knowledge, human and *godlike*,  
That thought can reach, or science can define; &c.

*Rhyme completed.*

Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue,  
Than ever man pronounced or angel *sung*;  
Had I all knowledge, human and divine,  
That thought can reach or science can define, &c.

*Exercises.*

A shepherd's dog, unskilled in sports,  
Picked up acquaintance of all *kinds*,  
Among the rest, a fox he knew;  
By frequent chat their friendship *increased*.  
Says Ren'ard, "T is a cruel case,  
That man should stigmatize our *generation*.  
No doubt, among us, rogues you find,  
As among dogs and human *sort*.  
And yet, (unknown to me and you,)  
There may be honest men and *not false*.  
Thus slander tries, whate'er it can,  
To put us on the foot with *the human race*

Not in the solitude,  
Alone, may man commune with Heaven, or *behold*,  
Only in savage *forest*  
And sunny vale the present Deity;  
Or only hear his voice  
Where the winds whisper and the waves are *glad*.

Even here do I behold  
Thy steps, Almighty! here, amidst the crowd  
Through the great city rolled,  
With everlasting murmur, deep and *strong*—  
Choking the ways that wind  
Mongst the proud piles, the work of human kind.

"Without a vain, without a grudging heart,  
To him who gives us all, I yield a *portion*;  
From him you came, from him accept it here—  
A frank and sober, more than costly, *entertainment*."  
He spoke, and bade the welcome tables spread;  
Then talked of virtue till the time of *rest*,  
When the grave household round his hall repair,  
Warned by the bell, and close the hour with *supplication*.  
At length the world, renewed by calm *sleep*,  
Was strong for toil; the dappled morn arose  
Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept  
Near the closed cradle, where an infant *slumbered*,  
And writhed his neck; the landlord's little pride—  
O strange return!—grew black, and gasped, and *expired*.  
Horror of horrors! what! his only son!  
How looked our hermit when the deed was *completed*!  
Not hell, though hell's black jaws in sunder part,  
And breathe blue fire, could more assault his *breast*.  
Confused, and struck with silence at the deed,  
He flies; but, trembling, fails to fly with *haste*.

If all our hopes and all our *apprehensions*,  
Were prisoned in life's narrow *limit*;  
If, travellers through this vale of tears,  
We saw no better world beyond;  
Oh, what could check the rising sigh?  
What earthly thing could pleasure *bestow*?  
Oh, who could venture then to *expire*?  
Oh, who could then endure to live?

A few examples are presented below, in which the words in *Italic* are improperly used for others which in some respects they resemble.

*Example 1st.*

"The lamb is *tame* in its disposition."  
Here the word *tame* is incorrectly used for *gentle*; *tame-ness* is produced by discipline; gentleness belongs to the natural disposition.

## Example 2d.

"Newton discovered the telescope, and Harvey invented the circulation of the blood."

In this example the words *discovered* and *invented* should change places. We discover what was hidden; we *invent* what is new.

## Example 3d.

"Caius Marcus displayed *courage* when he stood unmoved with his hand in the fire; Leonidas displayed his *fortitude* at Thermopylæ when with three hundred Spartans he opposed the entire army of Xerxes."

Here also *courage* and *fortitude* should change places. Courage enables us to meet danger; *fortitude* gives us strength to endure pain.

From such examples the student will learn the importance of proper attention to the exact meaning of words. A loose style of writing is the result of the careless use of words, improperly considered as synonymous.

## Exercises.

I heard a *large* noise, which, though made at a *big* distance, must have been made by a very *great* animal.

The work is *capable* of great improvement, although it was written by a very *susceptible* man.

*Much* men were present, and their united voices caused *many* confusion.

Franklin *framed* the fact that lightning is caused by electricity. Sir Isaac Newton *discovered* the telescope. Solon *invented* a new set of laws for the city of Athens.

A wicked man *fabricates* sorrow for his sins, and often *feigns* an excuse for his crimes.

The book has many *vices*, but the *defect* is not in the author, who has sufficiently shown his abhorrence of *faults*.

I *know* the man and *am acquainted with* his faults. We are agreeably *amazed* to see our friends returning so soon. We are *surprised* that they accomplished their business so early, as well as *astonished* at the unexpected events which nearly threatened their ruin.

We often know the *spot* where a thing is, but it is not easy to find out the exact *place* where it happened.

When *dissensions* arise among neighbors, their passions often interfere to hinder accommodations; when members of a family consult interest or humor, rather than affection, there will necessarily be *variances*; -and

when many member of a community have an equal liberty to express their opinions, there will necessarily be *disagreements*.

A misplaced economy in people of property is *low*, but swearing and drunkenness are *meaner* vices.

We perform many duties only as the *occasion* offers, or as the *opportunity* requires.

It is the duty of a person to *govern* those who are under him in all matters wherein they are incompetent to *rule* themselves.

Fashion and caprice *regulate* the majority as the time of one clock *rules* that of many others.

*Exuberance* of imagination and *luxuriance* of intellect are the greatest gifts of which a poet can boast.

We may be *eminent* and *illustrious* for things good, bad, or indifferent, we may be *distinguished* for our singularities; we may be *conspicuous* for that which is the subject of vulgar discourse; but we can be *distinguishea* only for that which is really good and praiseworthy.

Lovers of fame are sometimes able to render themselves *eminent* for their vices or absurdities, but nothing is more gratifying to a man than to render himself *illustrious* for his professional skill. It is the lot of few to be *noted*, and these few are seldom to be envied.

Water and snow *amass* by the continual accession of fresh quantities, the ice *accumulates* in the river until it is frozen over.

The industrious man *amasses* guineas and *accumulates* wealth.

France has long been celebrated for its *health*; and many individuals resort thither for the benefit of their *salubrity*.

The places destined for the education of youth should be *salutary*; the diet of the young *healthy* rather than delicate, and in all their disorders, care should be taken to administer the most *wholesome* remedies.

A nation may be *extravagant* of its resources, and a government may be *profuse* of the public money; but no individual should be *wasteful* of what is not his own, nor *prodigal* of what he gives another.

There are but few *remarkable* things; but many things are *extraordinary*.

A man may have a *distaste* for his ordinary occupations without any apparent cause; and after long illness he will frequently take a *dislike* to the food or the amusement which before afforded him pleasure.

It is good to suppress unfounded *disgusts*; it is difficult to overcome a strong *dislike*; and it is advisable to divert our attention from objects calculated to create *distaste*.\*

\* Words are sometimes similar in sound, although different in spelling and signification. Such are the words *sight, cite, and site; raise and raze; aisle and isle; scent, cent, and sent, &c.* Although these are not, technically speaking, to be considered as synonymous, they may be here mentioned in order to caution the student with regard to the use of them. The verbs *lie* and *lay*, also, although entirely different in meaning, have some parts in common, which are frequently misused. The teacher who wishes for exercises of this kind, to be corrected by the pupil, will find a large collection of them in a little work recently published by a distinguished teacher of this city, entitled "The Companion to Spelling Books, in which the Orthography and Meaning of many thousand Words, most liable to be misspelled and misused, are impressed upon the Memory by a regular Series of Written Exercises." The work is by that eminent teacher, Mr. William B. Fowle. See also the exercises on words, page 17.

## XVII.

## METHODS OF INVERSION AND TRANSPOSITION.

The same idea may be expressed in a great variety of ways by the methods of inversion and transposition suggested in the following examples.

*Example 1st.*

By changing active verbs into passive, and the contrary; thus, *By the active verb.* A multitude of delighted guests soon filled the places of those who refused to come. *By the passive verb.* The places of those who refused to come were soon filled by a multitude of delighted guests.

*Example 2d.*

By using the case absolute, instead of the nominative case and its verb, and the contrary; as, *The class having recited their lessons,* the teacher dismissed them. *The class recited their lessons* and the teacher dismissed them. Of these two sentences the former is preferable, because it preserves the unity of the sentence, which requires that the subject or nominative should be changed as little as possible during the course of the sentence. Another recommendation of the former expression is, that it throws out the conjunction, which should never be unnecessarily introduced into a sentence.

*Example 3d.*

*Infinitive mood or substantive and participial phrases instead of nominative or objective nouns, and the reverse;* as, His having been unfortunate is no disgrace; instead of, His misfortunes are no disgrace.

Diligence, industry, and proper improvement of time are material duties of the young; or, To be diligent, industrious, and properly to improve time are material duties of the young.

*Example 4th.*

*By the negation or affirmation of the contrary;* as, Solon the Athenian effected a great change in the government of his

country. Solon, the Athenian, effected *no small* change in the government of his country.

The beauty of the earth is *as conspicuous* as the grandeur of the heavens. The beauty of the earth is *not less conspicuous* than the grandeur of the heavens.

*Example 5th.*

*By reversing the corresponding parts of the sentence, with a negative adverb;* as, The grandeur of the heavens is *not* more conspicuous than the beauty of the earth.

*The negation of the contrary.\** The beauty of the earth is *not less conspicuous* than the grandeur of the heavens.

*By a comparison.* There is as much beauty in the earth, as there is grandeur in the heavens.

*By an expletive cause.* There is no less beauty in the earth than grandeur in the heavens.

*Example 6th.*

*By changing the participial phrases into a personal verb with a conjunction;* as, Charles, having been deprived of the help of tutors, neglected his studies. Charles was deprived of the help of tutors, and therefore he neglected his studies.

*Example 7th.*

*Change of the nominative and verb into an infinitive phrase;* as, He sacrificed his future ease and reputation *that he might enjoy* present pleasure. He sacrificed his future ease and reputation *to enjoy* present pleasure.

*Example 8th.*

*The infinitive changed into an objective noun;* as, Canst thou expect *to escape* the hand of vengeance? Canst thou expect *an escape* from the hand of vengeance?

*Or into a finite verb with its nominative;* as, Canst thou expect that thou *shalt escape* the hand of vengeance?

\* The negative adjective is generally more elegant than the negative adverb. Thus, "I was *unable*," is to be preferred to the expression, "I was *not able*." "Invisible," rather than "not visible;" "Inconsistent," rather than "not consistent," &c.