

rejects all arguments of consolation; but at length, if applied with tenderness, calmly and willingly acquiesces in them.*

Very truly yours,
GEORGE C. S. PARKER

Henry Dix, Esq.

Exercises in Epistolary Writing.

- A Letter to a friend announcing any event, real or imaginary.
- " " the inhabitants of the moon, or the stars, or a comet
- " " any character in history.
- " " any one in a foreign country.
- " containing a journal of occurrences.
- " " criticisms on works that have been read.
- " " opinions on subjects discussed at any seminary
- " " suggestions caused by daily studies.
- " " requesting the acceptance of some present
- " describing a sunrise at sea.
- " " sunset "
- " from Palestine, describing the country, &c.
- " " England, " " "
- " " France, " " "
- " " Italy, " " "
- " " Greece, " " "
- " describing the personal appearance and style of preaching of
- " some eminent divine.
- " the Falls of Niagara.
- " the White Mountains.
- " Lake Erie, &c.
- " the Pyramids of Egypt.
- " Mount Vesuvius.

LXV.

REGULAR SUBJECTS.

ON A SUBJECT, AND THE METHOD OF TREATING IT.

In writing on a regular subject, the following directions are given by Mr. Walker, as suggestions for the different divisions, as well as for the systematic train of reflections.

* This letter is an original of Pliny the Younger to Marcellinus, translated by Melmoth. The address, &c. has been altered to accommodate it to the purposes of this volume.

The definition; the cause; the antiquity, or novelty; the universality or locality; the effects; namely, the goodness or badness, or the advantages or disadvantages.

1st. If your subject require explanation, define it or explain it at large.

2nd. Show what is the cause of your subject; that is, what is the occasion of it, or what it is derived from.

3d. Show whether your subject be ancient or modern; that is, what was in ancient times, and what it is at present.

4th. Show whether your subject relates to the whole world, or only to a particular part of it.

5th. Examine whether your subject be good or bad; show wherein its goodness or badness consists, and what are the advantages or disadvantages that arise from it.*

Example.

ON GOVERNMENT.

Definition. Government is the direction and restraint exercised over the actions of men in communities, societies, or states. It controls the administration of public affairs, according to the principles of an established constitution, a code of written laws, or by well-known usages; or it may be administered, as in some countries, by the arbitrary edicts of the sovereign. Government is the soul of society: it is that order among rational creatures which produces almost all the benefits they enjoy. A nation may be considered as a large family;—all the inhabitants are, as it were, relations; and the supreme power, wherever it is lodged, is the common parent of every individual.

Cause. The necessity of government lies in the nature of man. Interest and selfishness, unrestrained by salutary laws and restrictions, would be the controlling principle of every man's actions, uninfluenced by a proper regard for the rights of others. It is necessary, therefore, to have some restraint laid upon every man—some power which shall control him, and impel him to what is right, and deter him from what is wrong, and this power is government. To this restraint every one must submit; and if in such submission any one finds it necessary to give up

* These directions are thus versified by Mr. Walker:

If first your subject definition need,
Define your subject first, and then proceed;
Next, if you can, find out your subject's cause,
And show from whence its origin it draws:
Ancient or modern may your subject be,
Pursue it, therefore, to antiquity;
Your subject may to distant nations roam,
Or else relate to objects nearer home:
The subject which you treat is good, or ill
Or else a mixture of each principle:
And ere your subject a conclusion know,
The advantage or the disadvantage show.

a portion of the rights with which he fancies that God and nature endowed him, he will be consoled by the reflection that all have to make the sacrifice, and that the concession is made for the protection of his property and his life, for without government neither would be safe.

Antiquity. Accordingly, we find, so deeply seated is the necessity for government, that in the earliest ages of the world a kind of government was existing among all tribes and nations; and so remarkable is this fact, that almost all that history records of the earliest people is the history of these kings.

Universality. In every part of the world, also, at the present day, where human creatures are to be seen, there also some kind of government is found among them. Even the rudest among the savage nations have their kings and chiefs, whose word is law, and whose power is seldom disputed.

Locality. But government, in its most perfect form, is generally found among the most civilized and enlightened people. Almost all the different kinds of government now existing, or that ever did exist, may be reduced to three, namely, Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy. Under one of these forms every nation now known to exist is regulated and controlled. The painted Indian, whose life and death are at the mercy of his sachem, the naked African, who looks in terror at his king, and the wild Arab, whose chief is the sovereign arbiter in the division of the plunder obtained by the horde, all are in fact the subjects of a monarch. Rome, under the decemvirs, and Venice and Genoa under their nobles, presented the spectacle of an Aristocracy; while Athens, luxurious Athens, invested the chief power in an assembly of the people, and presented to the world a splendid example of a Democracy. Each of these different forms is attended by its own peculiar advantages and disadvantages which the unity of our subject does not permit us now to discuss. But the advantages of some form of government remains yet to be presented.

Advantages. Order is said to be the first law of heaven. But among men it is essentially necessary for their very existence. Man, uncontrolled and unrestrained, would ever be invading his brother's rights. Nothing would be safe. Might would be right, and the strongest might revel in the possession of that which the weaker had no power to keep from him. Laws emanate from government. Without government there could be no laws. It is the laws which protect every man in the enjoyment of his life, his liberty, and his possessions. Without laws, property would not be respected; the weak would be the slave of the strong, and the strong could enjoy their ill-gotten possessions only so long as they could maintain their ascendancy. It is government, therefore, that secures to every one the enjoyment of what he possesses, and restrains the strong from encroaching on the rights of the weak.

Disadvantages. Every form of government is liable to abuse. They who are in power are engaged in a constant struggle to maintain that power, while the ambitious and the aspiring are eagerly watching their opportunity to supplant them. This gives rise to parties and cabals, to plots and intrigues, to treachery, to treason and rebellion, to civil wars and family feuds, in which the innocent often share the punishment prepared for the guilty. But these evils are light in comparison with those which spring from anarchy, or want of government. It becomes every

one, therefore, to lend his aid in support of the government under which it has pleased providence to place him, until that government shows by its actions that the good of the people for whom it was instituted is not its aim, and thereby renders rebellion a palliated evil, if not a virtue.

Exercises.

On Time.	On Justice.	On Joy.
Temperance.	The Mind.	Gaming.
Modesty.	The corporeal faculties.	Industry.
Sculpture.	Forgiveness.	Luxury.
Clemency.	Affection filial.	Patience.
Religion.	Affection parental, &c.	Pride.
Morning.	Cruelty.	Perseverance.
Evening.	Faith.	Conscience.
Day.	Happiness.	Compassion.
Night.	Flattery.	Equity.
Ambition.	Indolence.	Generosity.
Revenge.	Justice.	Melancholy.
Honor.	Magnanimity.	Humanity.
Virtue.	Politeness.	Ingratitude.
Education.	Prudence.	Fragility.
Truth.	Courage.	Patriotism.
The World.	Fortitude.	Prodigality.
Anger.	Disinterestedness.	Poverty.
Knowledge.	Fidelity.	

LXVI.

THEMES.

Themes are subjects, or topics, on which a person writes or speaks.

A theme, as defined by Mr. Walker, is the proving of some truth.

Themes are divided into two classes, the simple and the complex.

Simple themes comprehend such as may be expressed by one term or more, without conveying either an affirmation or a negation. Such as Logic, Education, Habit, The Fall of the Roman Empire, The Institution of Chivalry.*

* Such, also, are the subjects of the last Exercises under the head of Regular Subjects.

Complex themes comprehend such propositions as admit of proof or illustration; expressing a judgment which of course may be denied without invoking any positive contradiction in the meaning of the terms. The following are examples. "Logic is a useful study." "Youth is the season of improvement." "Wisdom is better than riches." "A public is preferable to a private education."

In the last set of exercises the course was laid down for the management of "a regular subject," which is prescribed by Mr. Walker in his "Teacher's Assistant." What he calls "regular subjects" are designed for simple themes. The course prescribed by Mr. Jardine, in his Outlines of a Philosophical Education, is less mechanical, and is to be preferred, because the mind of the student is less fettered by "leading strings," and left more to its own resources. The following are his preliminary remarks:

"To give an illustration of a simple theme I shall suppose the subject to be Logic, and shall shortly apply the scholastic rules to the structure of the essay which should be composed upon it."

"The first rule directs the student to begin by fixing exactly the meaning of the term, which is the subject of the theme, removing every thing that is doubtful or equivocal in its signification; and, when difficulties of that kind occur, the true import of the word must be determined by the canons of etymology, or by the practice of the best writers."

"By the second rule, which is the principle one, he is required to explain the essential and accidental qualities of the subject, here supposed to be *logic*; and to enumerate them, according to their order and importance, and with a reference to the end which is contemplated by the logician. That end is the establishment of truth or the refutation of error, and it is accomplished by the application of those rules of right reasoning, in which the art of *logic* may be said to consist. In these rules are included definition, division, classification, as well as those general directions relative to propositions which are derived from the ancient dialectics. But it is unnecessary here to enlarge; for the most important of the rules, for both kinds of themes, are the same, in so far, at least, as the object of both is the attainment of clear notions, lucid arrangement, and perspicuous expression."

"The special rules which relate to the management of complex themes, may be shortly enumerated. That no propositions, advanced as the ground of inference and deduction should be admitted, but upon the best and most solid evidence, arising from sense, from consciousness, or experience, or from undeniable truths, such as axioms and intuitive propositions; or lastly, upon testimony, analogy, facts already proved, the undeviating laws of nature, &c.—that the meaning of the subject, and predicates of the radical proposition be accurately fixed—that the extent of the affirmation or negation be exactly ascertained, so that the proposition may be stated in the most intelligible manner, and the logical rules of division be applied—that the attention be next directed to the kind of evidence by which the proposition is established—and the arguments to be introduced in such order, that those which precede shall throw light on those that follow, and form a connected chain of comparisons, by which ulti-

mately the agreement or disagreement, expressed in the proposition, shall be made manifest; and finally that all objections against the proposition be candidly and explicitly answered. The proof, when it is long, may be concluded with a recapitulation, containing the united strength of all the arguments which have been brought to confirm it."

"It is impossible to prescribe rules which shall exactly accord with the variety of subjects which may come under this order of themes, and, therefore, much must be left to the judgment and experience of the teacher. It is not every theme that requires the application of all the rules. The first rule may be sometimes necessary; the second is indispensable on all subjects; the other rules are only occasionally required;—a rigid adherence to these rules might render composition stiff and formal; but that would, in a great measure, be prevented, by frequent use and judicious application."

"Though, in the management of complex themes, the rules of demonstration cannot be always followed, yet the clearness, certainty, and progress of that kind of reasoning, ought to be the standard, as the best and most effectual mode of procuring the assent of the mind. Let the young composer imitate the geometrician, in first attempting to establish clearly the datum on which the deduction rests, and then proceed, with gradual and increasing strength, to the conclusion." *

* It may, perhaps, be objected that the course here prescribed by Mr. Jardine is too difficult for the young student. If perfect or finished compositions were required, there might be good grounds for such an opinion. In all cases, perfect specimens must be preceded by many unsuccessful efforts. An eminent writer has candidly acknowledged that he would be ashamed to disclose the many unsuccessful attempts he had made, before he could produce any thing worthy of public attention. Imperfect, then, as the first essays of the student may be, they constitute the natural and indispensable steps which lead to higher degrees of perfection.

The following extract from one of Mrs. Sherwood's "Social Tales" is so pertinent to the subject, that it is thought that it will be useful to the student to present it in this place. The tale from which it is extracted is entitled "*Hoc Age*."

"It was the custom of my father, when I was a girl, to require of me every Saturday, a few pages written upon a given subject. Well do I remember the hours which I sometimes used to spend on these unfortunate Saturday mornings, in endeavoring to elicit sparks of genius from the cold iron of my brain; and how pleased I was wont to be, when any thing like a bright idea presented itself to my imagination: such were welcome to me as angel's visits, which are said to be few and far between.

"Much of my success, however, I found, depended upon the subject which was given me. When these subjects were fruitful and congenial to my feelings, the task was comparatively easy; but when they were new and strange to me, my labor was greatly increased, and so far from being able to put my ideas into any new form, I seemed to lose the power of expressing them, even in the most ordinary way.

"Judge, then, what must have been my despair, when on a certain Saturday, having stolen up into my father's study, with that sort of quiet pace which children use when they are going about any thing they do not much relish, (for the motion of the foot is a never-varying index in a simple mind, of the feelings of the heart.) I stood behind his chair as he sat writing, and said, 'Papa, please for the subject of my theme, to day?'

"*Hoc age,*' he replied, still writing on.

"Of one thing," continues Mr. Jardine, "the youngest student must be made sensible, from the evidence of his own consciousness, that he cannot expect to compose even the simplest theme without directing and continuing his power of thinking upon it."

"Instructions cannot be too plain nor too minute, when directed to young persons entering upon a new and difficult course of study. The experience of the perplexities which assail the juvenile mind, in its first endeavors to discover materials and to find expressions, has induced me to lay aside the authority of the teacher, and to place myself as the companion or friend of the student, in those moments when his difficulties are most formidable."

"I suppose, then, 'Emulation' chosen as the subject of a simple theme, which the student is required to explain and illustrate, from lectures, books

"What, papa?" I said.

"Hoc age, child," he answered; "Hoc age—go and make the best of it, but do n't disturb me."

"Hoc age," I repeated, as I went down stairs. "Hoc age—it is Latin; I know it is Latin. Hoc is this, and it is neuter, and the word thing is understood; and age is do; I know enough of Latin for this; therefore, Hoc age means, Do this thing."

"So I mended a pen, and took a sheet of paper, and wrote 'Hoc age' in a fair hand at the top of the paper; and then I added the translation; and then wrote my own name in one corner, and the date at another; and then looked out of the window, and up to the ceiling, and wrote again, and actually made out a sentence to this effect: 'It is our duty, under every circumstance of life, to attend to this admonition;' and there I stopped, for the question suggested itself, to wit, what admonition? Further, there fore, I could not get, and when my father called me to dinner, I had not advanced an inch beyond the full round stop after the word admonition."

"My father was one of the kindest and gentlest of parents, and when I presented my vacant sheet to him, he smiled, and said, 'T is as much as I expected; but I am perfectly satisfied, nevertheless. If you have spent your morning in considering the nature of the injunction meant to be expressed in the words 'Hoc age,' you have not lost your time.'" My father then entered into an explanation of the subject, and pointed out to me that these two words were equivalent to the Scripture injunction, "Whatever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." And then he showed me that the world abounded with persons who never seemed to give their full and undivided attention to any thing which they had to do, and in consequence, when suddenly called upon to act or speak with promptitude, were never ready and never had their words or their actions at command. "Hence," continued he, "on smaller occasions, they are for ever wasting their time, and on more important ones losing advantages and opportunities never to be recovered." My father added much more to me on this subject; but as I shall hope, in what follows, to elucidate what he said by a very appropriate example, I shall cite no more of his valuable discourse, with the exception of one remark only, which was most important; it was to this effect: that the salvation of the soul is the thing to be done in the first instance; the 'Hoc age' to which every human creature should principally attend—all other concerns being made subordinate to this one object, and all other efforts or exertions being in the end wholly inefficient in producing the happiness of any individual, when this one thing needful is neglected."

The whole of the tale, of which the above extract is merely the introduction, may well be recommended to the perusal of both teachers and students.

and observations, in such a way as to communicate a distinct account of emulation to all who shall read his essay. Where are the materials to be found? His first recourse would probably be to authors who have treated of emulation, from whom he might take what serves his purpose. But he is instructed that there is a nearer and much more fertile source, which will furnish him with materials, providing he seek for them in the proper way. And what is that source? His own mind, working upon the materials which he already possesses. Let him put the question to himself, What is emulation? Here let him recollect the early scenes in which this feeling was first excited. On the verge of childhood, he must remember the language used in amusements, 'I can do this, and you cannot,' 'I shall be at that mark before you.' He may have, perhaps, read the beautiful description of Gray, in the distant prospect of Eton College:

Who, foremost, now delights to cleave
With pliant arms, the glassy wave, &c.

Or the description of the Trojan games, in the sixth book of the *Æneid*. He may recollect that, when at school, he contended for the first place in his class, or may be now contending for the first prize at college. Upon the recollection of these scenes, and from associated feelings which exist in his mind, he is in some sort prepared to answer the question, What is 'emulation?' A desire and endeavor to excel others,—to be the first in any competition."

"From whence proceeds, or what excites this desire and endeavor? From obtaining an object first, which other competitors wish to possess. Is it the intrinsic value of the object of competition? No;—it may be a sprig of laurel,—a palm-branch,—a fox's tail,—a medal of little value,—a book, a seat of preferment or of honor. From what, then, does the object receive its value? It is the circumstance of obtaining it before other competitors. And what is it that gives such value to the being first in the competition? It is the presence of many spectators and admirers. It is their reflected praise, which animates the competitors,—which makes the breast of the student palpitate when he receives the prize. Let the competition take place in a desert, where there are no spectators, the charm is dissolved, and the competitors walk over the course without pleasure or expectation."

"Again, what are the effects of emulation? When this principle operates with full effect, and under control of virtue and honor, it produces vigorous conflict, persevering exertion, contempt of difficulties and dangers, increasing hopes, eager expectations, and, in the moments of success, exquisite delight. The student may have a clearer view of this generous and energetic feeling, by turning his attention to the histories of great characters and great events, and distinguishing emulation from the effects of other feelings not unfrequently associated with it. He will thus be enabled to draw a line of distinction between it and its collateral, ambition and fame. These fix upon the possession of their objects without any view of competition, or of the means by which they may be obtained, whereas the pleasures of emulation spring from the love of excellence and superiority."

"The experience of competitions, in which the student has been engaged, or of those which he has observed, will suggest to him, that emulation in its purest form can only take place where the prize is won by the personal exertions of the individual. When any undue means are used

to obtain it, or any obstacle indirectly thrown in the way of a rival competitor, the generous flame of emulation is extinguished, and a mean degrading spirit is substituted in its place. One would think that the mortification which the student must suffer, when he receives a prize which he is conscious he did not deserve, should dispose him to reject it as altogether unworthy of his acceptance. The student cannot have forgotten the manner in which the friendly stratagem of Nisus, in favor of Euryalus, was received by the other competitors at the celebration of the Trojan games."

"An enlarged view should be taken of the field of competition. That field may be called up by the imagination. The person in whom the true spark of emulation is kindled, may imagine himself placed upon the same arena with the competitors of other centuries and other ages. Virgil endeavored to rival the fame of Homer, and Cicero that of Demosthenes. When Cæsar passed the statue of Alexander, he is said to have burst into tears, because the Macedonian had surpassed him in military achievements. When ambition and emulation are conjoined in the same character occupied in similar exploits, it requires some discrimination to determine what belongs to each."

This sketch, of course, is not intended as a specimen of a simple theme on emulation, but merely as a general outline of the materials, with the view of pointing out to the student the course he should take to find them. He has only to embrace the subject of the theme closely, — to apply to his own mind for light and knowledge, — to press himself with interrogatories relative to his demands, — to follow the natural associations of things, and he will soon find materials enough, and arrive at much information which he could not otherwise have conceived to be within his reach. The concluding step is to select from these materials, and to arrange them according to the particular end he has in view. If this part of his work be rightly performed, he will not find much difficulty in suitably expressing what he clearly and distinctly knows."

[A list of subjects for Exercises will be found in the last article, under the head of Regular Subjects.]

If the course thus laid down by Mr. Jardine for the management of themes, be found too loose or too difficult, the student may follow the more mechanical one of Mr. Walker. His course for regular subjects or simple themes has already been given. The following is his course, with regard to themes in general:*

After the Theme or Truth is laid down, the Proof consists of the following parts:

1st. The Proposition or Narrative; where we show the meaning of the Theme, by amplifying, paraphrasing, or explaining it more at large.

* It will be noticed that Mr. Walker designates *simple themes* as *Regular Subjects*; while he embraces, under the term of Theme, those only which in general are called *complex* themes. This accords with his definition of a theme, which he says is the "proving of some truth."

2d. The Reason; where we prove the truth of the Theme by some reason or argument.

3d. The Confirmation; where we show the unreasonableness of the contrary opinion; or, if we cannot do that, we try to bring some other reason in support of the former.

4th. The Simile; where we bring in something in nature or art, similar to what is affirmed in our Theme, for illustrating the truth of it.

5th. The Example; where we bring instances from History to corroborate the truth of our Theme.

6th. The testimony or Quotation; where we bring in proverbial sentences or passages from good authors, which show that others think as we do.

7th. The Conclusion; when we sum up the whole and show the practical use of the Theme, by concluding with some pertinent observations.*

Example.

TOO MUCH FAMILIARITY GENERALLY BREEDS CONTEMPT.

Proposition. There is no observation more generally true than that our esteem of a person seldom rises in proportion to our intimacy with him.

Reason. Such is the general disguise men wear, that their good qualities commonly appear at first, and their bad ones are discovered by degrees; and this gradual discovery of their

* The rules are thus versified by Mr. Walker

The Proposition, the Reason, the Confirmation, the Simile, the Example, the Testimony, and the Conclusion.

The Theme at large the Proposition gives,
And the same thought in other words conceives
The Reason shows the Proposition true,
By bringing arguments and proofs to view;
The Confirmation proves th' opinion right,
By showing how absurd 's the opposite.
If that 's not to be done, it tries to explore
Some proof in aid of what was given before.
The Simile an apt resemblance brings,
Which shows the theme is true in other things;
The Example instances from History draws,
That by mankind's experience prove our cause;
The Testimony to the wise appeals,
And by their suffrage our opinion seals.
Some useful observations come at last,
As a conclusion drawn from what is past.

failings and weaknesses, must necessarily lessen our opinion of them.

Confirmation. It is the nature of man to have a high opinion of any excellence he is not fully acquainted with: he is prone to imagine it much greater than it really is; and therefore when it becomes thoroughly known, the expectation is at an end, and the good qualities which we at first admired, having no longer the recommendation of novelty, become not only less striking, but often produce indifference and contempt.

Simile. As the frogs in the fable were at first terrified by the noise of the falling of the log which Jupiter threw down into the lake for their king, but by degrees became so familiar with their wooden monarch as to despise it; so kings have often found by mixing too familiarly with their subjects, and masters by being too free with their servants, that they have lost their importance in proportion to their condescension.

Example. James the First, King of England, was a man of considerable learning, and had as few bad qualities as the generality of his subjects; but, by jesting with his attendants, and descending to childish familiarity with them, scarcely any King of England was held in greater contempt.

Testimony. A celebrated teacher has said that young people cannot be too much on their guard against falling into too great familiarity with their companions; for they are sure to lose the good opinion of those with whom they are familiar.

Conclusion. It may, therefore, be laid down, as confirmed by reason and experience, that nothing requires greater caution in our conduct, than our behaviour to those with whom we are most intimate.

Exercises.

The necessity of Exercise.
 The proper use of Amusements.
 On Laudable Exertion.
 The importance of a good character.
 The Folly of Dissipation.
 Want of Piety arises from the want of sensibility.
 The importance of Hospitality and the civilities of common life.
 Religion consistent with true politeness.
 On the pleasures of Conversation.
 The dignity of virtue amid corrupt examples.
 The duties and pleasures of Reflection.
 The obligations of Learning to the Christian Religion.
 On Decency as the only motive of our apparent virtues.

The importance of the government of temper.
 The value of the art of printing.
 The baneful effects of Indulgence.
 The influence of the Great.
 The Beauty and Happiness of an open behaviour and an ingenuous Disposition.
 The utility of religious ceremonies.
 A good heart necessary to enjoy the beauties of nature.
 The wisdom of aiming at perfection.
 Family Disagreements the frequent cause of immoral conduct.
 The selfishness of men of the world.
 The necessity of Temperance to the health of the mind.
 Advantages of music as a recreation.
 Necessity of attention to things as well as books.
 The influence of fashion.
 An honorable death preferable to a degraded life.

LXVII.

ABSTRACTS.

An abstract is a summary, or epitome, containing the substance, a general view, or the principal heads of a treatise or writing.

The taking of abstracts from sermons, speeches, essays, &c. is an exercise which the student will find exceedingly useful in the cultivation of habits of attention, as well as of analysis. In writing abstracts, it is not necessary to endeavor to recall the exact language of the original, the purpose of the exercise is fully subserved, if the principal idea be recorded.

Example.

ON DIVERSIONS.

It is generally taken for granted, by most young people of fortune, that diversion is the principle object of life; and this opinion is often carried to such an excess, that pleasure seems to be the great ruling principle which directs all their thoughts, words, and actions, and which makes all the serious duties of life heavy and disgusting. This opinion, however, is no less absurd than unhappy, as may be shown by taking the other side of the question, and proving that there is no pleasure and enjoyment of life without labor.

The words commonly used to signify diversion are these three, namely, relaxation, amusement, and recreation; and the precise meaning of these words may lead us to very useful instruction. The idea of relaxation is taken from a bow, which must be *unbent* when it is not wanted to be used.

that its elasticity may be preserved. Amusement literally means an occasional forsaking of the *Muses*, or the laying aside our books when we are weary with study; and recreation is the refreshing or recreating of our spirits when they are exhausted with labor, that they may be ready, in due time, to resume it again.

From these considerations it follows that the idle man who has no work can have no play; for, how can he be relaxed who is never bent? How can he leave the *Muses* who is never with them? How can play refresh him who is never exhausted with business?

When diversion becomes the business of life, its nature is changed all rest presupposes labor. He that has no variety can have no enjoyment; he is surfeited with pleasure, and in the better hours of reflection would find a refuge in labor itself. And, indeed, it may be observed, that there is not a more miserable, as well as a more worthless being, than a young person of fortune, who has nothing to do but find out some new way of doing nothing.

A sentence is passed upon all poor men, that if they will not work, they shall not eat; and a similar sentence seems passed upon the rich, who, if they are not in some respect useful to the public, are almost sure to be come burthensome to themselves. This blessing goes along with every aseful employment; it keeps a man on good terms with himself, and consequently in good spirits, and in a capacity of pleasing and being pleased with every innocent gratification.

As labor is necessary to procure an appetite to the body, there must also be some previous exercise of the mind to prepare it for enjoyment; indulgence on any other terms is false in itself, and ruinous in its consequences. Mirth degenerates into senseless riot, and gratification soon terminates in satiety and disgust.

Abstract of the above.

1. It is a common error to suppose that diversion should form the business of life, the contrary being true.
2. This is proved by the derivation of the words used to express diversion — viz., relaxation, amusement, and recreation.
3. They who have no labor can have no diversion.
4. When diversion becomes labor, it is no longer diversion.
5. All men must have occupation, or be miserable.
6. There must be labor of mind as well as labor of the body, for the well being of both.

Exercises.

Exercises in the practice of taking abstracts are frequently presented by the preacher. They may also be found in volumes of sermons, in periodical papers and essays, in common text-books in literary institutions, and in the wide circle of English literature. It is not, therefore, deemed important to present them in detail in this volume.

LXVIII.

The faculty of invention, it is thought, has been sufficiently exercised in the preceding principles to enable the student now to fill out an essay from heads, outlines, or abstracts, as in the following

Example.

ON INDEPENDENCE.

HEADS.

1. No being perfectly independent but God.
2. The dependence created by trade and commerce is, in fact, a kind of independence.
3. Pecuniary dependence the most humiliating of any.
4. Pecuniary dependence naturally degrades the mind and depraves the heart.
5. Young people ought to be particularly careful to avoid pecuniary dependence.

The Essay founded on the above heads.

Independence, in the largest and most unlimited sense, is to created beings, a state impossible. No being is perfectly independent, but the One Supreme Being: all other beings, by their very nature, are dependent, in the first place, on their Creator, and in the second, on their fellow-creatures; from whose good-will and assistance they derive their chief happiness.

This dependence, however, consists in a mutual interchange of good offices; in such a suitable return of favors received, as makes each party obliged to the other, and at the same time leaves each other independent. This kind of dependence we find in different countries, that trade in commodities which are necessary to both; by which means, they become useful, but not indebted to each other.

But the most general sense of independence is that of property. The circulating medium, called money, and which is the representative of all most every thing that we wish, has in it something so sacred, that we can never receive it gratuitously, without losing our dignity and becoming dependant. We may ask for favors of another kind, and though they are granted to us, we are not degraded; but if once we ask a pecuniary favor we lose our independence, and become enslaved. No more can we converse with our creditor on the same equal terms that we did before. No more can we controvert his opinion, and assert our own: a conscious in

feriority has deprived us of freedom, and we are the slave of him who was formerly our equal.

But the most deplorable part of this picture is, that dependence not only enslaves the mind, but tends to deprave the heart. We feel ourselves degraded by receiving pecuniary favors, and conscious of what our creditor must think of us, when we cannot return them, we are apt to view him with an eye of jealousy and distaste; and thus become guilty of one of the worst of crimes, the crime of ingratitude.

Young people, who know but little either of themselves or of the world, are apt to think such pictures of human nature misanthropical. They are, however, such as have been drawn by the experience of all ages and nations; and concur with several other traits to show us the natural depravity of man. If, therefore, we wish to preserve ourselves independent, — if we wish to maintain a proper dignity of character and freedom of opinion, — if we desire, above all things, to preserve ourselves from that depravity of heart, which we are so apt to slide into when we cannot pay our debts, — let us beware of borrowing money; for, as our immortal Shakspeare says,

“A loan oft loseth both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.”

Exercises.

On the Multiplication of Books.

1. No amusements more attainable, or attended with more satisfaction, than those derived from literary subjects.
2. The student can enjoy in his library all that has employed the active mind of man.
3. Reading especially gratifying to those who are confined by profession or by circumstances.
4. Much of the student's time necessarily employed in retracing the progress of those who have gone before him.
5. Modern authors justify to themselves and others the addition which they make to the number of books.

2.

On the means of rendering old age honorable and comfortable.

1. Man degenerates in his nature as he advances in life.
2. That state is wretched, when the heart loses its sensibility.
3. Old age, though insensible to many pleasures, has a keen perception of pain.
4. Old age not always attended with natural infirmity.
5. A life of temperance preserves the equanimity of the mind.
6. A devotional spirit will afford the most lively enjoyments.
7. These enjoyments increase with the nearness of the approach of fruition.
8. That life honorable which affords the most useful lessons of virtue.
9. That life comfortable, which, although unattended with absolute enjoyment, has a solace for pain and a prospect of enjoyment near.

3.

Moderation in our wishes necessary.

1. Man's active mind seldom satisfied with its present condition.
2. Restlessness and excitement prevalent.
3. Ambition and hope constantly deceive us with delusive dreams.
4. If we dwell with satisfaction on the ideal, the real can never fulfil our expectations.
5. Few have realized their expectations. Many have been disappointed and deceived.
6. What is rational and attainable, should, therefore, be the only objects of desire.

4.

Wealth and fortune afford no ground for envy.

1. Envy most generally excited against wealth and fortune.
2. The rich and fortunate are not always happy.
3. We are deceived by appearances.
4. The poor are exempted from many evils to which the rich are subjected.
5. The rich have troubles from which the poor are exempted.
6. The real wants and enjoyments of life are few, and are common to almost all classes.
7. If the balance of happiness be adjusted fairly, it will be found that all conditions of life fare equally well.

LXIX.

DIVISIONS OF A SUBJECT.

One of the most difficult of the departments of composition consists in methodizing, or arranging, a subject; laying it out, as it were, and forming a sort of plan on which to treat it. The writer may be figuratively said to make a map of it in his own mind, ascertaining its boundaries, that is to say, the collateral subjects with which it is connected, its dependencies, influences, and prominent traits. And as no two geographers would probably lay down the same country exactly in the same way — some giving special attention to the mountains, others to the rivers, others to the sea-coast, others to the chief towns, &c., so no two writers would probably “map out” a subject in the same way. On this subject the following directions will probably be useful to the student: