

67
FURNISHING

Composition Book



CONTAINING

DIRECTIONS, SUBJECTS AND BLANK LEAVES FOR COMPOSITION

With Original Illustrations by

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DIRECTIONS FOR COMPOSITION.

ANY one who can learn to write words, can learn to write compositions; for composition is simply the expression of thought in language, which may be either written or spoken. Your conversation with your schoolmates is composition, and it would be no very hard task to write the words you so easily speak. You are expected at first merely to talk with the pen, as you would talk with the voice.

You soon find, however, that there is a higher purpose in this useful art,—for composition is an ART to be studied and practiced;—your ideas should be such as will please or interest others; they should be properly arranged, and expressed in language easily understood.

You should first learn to write a neat and legible hand, and to spell and punctuate correctly. Careful attention to these particulars will give your compositions and letters a pleasing appearance, even though they may not contain very high ideas. The best composition can not please the reader, if the writing is careless and indistinct, and especially if the spelling and punctuation are wrong.

The importance of learning, while young, to express your ideas in correct and clear language, is very evident in our country, where all classes of people—farmers, mechanics, merchants, and professional men—must write so many letters, advertisements, notices, agreements, and other matters, the composition of which must be accurate to insure success in business.

A higher motive, however, than mere gain, should prompt you to study and practice composition. It enables you to give pleasure to others by interesting letters, or perhaps even by essays, stories, and useful books. It also expands and improves the mind, by encouraging you to think about what you read, hear and see.

Composition should be one of the chief studies in all our schools. No education is complete without it, and no other accomplishment renders young ladies and gentlemen so useful or agreeable; for it increases their powers of conversation, and their ability to amuse and instruct others.

The want of proper assistance may be one reason why this useful exercise is so much dreaded by many pupils; but we hope you will find this book a pleasant and useful guide.

When about to commence a composition or letter, two questions arise in your mind. The first is: "WHAT SHALL

I WRITE?" The answer is: "Write what you think;" your thoughts never stop; for the world is full of subjects to think about. You must study, converse, observe, go into the fields, into cities, into factories, on board ships, and wherever information can be gained, and *think* about every thing that comes under your observation: then education will in time render your ideas valuable and interesting to others. You wish, however, to commence writing before all this information can be obtained; and the beautiful pictures in this work furnish a great variety of subjects, with many hints upon each, about which you can think and write.

The second question is: "HOW SHALL I WRITE?" and the answer is contained in these introductory pages, which give directions for spelling, punctuation, and the arrangement and style of your composition.

PENMANSHIP.

Learn to form all the letters of the alphabet after the best models you can find, practicing them until you can make them rapidly and correctly. The letters should be neat and plain, without ornamental flourishes; for good writing is of itself an ornament.

Several letters have more than one form, but whichever of these you choose, be sure that every one is perfectly formed: nothing injures the beauty and legibility of writing more than imperfect letters, such as *a*, *d*, *g*, and *o* with the round part open at the top; *m*, *n*, *u* and *w*, so written that they can not be distinguished from each other; and other careless marks, all of which may be avoided by learning to write *well* before you try to write *rapidly*. Keep your paper perfectly smooth, and free from soils and blots. Place some blotting paper over the part where your hand rests.

Never write anything in a hasty, careless manner, with the excuse that it is not of much importance, or that you will copy it. This practice will soon ruin your penmanship. "Whatever is worth doing, is worth well doing," and the first composition or letter should be in your best handwriting, even though you intend copying it.

THE TITLE.

The subject or title should be written two lines above the composition, in the center of the page. Write it in larger

letters than the exercise itself, and begin all its important words with capitals.

You will find nearly four pages of blank paper allowed to every picture in this book, on which you can write one long composition, or two or three short ones. Choose any subject that pleases you among those in the border of the cut, and write the title according to the above directions, one inch below the engraving.

THE MARGIN.

On the left side of each page draw a perpendicular line half an inch from the edge. Let the lines of the composition begin evenly on this mark, except the first lines of paragraphs. The line should be drawn lightly with a lead pencil, that it may be entirely erased after the page is written.

PARAGRAPHS.

Divide your exercise into paragraphs, or verses, as they are sometimes called. When you have finished the first idea or division of your subject, commence the next with a new paragraph, and so on through the exercise. Begin the first line of each paragraph half an inch within the margin line.

SPELLING.

Correct spelling is not only a great accomplishment, but is necessary to all classes of writers. It can be acquired by perseverance alone; because the spelling of a word can not always be known by its sound, and there are no general rules which you can follow. The only way to perfect yourself in this art is, to study your spelling-book carefully while young, to observe the spelling of words in everything you read, and to keep a standard dictionary near you, by which to look out every word of which you have any doubt, and remember its orthography. In this way you can soon learn to spell all the *simple* and *primitive* words of our language; but there are two classes of words called *compounds* and *derivatives*, some of which you will not find in a small dictionary.

Compound words are such as are made up of two or more simple ones, and generally retain the orthography of the simple words which compose them; as, *hereof*, *wherein*, *horseman*, *uphill*, *shellfish*.

Exc. In permanent compounds, the words *full* and *all* drop one *t*; as, *handful*, *careful*, *always*, *withal*: in others they retain both; as, *full-eyed*, *all-wise*, *save-all*.

Derivative words are formed from primitives, by adding a syllable called a *suffix*, or placing before them a syllable called a *prefix* thus: the primitive word *bind* makes, by adding the suffix *ing*, the derivative *binding*; placing the prefix *un* before it, makes *unbind*, and with both prefix and suffix, it forms still another derivative, *unbinding*.

If these primitive words were never changed when adding or prefixing syllables, there would be no difficulty in spelling derivatives, but the final letters are so often changed, doubled, or omitted, that the following eight rules, if carefully learned and strictly followed, will greatly assist you. The first two rules refer to primitive words, the others to derivatives.

RULE I.—FINAL F, L, OR S.

Monosyllables ending in *f*, *l*, or *s*, preceded by a single vowel, double the final consonant: as, *staff*, *mill*, *pass*; except *if*, *of*, *as*, *gas*, *has*, *was*, *yes*, *is*, *his*, *this*, *us*. *thus*.

RULE II.—OTHER FINALS.

Words ending in any other consonant than *f*, *l*, or *s*, do not double the final letter; except *add*, *odd*, *ebb*, *egg*, *inn*, *err*, *purr*, *butt*, *buzz*, and some proper names.

RULE III.—DOUBLING.

Monosyllables, and words accented on the last syllable, when they end with a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, double their final consonant before an additional syllable that begins with a vowel: as, *rob*, *robber*; *permit*, *permitting*.

Exc. *X* final, being equivalent to *ks*, is never doubled.

RULE IV.—NO DOUBLING.

A final consonant, when it is not preceded by a single vowel, or when the accent is not on the last syllable, should remain single before an additional syllable: as, *toil*, *toiling*, *visit*, *visited*, *general*, *generalize*.

RULE V.—FINAL LL.

Primitive words ending in *ll*, generally reject one *l*, before *ful*, *less*, *ly*, and *ness*: as, *skill*, *skillful*, *skillness*; *full*, *fully*, *fulness*.

Obs. Words ending in any other double letter, preserve it double: as, *blissful*, *oddly*, *stiffness*, *carelessness*.

RULE VI.—FINAL E.

The final *e* of a primitive word is generally omitted before an additional termination beginning with a vowel: as, *rate*, *ratable*; *force*, *forcible*; *rave*, *raving*.

Exc. Words ending in *ce* or *ge* retain the *e* before *able* or

ous, to preserve the soft sound of *c* and *g*: as, *peace, peaceable; change, changeable; outrage, outrageous.*

RULE VII.—FINAL E.

The final *e* of a primitive word is generally retained before an additional termination beginning with a consonant: as, *pale, paleness; lodge, lodgement.*

Exc. When the *e* is preceded by a vowel, it is sometimes omitted: as, *true, truly; awe, awful*; and sometimes retained; as, *rue, rueful; shoe, shoeless.*

RULE VIII.—FINAL Y.

The final *y* of a primitive word, when preceded by a consonant, is changed into *i* before an additional termination: as, *merry, merrier, merriest, merrily, merriment; pity, pitied, pities, pitiest, pitiless, pitiful, pitiable.*

Exc. Before *ing*, *y* is retained, to prevent the doubling of *i*: as, *pity, pitying*. Words ending in *ie*, dropping the *e* by RULE VI., change *i* into *y*, for the same reason: as, *die, dying.*

Obs. When a vowel precedes, *y* should not be changed: as, *day, days; valley, valleys; money, moneys; monkey, monkeys.*

A few words are spelled in various ways in different dictionaries, and by different scholars. No fault can be found with you for spelling according to a standard dictionary.

RULES FOR USING CAPITAL LETTERS.

RULE I.

The first word of every book, chapter, letter, note, or any other piece of writing, should begin with a capital letter.

RULE II.

The names of the month and the days of the week should always begin with a capital letter.

RULE III.

The first word after a period should begin with a capital letter.

RULE IV.

The first word after every interrogation, or exclamation, should begin with a capital letter; unless a number of interrogative or exclamatory sentences occur together, and are not totally independent.

RULE V.

The various names, and pronouns referring to names, of the Deity should begin with a capital letter: as, *God, Jeho-*

vah, the Almighty, the Supreme Being, the Lord, Providence, the Messiah, the Holy Spirit, He, His, Him, etc.

RULE VI.

All proper names, such as the names of persons, places, streets, mountains, lakes, rivers, ships, etc., and adjectives derived from them, should begin with a capital letter.

RULE VII.

The first word of a quotation after a colon, or when it is in a direct form, should begin with a capital letter.

RULE VIII.

The first word of an example, every substantive and principal word in the titles of books, and the first word of every line in poetry, should begin with a capital letter.

RULE IX.

The pronoun *I*, and the interjection *O*, are always written in capitals.

RULE X.

Any words, when remarkably emphatical, or when they are the principal subject of the composition, may begin with capitals.

Obs. Never use a capital letter unless you can give a reason for it from one of the above rules.

PUNCTUATION.

Punctuation is the art of dividing a composition into sentences, and these sentences into clauses or phrases. Correct punctuation is necessary to render what you write distinct and easily read; for the marks of punctuation are a great assistance to readers.

THE COMMA, ,

1. When two or more words are connected without the connecting word being expressed, the comma supplies the place of that word: as, "Washington was a brave, pious, patriotic statesman."

2. Those clauses or parts of a sentence, having a relative pronoun, the case absolute, the nominative independent, a parenthesis without crotchets, and all the simple members of sentences, must be separated by commas: as, "That point of light, which you see above us, is a glorious world." "Shame being lost, all virtue is lost." "Depart, O youth, from the snares of sin." "I would rather see this man flourish, than that, or the other man."

3. The following words and phrases, and others similar

to them, are generally separated by commas from the rest of the sentence: namely, Nay, so, however, hence, besides, perhaps, finally, in short, at least, moreover, again, first, secondly, thirdly, lastly, once more, on the contrary, etc.

4. The words of another writer, not formally introduced as a quotation, and words and clauses expressing contrast or opposition, though closely connected in construction, are separated by a comma: as, "I pity the man who can travel throughout the world and cry, I have no friend." "Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull."

5. When the absence of a word is indicated in reading or speaking by a pause, its place may be supplied by a comma: as, "From law arises security; from security, inquiry; from inquiry, knowledge."

6. Nouns in apposition, accompanied by explanatory words or phrases, are separated by commas: as, "Columbus, the greatest of discoverers, was imprisoned."

THE SEMICOLON, ;

When a sentence consists of several members, each constituting a distinct proposition, and having a dependence upon each other, or upon some common clause, they are separated by semicolons: as, "Cherish your fellow-creatures; cover their frailties; love their excellences; encourage their virtues; relieve their wants; rejoice in their prosperity; compassionate their distress; receive their friendship; overlook their unkindness; forgive their malice."

THE COLON, :

1. The colon is used to divide a sentence into two or more parts, which, although the sense be complete in each, are not wholly independent: as, "But Abraham pressed him greatly: so he turned, and they went into the tent: and Abraham baked unleavened bread, and did eat."

2. The colon is used when an example, a quotation, or a speech is introduced: as, "The Scriptures give us an amiable representation of the Deity in these words: "God is love." "Being thus called upon, the boy spoke as follows: 'Schoolmates and friends,' etc."

THE PERIOD, .

The period is used at the end of a complete and independent sentence. It is also placed after initial letters, when used alone; and, likewise, after all abbreviations: as, "One clear and direct path is pointed out to man." "Fear God." "Have charity towards all men." "G. W." for "George Washington." "Geo." for "George." "Benj." for "Benjamin." "O. S." for "Old Style." "F. R. S." for "Fellow of the Royal Society."

Obs. These four marks are the most important of all used for punctuation; for the period separates paragraphs into distinct sentences; the colon shows some connection between sentences; the semicolon divides the principal parts of sentences; and the comma separates the clauses and phrases.

THE INTERROGATION, ?

The note of interrogation, or the question, as it is sometimes called, is placed after every sentence which contains a question: as, "Who is this?" "What have you in your hand?" "The woman said to me, Why do you weep?"

The interrogation is used only at the end of a sentence: when, therefore, several questions are used in the same sentence they may be separated by commas, semicolons, or dashes, and this point used at the close: as, "Did he recite his lesson correctly, read audibly, and appear to understand what he read?" "Is this the man that shook the kingdoms; that made the world a desert; that destroyed cities?" "Can you ask such a question—dare you ask it?"

THE EXCLAMATION, !

The exclamation point is used to express any sudden or violent emotion; such as surprise, joy, grief, love, hatred, anger, pity, anxiety, ardent wish, etc. It is also used to mark an exalted idea of the Deity; and is generally placed after the nominative case independent, and after the noun or pronoun which follows an interjection: as, "How mischievous are the effects of war!" "O blissful days! Ah me! how soon ye pass!"

The exclamation point is also used after sentences containing a question when no answer is expected: as, "What is more amiable than virtue!" Several exclamations in succession are usually separated by commas, semicolons, or dashes and the exclamation placed at the end.

THE QUOTATION, " "

The quotation marks, or inverted commas, as they are sometimes called, consist of four commas; two inverted, at the beginning of a word, phrase, or sentence which is quoted from some author or speaker in his own words; and two others, in their direct position, placed at the conclusion: as, a poet says:

"The mind's the measure of the man."

THE APOSTROPHE, '

The apostrophe is a comma placed above the line. It is used as the sign of the possessive case, and sometimes indi-

cates the omission of a letter or several letters: as, John's; "Tis" for "it is;" "tho'" for "though;" "I'll" for "I will."

THE DIÆRESIS, ..

The diæresis consists of two periods placed over the latter of two vowels, to show that they are to be pronounced in separate syllables: as, "Laocoön, Zoönomia, coöperate."

THE BRACE, }

This mark is used to connect several words or sentences with one common term, to prevent a repetition of writing; thus:—

sion	}	pronounced <i>shun</i> .	WHITNEY,	}	<i>Committee.</i>
tion			JOCelyn,		
cion			ANNIN,		

NOTE MARKS.

The following marks are references: and are generally used to call attention to notes on words or sentences, placed at the bottom of the page:—

The Asterisk, *	The Parallels,
The Obelisk, †	The Paragraph, ¶
The Double Obelisk, ‡	The Section, §

When many notes occur on a page, and these marks are all exhausted, they are sometimes doubled. Figures and letters are also sometimes used instead of the above marks.

In some books the Section, §, and the Paragraph, ¶, are used to mark the parts of a composition, which in writing or printing should be separated. A Paragraph denotes the beginning of a new subject, or a sentence not connected with the foregoing. A Section is used for subdividing a chapter into smaller parts.

THE DASH, —

This mark is used when there is a sudden change either in the form or idea of a sentence: as, "It was a sight—that lovely child—to gladden any heart."

When a sentence is abruptly broken off, or interrupted, a long dash, called an ELLIPSIS, is used: as "I tell thee when that—but hark; that noise."

THE HYPHEN, -

The hyphen is used to separate the syllables of a word; or to make one word of two: as, "semi-circle, sea-water."

When there is not room enough in the line for the whole of a word, some of its syllables are put into the line with a

hyphen, and the remainder in the next line: as, extraordinary. When you divide a word in this way, be careful not to separate the letters of one syllable: the word "department" is wrongly divided: it should be written "depart-ment."

THE CARET, ^

This mark is never properly used in printing, but is often placed in a line of manuscript to denote that something has been left out. The omitted letters or words are over the line, just above the caret: as, "This book is ^{for} you."

CROTCHETS AND BRACKETS, () []

These marks are used for containing *parentheses*, or words and clauses in a sentence, which are not closely connected with that sentence, but are intended to explain or suggest something concerning it: as, "In all my griefs (and God has given my share) I still had hopes." "Then drew near unto him [Luke xv. 1] all the publicans and sinners." Modern writers do not make much use of crotchets, but separate their parentheses by commas or dashes.

EMPHATIC WORDS.

When you wish to give significance or emphasis to any word or words, you can do so by underscoring,—that is, by drawing under them a light line. One line under manuscript, denotes *italics* in printing; two lines denote small capitals; three, large capitals. It is not best to underscore your words much.

ARRANGEMENT OF SENTENCES.

A sentence is an assemblage of words making complete sense. Every sentence consists of two principal parts,—the SUBJECT or nominative, and the PREDICATE or verb. The simplest way of arranging a sentence is, to place the subject first, and the verb after it: as, "Poison kills." When there is an OBJECT, it should generally follow the predicate: as, "Poison kills people." The words, phrases, and clauses which describe any of these parts of a sentence should be placed near that word: as, "That dangerous poison called arsenic, usually kills the unfortunate people who eat it." This is the direct arrangement of sentences.

A variety of arrangement often makes sentences more forcible. The following example may be arranged several ways:—

"We must strive hard, if we wish to excel."

"If we wish to excel, we must strive hard."

"We must, if we wish to excel, strive hard."

Variety of expression is another important change in sentences, which is effected by changing the verbs, prepositions, etc. In the following examples, both parts state the same fact by a different form of expression:—

"Integrity secures the esteem of the world."

"The esteem of the world is secured by integrity."

"Peace was declared, and war ceased."

"Peace being declared, war ceased."

There are many other ways of changing the arrangement and expression of sentences, and, by understanding them all, you can add to the force and variety of your compositions.

STYLE OF WRITING.

STYLE means the peculiar manner in which a writer expresses his thoughts by words.

When the thoughts are expressed in an easy, natural manner, without attempting any display, the writer is said to have a SIMPLE STYLE; if a great many adjectives, and other ornaments are used, it is called the FLORID STYLE; forcible words and expressions denote the NERVOUS STYLE; the CONCISE STYLE is that in which thoughts are expressed in few words, and the DIFFUSE STYLE is that in which the writer extends his thoughts, and uses many words.

Each of these styles may be followed at different times, according to the nature of the subject upon which you are writing; but there are certain qualities belonging to the style of every good writer, which you should carefully study and cultivate. They are purity, precision, clearness, strength, harmony and unity.

PURITY.

Your words and expressions should be such as are used by the best writers, and in good society. Do not use foreign words, when there are English ones just as appropriate. Avoid words which have fallen into disuse, and all ungrammatical and coarse expressions. Sometimes, however, the nature of your subject requires such language; but it should be always put in quotations, as belonging to the persons you describe.

PRECISION.

Endeavor to use such words as will exactly express the meaning you intend to convey. There are many synonymous words in our language which may seem to have the

same meaning, but are really quite different: as, "courage, fortitude, bravery." "Big, great, large." "Discovery, invention." To say that Columbus invented America, and Fulton discovered the steamboat, would destroy the precision of both sentences; but changing the words *discovery* and *invention* would give each sentence its precise meaning.

CLEARNESS.

Be careful to construct your clauses and sentences in a clear and direct manner, and avoid ambiguous words and phrases, that your meaning may not be mistaken. The following example is incorrect because an ambiguous or doubtful expression is used: "Our reproof was beneficial." The reproof may have been given to us, or by us to another. In one sentence do not use the same pronoun referring to different persons or things. Never omit words that are necessary to the clearness of a passage. The arrangement of your sentences should be such as will render the meaning clear. Words and clauses should be placed near the words to which they relate. This example,— "The soldier was telling stories with a wooden leg,"—is badly arranged: it should be,— "The soldier with a wooden leg was telling stories." Adverbs are frequently misplaced, and made to qualify the wrong word: as, "My brother soon expects to sail,"—should be,— "My brother expects soon to sail." "A selfish man only thinks of himself,"—should be,— "A selfish man thinks only of himself."

STRENGTH.

Use such words, and arrange them in such order as will render your sentences impressive to the reader or hearer. Strength of style is obtained by avoiding tautology,—that is, the useless repetition of the same or similar words; by avoiding redundancy,—the useless repetition of ideas. You can easily correct these two sentences: "Washington was a good and excellent man." "Take a seat and sit down." The word *and* should not be used too often.

Sentences should generally end with some important word; for a preposition, or any other unimportant word at the close of a sentence, weakens it.

HARMONY.

Harmony of language is its pleasing sound. To young writers it is not so important as the other properties of style; but you can give some attention to it by avoiding harsh and difficult words,—such as have many consonants, or many unaccented syllables: as. "Wrongheadedness, conventiclers,

summarily, holily." Do not use too many monosyllables in succession, or too many words containing an equal number of syllables. Your sentences should not be too long; neither should your subject be cut up into very short sentences.

UNITY.

The unity of a sentence means its *oneness*. It should contain but one idea, and though it may consist of two or more parts, they should be closely connected in meaning. How awkwardly the two ideas are put together in this example: "My Aunt received me with great affection, and soon after was killed by a fall." There should evidently be two sentences here instead of one. There is generally in every sentence some person or thing which is the governing word. This should be continued so if possible from the beginning to the end. Another important rule for preserving unity is to avoid long parentheses, and use but few short ones.

DEBATES.

In some schools it is customary for two pupils, or two classes, to choose—one the affirmative, the other the negative side of a question. Each party produces as many arguments as possible in favor of its own side, and in opposition to the other. This is a pleasant and useful exercise, teaching the composer to express his thoughts in an orderly and forcible manner. Several subjects for debate will be found in this book.

LETTER WRITING.

You will all be frequently called upon to exercise this pleasant and useful form of composition; you should, therefore, learn to write a letter with neatness and dispatch. A letter consists of the following parts: 1st. The date. 2d. The complimentary address. 3d. The body of the letter. 4th. The complimentary closing. 5th. The signature. 6th. The address.

The date consists of the name of the place where the letter is written with a comma after it, the month and day with a comma, and the year with a period. The complimentary address and closing should be varied according to your acquaintance with the person to whom you are writing. The following is a specimen of the ordinary form of a friendly letter:—

Boston, April 16, 1854.

Dear Cousin,

My parents have permitted me to accept your kind invitation to spend my vacation with you in the country. I shall take the six o'clock morning train, on Wednesday, and shall be with you at about three o'clock. Please be at the depot when I arrive. Give my love to all the family.

Your Affectionate Cousin,
H. A. Hart.

James West.

POSTSCRIPTS.

When anything has been omitted from the body of a letter, a postscript may be added, with the letters P. S. before it, and your initials after it.

FOLDING.

The following diagrams will explain the best manner of folding a letter not to be inclosed in an envelop. Figure 1 shows the sheet with one leaf folded back twice; figure 2 shows the top and bottom folded so that they nearly meet; then the thick side of the sheet is turned over as in figure 3. The thick part should be slipped into the last fold, and the seal placed in the center, as in figure 4. Figure 5 is the other side of the letter with the direction and postage stamp.

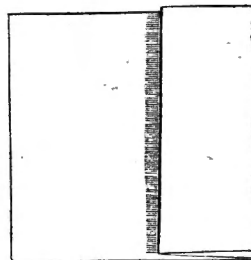


Fig. 1.

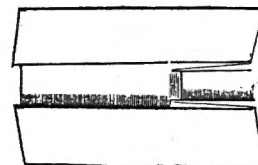


Fig. 2.

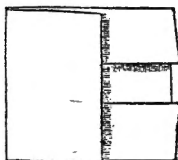


Fig. 3.

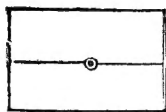


Fig. 4.

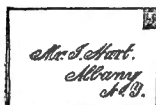


Fig. 5.

When a letter-sheet is to be inclosed in an envelop, fold it in halves by turning up the lower edge evenly on the upper, and then folding into thirds.

The imaginary letters to be written from the subjects given in this book, should be first written on a letter-sheet, folded, and directed: then they may be neatly copied in the book.

CORRECTING AND COPYING COMPOSITIONS.

Scholars should learn to correct their own compositions, without depending entirely on their teacher; but as the teacher should also examine them, we give a list of the principal errors to which writers are liable; designated by numbers which the teacher can mark over the lines with a pencil or red ink, leaving the errors to be corrected by the writer

KEY FOR COMPOSITIONS.

1. Bad spelling.
2. Bad grammar.
3. Wrong punctuation.
4. Comma wanted.
5. Semicolon wanted.
6. Colon wanted.
7. Period wanted.

8. Dash wanted.
9. Hyphen wanted.
10. Caret wanted.
11. Parenthesis wanted.
12. Interrogation mark wanted.
13. Exclamation mark wanted.
14. Quotation marks wanted.
15. No punctuation wanted.
16. Word or words should be omitted.
17. Word or words should not be omitted.
18. Words should be connected.
19. Words should not be connected.
20. Word wrongly divided.
21. Want of purity in sentence.
22. Want of precision or clearness.
23. Want of strength.
24. Want of harmony.
25. Want of unity.
26. Incorrect statement.

Scholars can correct each other's compositions by this Key.

The composition should be written first on a slate, that all errors may be carefully erased and corrected by the pupil, who should then copy it on paper for the teacher's inspection. After revising it from the teacher's corrections, it may be neatly written in this book.

The divisions of the subjects on the sides of each cut, are intended merely as hints, which you need not *closely* follow, but can select such as please you. Sometimes a single division may form the subject of a whole composition.

THE CREATION.—When and how the Earth was created.—Describe the six days' work.—Why animals and mankind were made last.—Rejoicing of the Heavenly hosts.—The first Sabbath.—Could things have been created by chance?—Proofs from Nature that a good, wise and powerful being made all things.

GARDENS.—Describe flower and vegetable gardens, and the way to make, and take care of them.—Mention several kinds of plants and flowers, their time of blooming, &c.—Compare city and country gardens.—The first garden.—Profit, health and pleasure of horticulture.

ANIMALS.—Their creation.—Describe the various classes of animals arranged by naturalists according to their habits of life.—Mention some of the principal animals in the world and tell how they are adapted to different countries and climates, and to the use of man.—Domestic and wild animals.—Their instinct.—How they should be treated.



ADAM AND EVE.—From the Bible account give, in your own language, a description of their creation, and their life in the garden.—Their superiority to all other things created upon Earth.—Their temptation and fall.—The punishment.

MORNING.—Describe the appearance of Nature, as though it were just created.—Give an imaginary scene of day-dawn after the first night in the Garden of Eden.—Importance of early rising.—Fate of the sluggard.

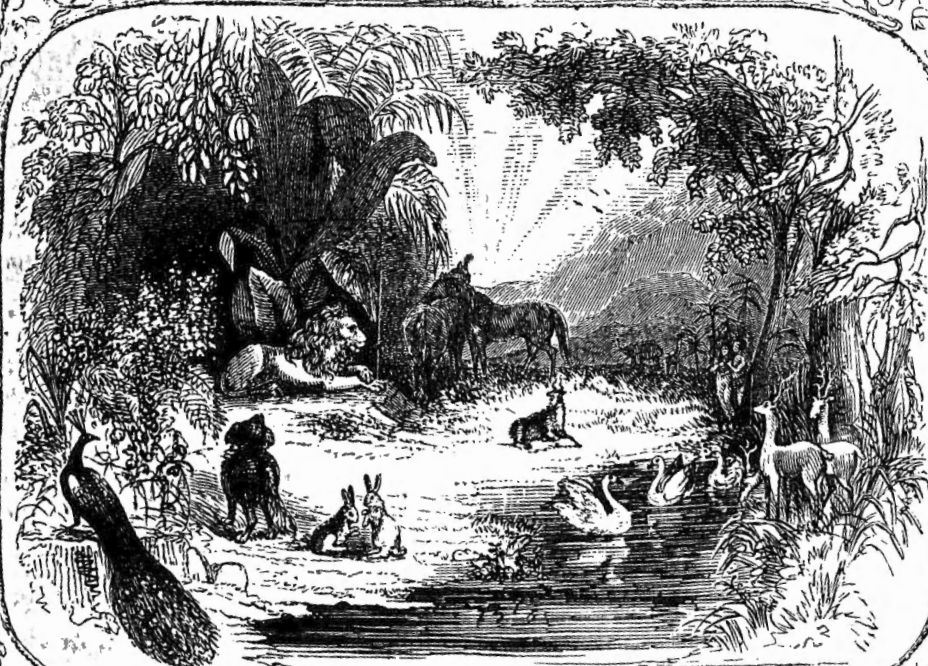
HAPPINESS.—Describe the happiness of our first parents in Eden.—How perfect happiness was lost.—How it may be regained.—Difference between happiness and pleasure.—Importance of being cheerful and happy.

BIRDS.—Account of the creation of birds.—Describe the birds represented in the picture, or write on birds in general, their skillful structure, beautiful plumage, melody, nests, migration, &c.—Their usefulness.

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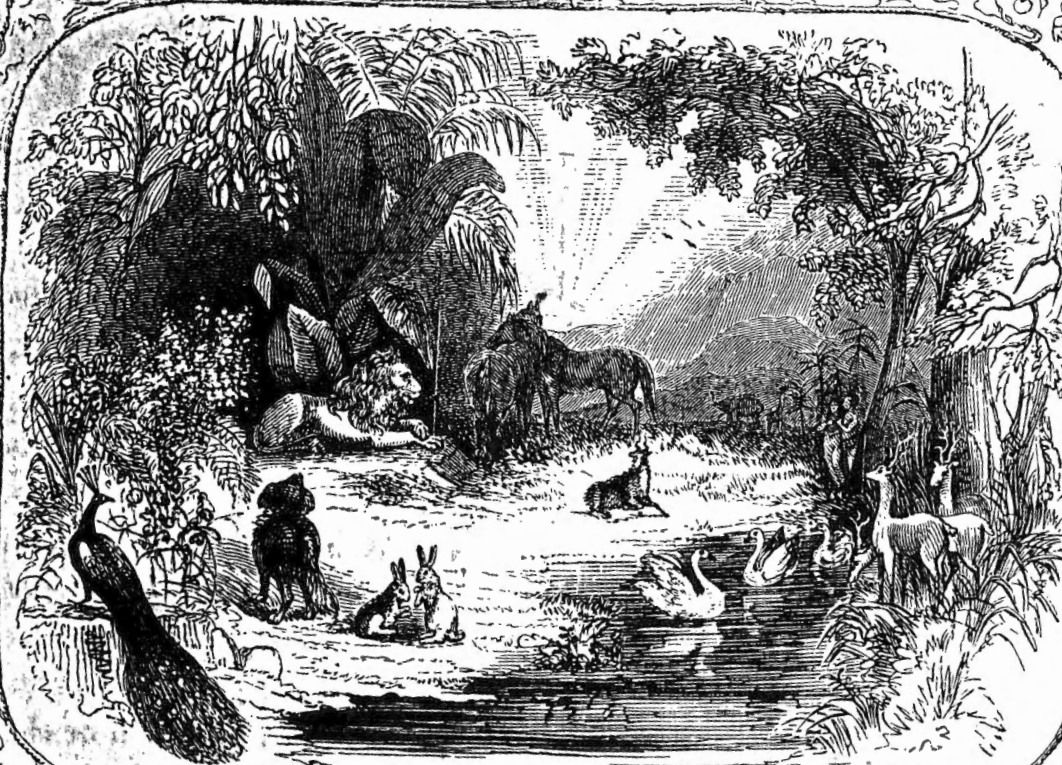
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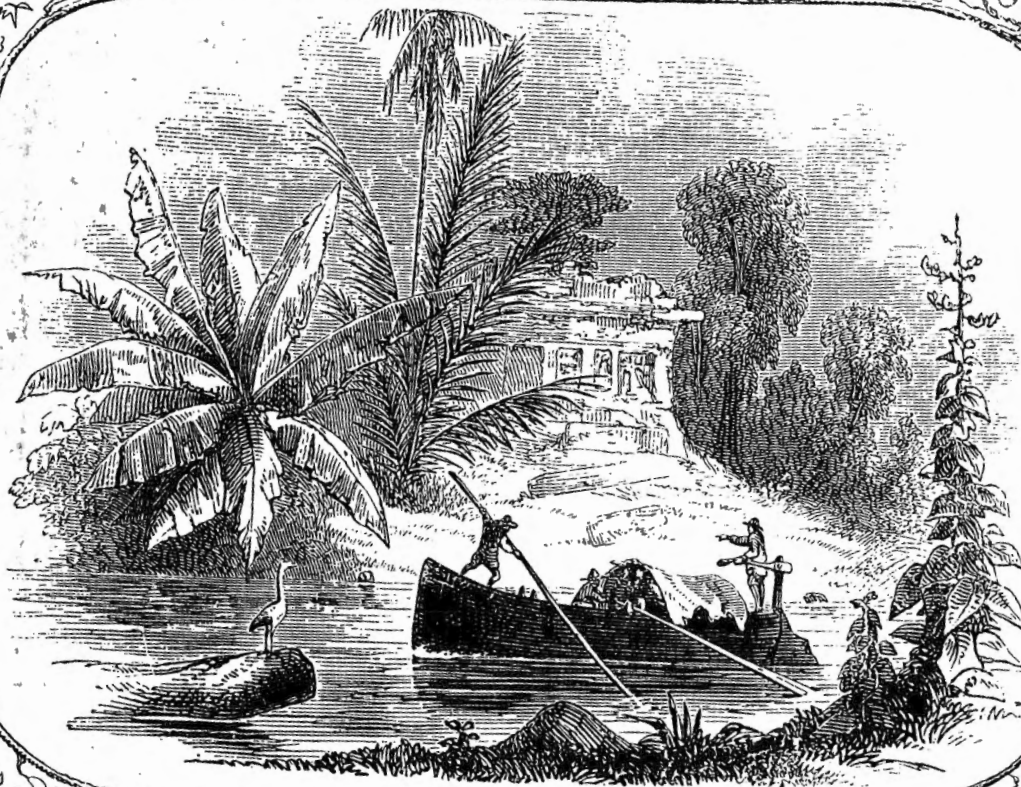
THE TROPICS.—Where the torrid zone is, and what countries it contains.—Its climate, vegetation, animals, &c.—The appearance, habits, and character of the people who inhabit it.

CENTRAL AMERICAN RUINS.—The ruins of ancient cities in the forests of Central America.—The early history of America, and where the various races of Indians are supposed to have come from.

THE VEGETABLE KINGDOM.—How it connects the mineral and animal kingdoms.—The various parts of plants and trees, and their uses.—Tropical vegetation.—Usefulness of plants to animals.

STRANGE RIVERS.—The unexplored rivers of the earth, such as the Nile, Niger, Amazon, &c., and the voyages which have been made on them.

CELEBRATED TRAVELERS.—Travels of Marco Polo, Mungo Park, John Ledyard, Mr. Stephens, & others.—What part of the world you would like to travel in.



BOATS.—Describe the boats used by different nations, and the manner of propelling them.—Pleasures and dangers of boating.—Life-boats of wood and metal.—Usefulness of boats for navigating shallow rivers.

AQUATIC BIRDS.—The waders, divers, skimmers, and other sorts of birds that love the water.—How they obtain their food and build their nests.—The vast numbers of water-fowl frequenting the lakes and rivers of America, and the different methods of capturing them.

CROSSING THE ISTHMUS.—The quickest and best route to California.—Different ways of crossing the Isthmus of Darien.—The Chagres river.—The Lake Nicaragua route.—Crossing with mules.—The railroad.—The proposed ship canal, and the benefits it will produce.

HEAT.—What is it?—Sources of heat.—Importance of heat to vegetable and animal life.—Expansion of solids, liquids, air, &c.—Latent heat.—Describe the thermometer.—The usefulness of heat in arts and manufactures.



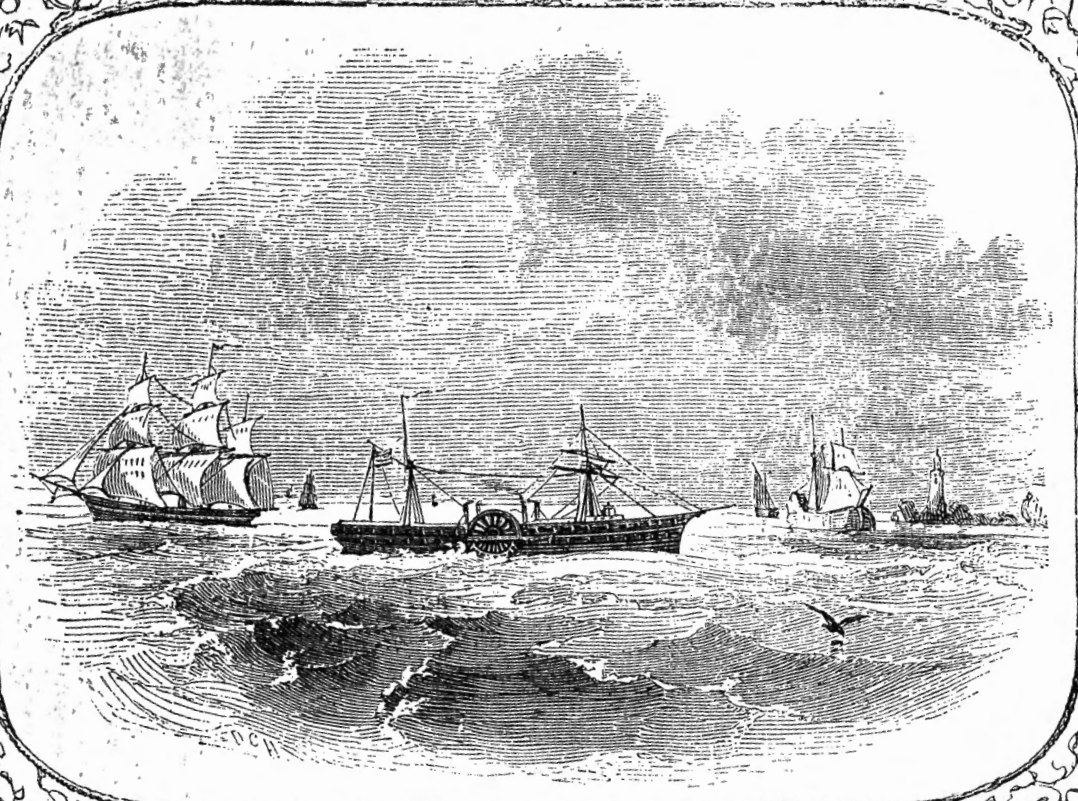
THE OCEAN.—Its vast extent, and the names of its divisions.—Why its waters are salt.—Its inhabitants.—Its appearance by night or day; in storm or calm.—Its usefulness to man.

SHIPS.—Noah's Ark.—Ancient ships.—How ships are built and rigged.—War ships.

NAVIGATION.—Voyages of the ancients.—Great discoveries by modern navigators.—How sailors find their way to all parts of the earth.

STEAMSHIPS.—How and why they differ from sailing vessels and steamboats.—Describe some of the lines of steamships, and the voyages they make.—The rivalry between British and American steamships.

MARINER'S COMPASS.—The magnet.—How the compass is made; from it.—How it guides.—What nation first used it.—Does it always point exactly north?—What is known of the cause of this wonderful property.



AMERICAN CLIPPERS.—Compare the clipper with the ancient vessel in the picture.—The yacht America.—Mention some of the fastest clipper ships, and the voyages made by them.

THE VOYAGE.—Write a letter giving a description of a real or imaginary voyage to a foreign country.

THE ERICSSON.—Give some account of the Caloric ship, and the inventor.—Tell what you think of that ship, and of another power doing away with steam.

LIGHT HOUSES.—Tell how they are built, and how the lights are arranged.—Revolving lights.—Mention some remarkable light houses.—Describe a storm scene in one.—Some of you can, perhaps, write a short poem, having for your subject, The Light House.

SEA BIRDS.—Describe gulls, petrels, albatrosses, &c.—Their strength of wing.—How they fish.—Migration of land birds over the ocean.



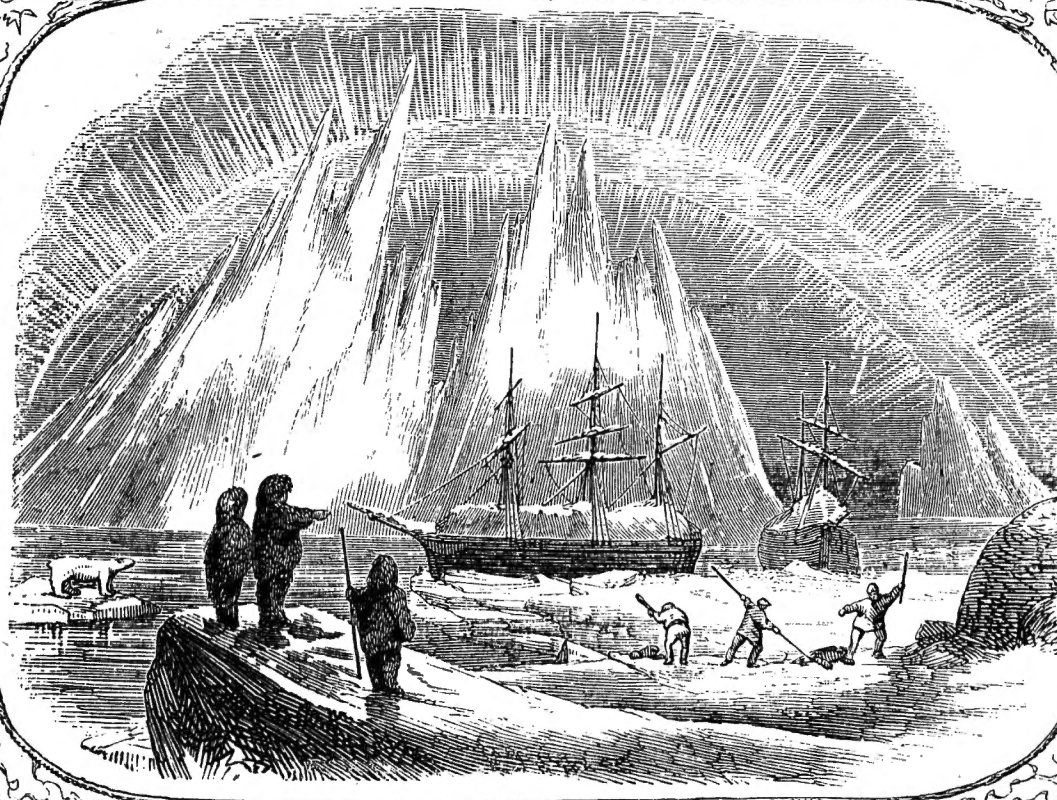
ICEBERGS.—Their size and appearance.—How formed, and destroyed.—Their grandeur.—Their inhabitants.—Dangerous to mariners.

ESQUIMAUX.—What race they belong to.—Their appearance, habits, and character.—Write, in your own words, some stories you have heard or read about them.

POLAR ANIMALS.—Describe the white bear, seal, reindeer, &c.—How they are adapted to the region they inhabit, and to the support of the people.—Danger of attacking the white bear.

NORTHERN LIGHTS.—Their splendid appearance and motions.—What is known about them.—Their influence on magnets.—Their usefulness.

SNOW AND ICE.—How formed.—Ice lighter than water.—The pleasures they afford in coasting, skating, ice-boats, &c.—Snow houses.—What they are used for, and the great trade in them.—How they may be kept a long time.



POLES OF THE EARTH.—The geographical definition of these two poles.—What is known about them.—The pole star.—Their climate and its cause.—Polar days and nights.—How near navigators have approached to either pole.

ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS.—An account of the expeditions of Parry, Ross, Franklin, and the late English and American expeditions in search of Franklin.—Dangers of arctic expeditions and the advantages resulting from them.—A long composition can be written about the celebrated Grinnell expeditions, as they are the most wonderful ones ever made to the Polar regions.

A DEBATE on the question, Is a very cold climate preferable to a hot one?—The writer on the negative can choose the picture of Tropical Scenery as an illustration to his part of the debate.

COLD.—Give a definition of it.—Its cause.—The effects it produces upon solids, liquids, and living things.—Description of a traveler freezing.

FAMILY DEVOTIONS.—Describe a family scene like the one here represented. — What we should be thankful for in the morning. — Why we should return thanks at night.

THE EVENING OF LIFE.—Compare the life of mankind with the course of a day: youth being its morning, middle age its noon, and old age the evening of life. How the day of life should be passed to render its evening useful, respected and happy.

THE BIBLE.—Its origin, and the purpose for which it was given to man. — By whom it was written. — History of its preservation to the present time. — Proofs that it is true. — Sending it to the heathen.

HOME.—The pleasures of Home. — Attachment of all people to their own home and country. — Our home duties. — Leaving home. — Remembrance of home through life. — The song "Sweet Home." — Returning home after long absence. — The brighter home prepared for the good in Heaven.



OUR PARENTS.—The benefits we receive from them. — The duties we owe to them. — Orphan children.

MUSIC.—Vocal and instrumental. — Importance of learning to sing while young. — Pleasure derived from Music in the family, and elsewhere. — Celebrated musicians and singers. — Music a part of worship.

CHILDHOOD.—Helplessness of infants. — Compare their reason with the instinct of young animals. — Compare the two as they grow older. — Happiness of childhood. — The time for improving the mind. — Youth passing rapidly away.

OUR FAMILY.—Write a letter to your friend, giving an account of the persons composing your family; their daily occupations and pleasures.

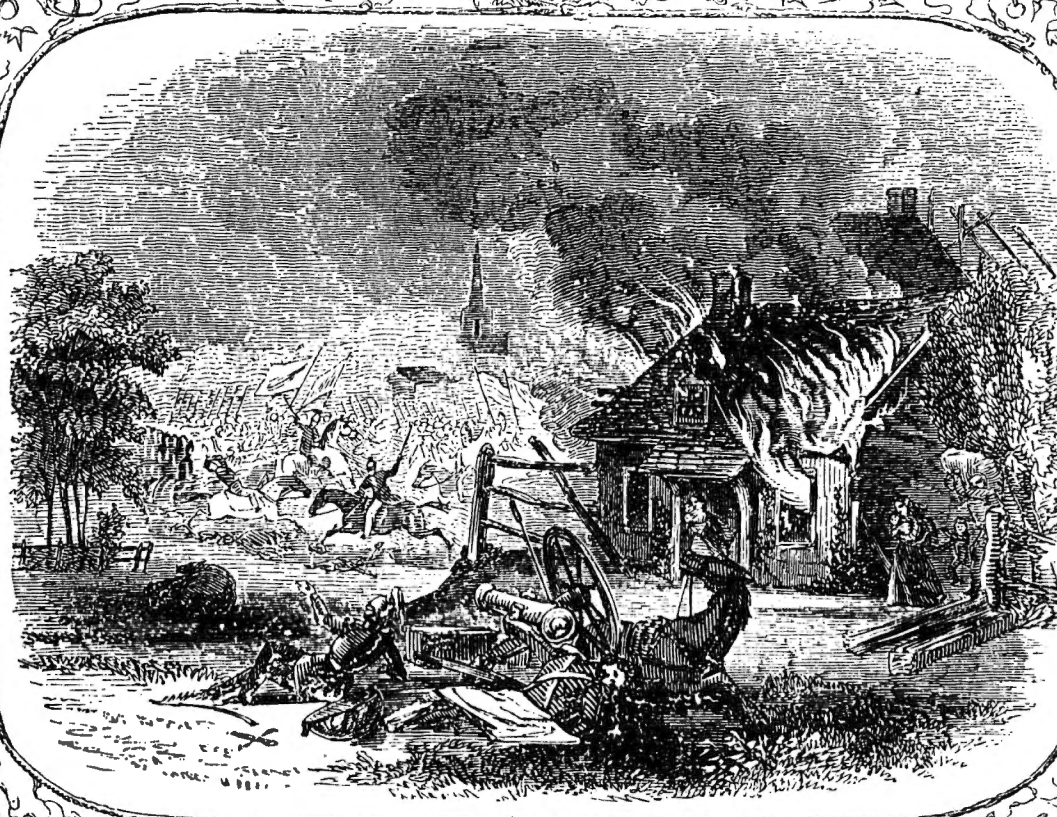
A POEM.—Some pupils who wish to exercise their poetical talents, will find the subjects suggested by this picture, as well as others, good themes for their verses.

REVENGE.—The origin and character of this evil passion.—The unhappiness it causes among individuals.—Its fearful result in war among nations.—Does its gratification ever give true pleasure?—How revengeful feelings may be overcome.—The heathen consider revenge a virtue.

WAR.—A brief history of war from the first bloodshed.—The causes of war among nations.—The misery it produces.—Describe any particular war you have read of, and its effect upon the nations engaged in it.

CRUELTY.—Give an account of some persons who have been noted for their cruel actions.—How youth, by abusing their companions and animals, may become hardened and cruel.—The cruelties of war.

POWDER.—How it is made.—Its uses.—The change it has produced in warfare.—Compare an ancient with a modern battle. Explosions of powder mills, magazines, and ships.—Dangers of playing with powder.



A BATTLE SCENE.—Describe from the picture the horrors of such a scene; the roar of artillery, the smoke and confusion, troops charging, men and horses dying, villages burning, and women and children murdered or left desolate.

WAR HORSES.—Why the horse is superior to any other animal for military purposes.—What the Bible says about them.—Cavalry and flying artillery in battle. Tell about the war horses of some celebrated generals.

A DEBATE—on the question: "Is war ever justifiable?"

CONFLAGRATIONS.—Burning of villages and cities in time of war.—Destruction of Carthage, Moscow, Washington, Charlestown, &c.

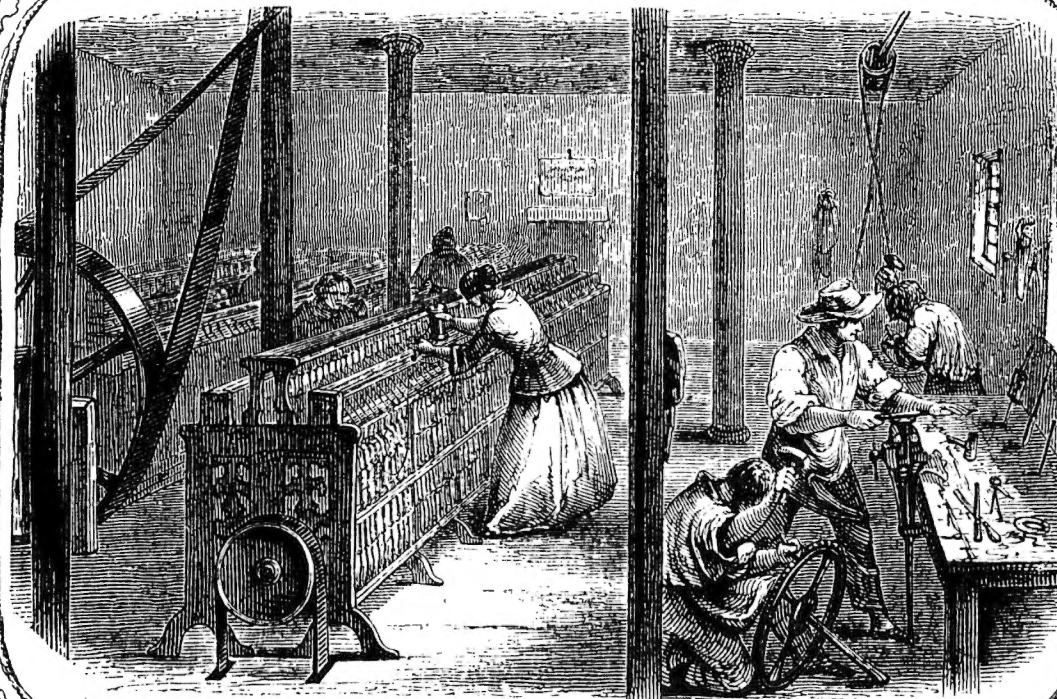
THE CONQUEROR.—The life and character of some one of the celebrated warriors, such as Cyrus, Alexander, Caesar, Pizarro, Cortez, Bonaparte, &c.—The danger of encouraging ambitious desires, and a love of military glory.

THE AGE OF IRON.—Tell why the name, "Age of Iron," has been given to this century.—The numerous applications of iron in making railroads, engines, houses, and useful and ornamental articles.

FACTORY GIRLS.—Their employments.—Describe the condition of the factory girls of Lowell or some other place; their industry and intelligence.

GREAT INVENTIONS.—The changes produced by the great inventions and discoveries of modern times. The slow progress of inventions, and the difficulties which scientific people must encounter.

DEBATE—on the three-sided question: "Which of the three branches of industry, agriculture, manufactures, or commerce, is most beneficial to a nation?" Those writing in favor of agriculture and commerce can choose the cuts appropriated to those subjects.—Any two of these subjects may also be chosen by two pupils or classes in a school.



THE MECHANIC.—Mention the different kinds of mechanics, and the work they do.—What branches of study are necessary for a good mechanic.—History of some of the most eminent mechanics.

COTTON FACTORIES.—Cotton as it grows, and the processes necessary to make cloth of it.—How it was formerly spun and woven.—A visit to a modern cotton factory.—The great cotton factories of England and the United States.

MANUFACTORIES.—The raw materials of which clothing, utensils, ornaments, &c., are made, and how they are manufactured.—The great manufactures of America, England, France, &c.—How they assist agriculture and commerce.

THE MECHANICAL POWERS.—Describe the simple mechanical powers, the lever, inclined plane, and pulley.—The screw and wheel and axle.—Show how these simple powers compose the most complicated engines.

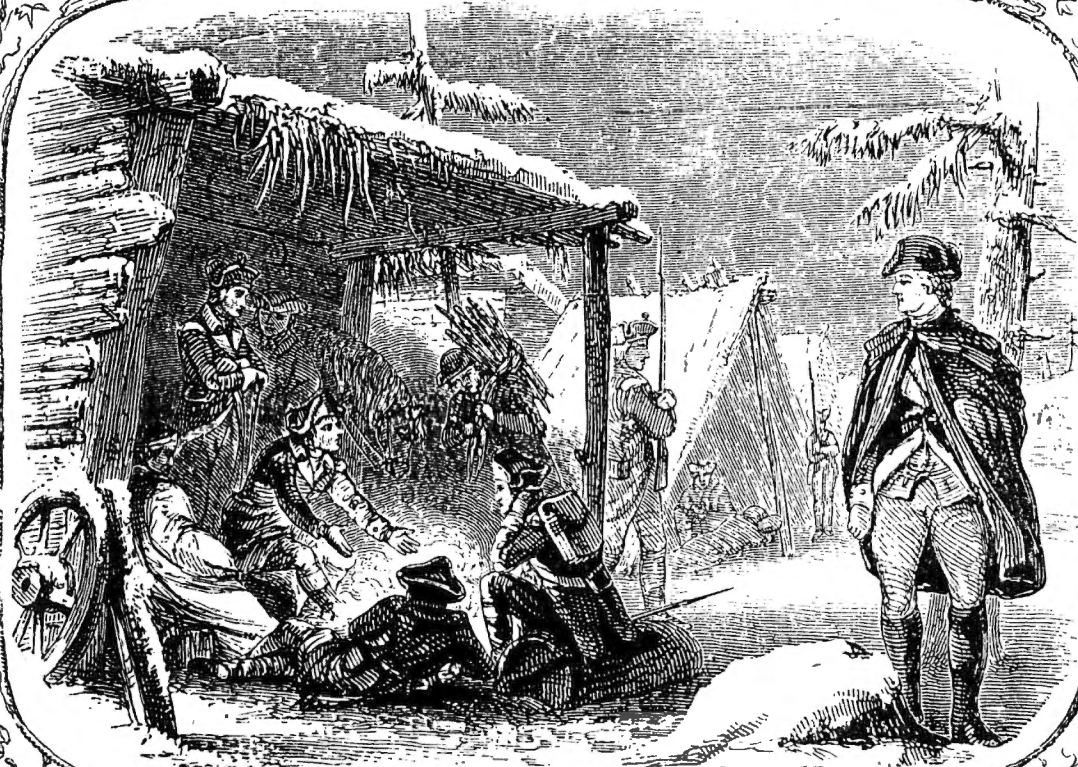
WINTER.—The cause of its cold, and its short days.—The enjoyments of winter.—The farmer's winter life.—Sufferings of the poor.—Winter the time for study.

AMERICAN REVOLUTION.—Its causes.—How it commenced.—The noble statesmen, orators, and soldiers who took part in it.—The long struggle, and final success.—The blessings of independence.

WASHINGTON.—Give an account of his history, and those qualities of body, mind, and heart, which have rendered him a model for American youth.

VALLEY FORGE.—A historical account of the winter quarters at Valley Forge.—The gloomy days of Seventy Six.—The courage and perseverance of Washington and the army.

OUR HISTORY.—The strange history of the New World, and particularly of the United States.—Importance of understanding our own history.—How the other nations regard us.



LIFE OF A SOLDIER.—Write an imaginary or true narrative of the adventures and sufferings of a soldier in his marches, winter encampments, and battles.

THE CAMP FIRE.—Soldiers seated around the fire relating stories: two or three stories or anecdotes may be written in succession.

A LETTER from a young soldier to his mother or sister, giving an account of his marches, &c., and his opinion of war.

A POETICAL DESCRIPTION of Washington and his army at Valley Forge.—Choose your own title, but do not attempt a poem unless you can express your thoughts in rhyme and measure as clearly as in prose.

THE CONTINENTALS.—From what you have heard or read, give some account of that celebrated body of troops; why so called, what uniform they wore, and who were their most noted officers.—The surviving soldiers of the Continentals.

AGRICULTURE.—Meaning of the word.—What class of nations attend to agriculture.—Tell how commerce and manufactures depend on it.—Compare the present appearance of the United States with the Indian wilderness of former times.—Modern improvements in agriculture.

WHEAT.—The wheat mentioned in the Bible.—Importance of wheat as an article of food.—Describe the sowing, reaping, threshing and grinding of wheat, also the process of making it into bread.—Reaping machines.—The vast wheat growing regions of the United States.

A FARM HOUSE.—Describe the farm at which you, or your friend may be living, giving the plan of the house, yards, barns, orchards, fields, &c.

PEACE.—Compare the cheerful appearance of a country and the occupations of a people in time of peace, with their miserable condition in time of war. Peace promotes industry; war, idleness.



COUNTRY LIFE.—Choose the question, "Is a country life preferable to a city life?" and write on the affirmative or negative side of it, your friend taking the opposite side.

THE FARMER.—Describe his occupations at different seasons.—The hardships and pleasures of his life.—His usefulness to mankind.

SUMMER.—Its great heat, the cause of it, and its usefulness to the farmer.—Its fruits. Its pleasures.

A DAY IN THE FIELDS.—Write a letter or a story about a picnic excursion to the harvest field.

THUNDER SHOWERS.—Tell what you know of their cause.—How they are beneficial.—The danger of being struck by lightning, and how to avoid it.—Franklin's experiments in a thunder shower, proving that lightning and electricity are the same.—Describe a scene in a harvest field when a thunder shower is rising.

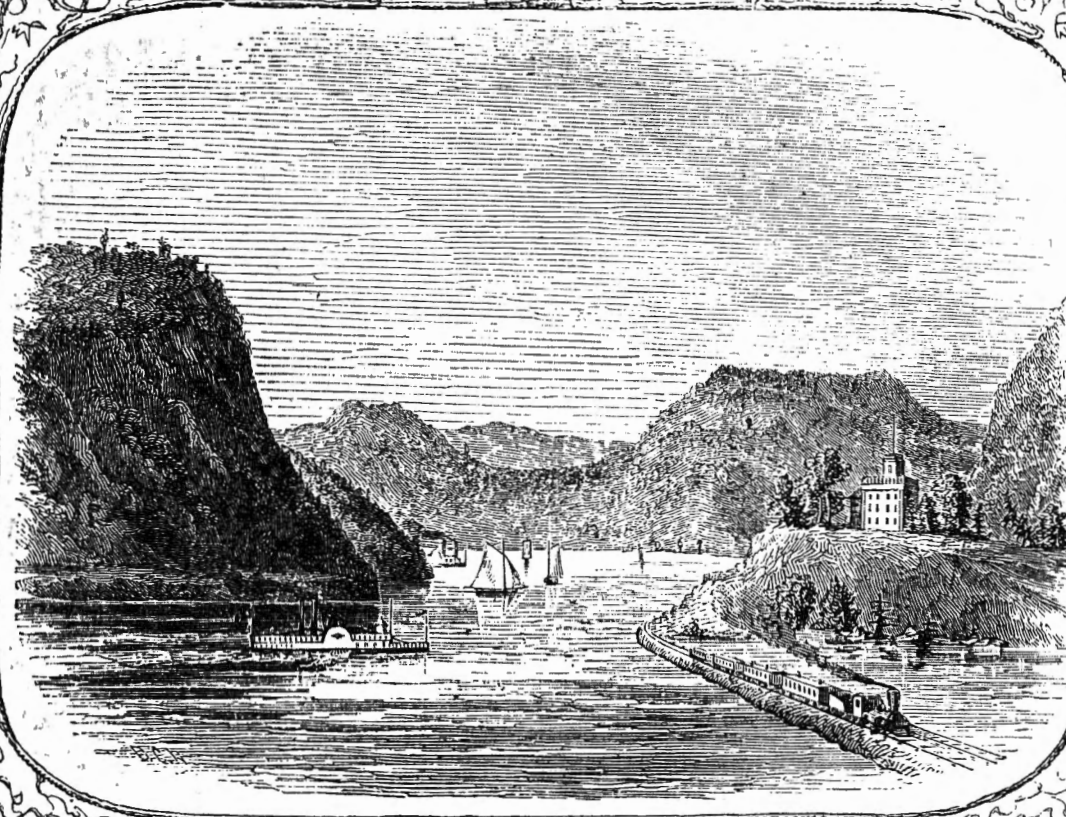
AMERICAN RIVERS.—Very numerous, and of great length.—The immense number of vessels and steamers on them.—Beautiful scenery of the Hudson.

STEAMBOATS.—By whom invented.—Their appearance and machinery.—Splendid steamers on the Mississippi, Hudson, and other rivers.—Accidents.

MOUNTAINS.—Great mountain ranges of America.—Usefulness of mountains for collecting moisture and giving rise to rivers.—Snow peaks.—Their sublimity.

THE STEAMBOAT EXCURSION.—Write a letter or narrative of a trip on the Hudson, or some other river, speaking of the towns, villas, scenery, &c.

RAILROADS.—Their invention.—How built.—Describe some great lines.—Locomotives and cars.—Railroad disasters.—Influence of railroads on business and society.—Give an allegorical description of a train rushing over the country like a living animal.



SUNSET AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.—Give a minute description of a sunset scene, like the picture; the gradual fading of the twilight sky into darkness.

THE STEAM ENGINE.—History of its invention and improvement.—Describe as well as you can, the parts composing it, and its principles of action.—The various labors to which it may be applied.—Improvement in trade and society arising from this engine.—Whether it will ever be superseded or not.

COUNTRY SEATS.—Describe the kind of country residence, pleasure grounds, &c. which suits your taste.—The various styles of architecture for country seats.—Extravagance and want of taste in some country houses.

INLAND COMMERCE.—How it differs from other commerce.—The vast inland trade on the rivers, lakes, railroads, &c. of the United States.—The kind of vessels used for inland commerce.—The commodities exchanged.

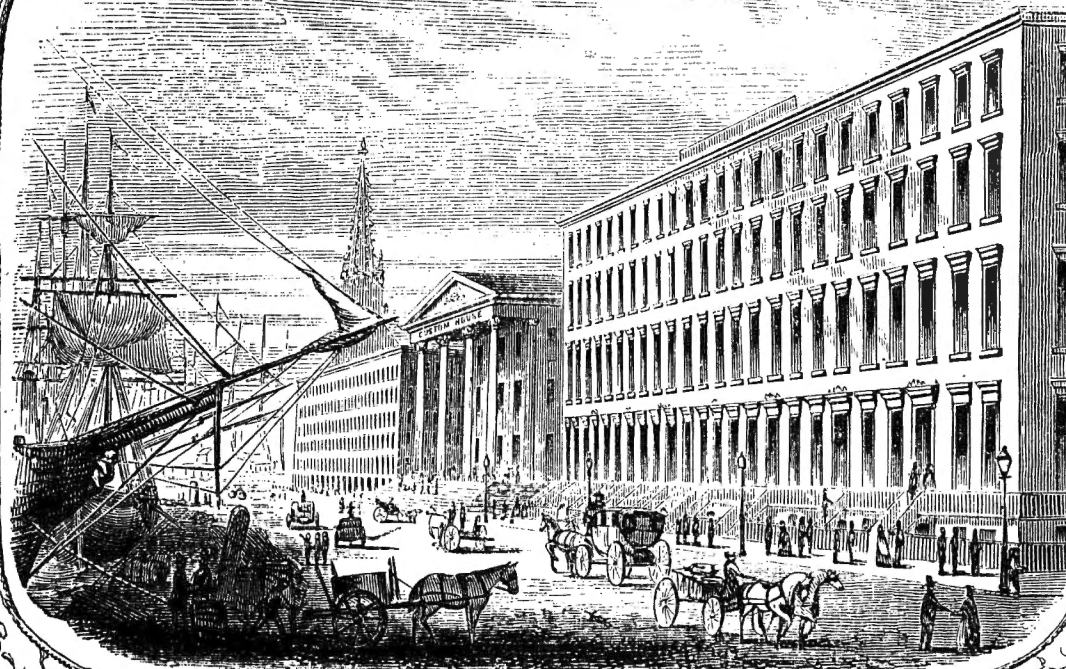
CITY WHARF.—Appearance of the ships of all nations unloading or preparing for sea.—Sailors in port.—Meeting of foreigners in commercial cities.

THE MERCHANT.—Describe the various classes of merchants, and the articles they deal in.—Compare wholesale with retail merchants, also city with country stores.—The troubles of the merchant, and his usefulness to the world.

BANKS.—The uses of money, and what trade would be without it. Different kinds of money.—Describe banks, and tell their advantages and disadvantages.

A LETTER.—Describing your journey to some large city, what you saw there, and your own thoughts on the subject.

GAS LIGHTS.—Inconvenience of city streets not lighted.—How, and from what gas is made.—Describe the appearance of lighted streets and parks.—A visit to the gas-works.



CITIES.—Compare them with villages.—What are the advantages of living in them.—The disadvantages.—Why they are important to mankind.

COMMERCE.—Give a brief history of it.—Describe the imports and exports of the United States.—How commerce is carried on.—How it promotes industry, education, and religion among nations.

A CITY STREET SCENE.—Describe the appearance of a city street, with its splendid buildings and stores, and throngs of people of all classes.

ARCHITECTURE.—The different orders of architecture.—The first dwelling of men.—What principles should be considered in building a house.—City and country houses compared.—Describe some of the finest buildings in the world.

CITY BEGGARS.—Contrast of wealth and poverty in cities.—Degraded condition of the city poor.—The impositions they practice.—The best way to relieve them.

AMERICAN FORESTS.—Their extent.—The kind of trees found in them.—Gigantic trees of California, Oregon, &c.—Appearance of the forests in autumn.—Rapid disappearance of American forests.

THE INDIANS.—What is known of their ancient history.—Describe the Indian nations as they appeared when America was discovered.—Their dress, manners, utensils and weapons.—Their disappearance.—What you think of their character.

MISSIONARIES.—What they do.—The preparation necessary to become a missionary.—The sufferings and persecution they undergo.—Their usefulness.—Mention some distinguished missionaries.

SAVAGE LIFE.—Compare it with civilized life; by describing the dress, dwellings, occupations, religion, &c.—Mention some of the nations still in a savage state.—How some savage nations have become civilized, and what evils among highly civilized nations may reduce them again to barbarism.



THE HEATHEN.—Mention some of the heathen nations, and their religious opinions.—Why their idolatry makes them miserable and degraded.—How they can be reclaimed.

INDIAN CHILDREN.—How they are brought up, and what education they receive.—Their skill in shooting and other pastimes.—Compare their condition with your own.

LIFE OF ELIOT.—Read his life, and write a narrative of his labors among the Indians, and his translation of the Bible into their language.

PEOPLE OF THE WEST.—The different races that make up the population of the West.—The Backwoodsmen.—Cabins and wigwags.—Rapid growth of the West.

HUNTERS.—Our Western hunters, the weapons they use, and the animals they pursue.—The great antiquity of hunting.—Dangers and excitements of a hunter's life.—Write a story of a hunter.

CALIFORNIA.—History of California, its accession to the United States, and the discovery of the gold mines.—How voyagers and travelers first went to California, and how they now go.—Its rapid growth and future destiny.—Chinese immigration.

VOLCANOS.—Definition.—Description of cone, crater, &c.—Eruptions, rumbling noises, lava.—Mention some of the great volcanos, and the destruction they have caused.—Connection between volcanos and earthquakes.

CATARACTS.—How formed.—An account of some of the most celebrated ones, particularly of Niagara.—The iris or rainbow.—Canals around waterfalls.—A description of some falls you have seen.—The various names applied to falls according to their size.—Their beauty or grandeur.

MINERALS.—Vast extent of the mineral kingdom.—Names and uses of mineral substances.—The extensive mineral regions of the United States.



GOLD SEEKER'S STORY.—Narrative of the travels and adventures of a youth going from the United States to California or Australia to seek his fortune. If the story is an imaginary one, consult your maps, to avoid blunders.

MINES.—Describe the appearance of, and the method of forming the various mines from which coal, copper, gold, silver, quicksilver, salt, &c. are taken.—The life of a miner.—Dangers of mines.—The safety lamp.—Some story you have heard or read about mines or miners.

PINE TREES.—Their appearance among rocks and hills, or in a winter landscape.—The purposes for which they are used.—Sound of the wind among the pines.

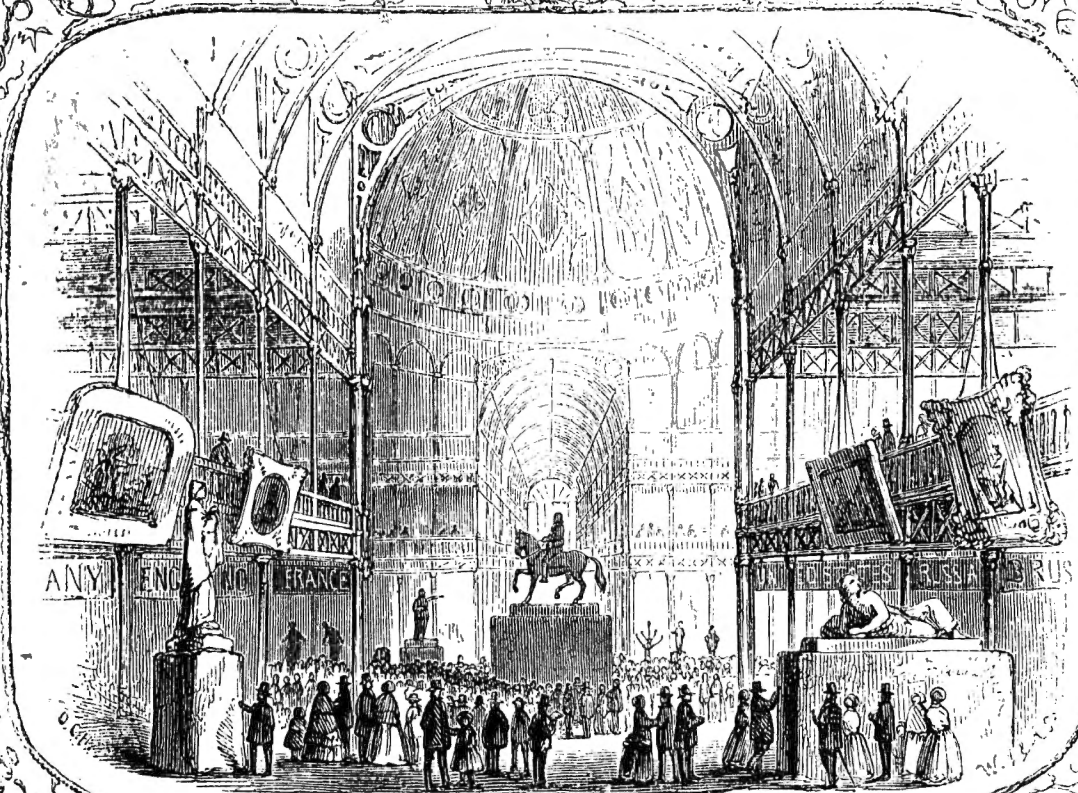
GEOGRAPHY.—Meaning of the word.—What it describes.—The knowledge of it important to all.—What persons cannot do business without understanding it.—Ignorance of the ancients.—Maps and charts.—Panoramic views of scenery.

WASHINGTON MONUMENTS AND STATUES.—Mention the different monuments and statues of the father of our country.—The great Washington monument at the capital, and the statue for it.—What you consider the proudest monument of his goodness and glory.

SCULPTURE.—The knowledge of drawing, anatomy, &c. necessary for this art.—How, and of what statues are made.—Great sculptors and their works.

GLASS.—Its appearance, brittleness, hardness, transparency, &c.—Of what, and how it is made.—What the ancients knew of it.—The various uses of it, particularly in houses and crystal palaces.—Stained and painted glass.—Visit to a glass house.

DRESS.—Describe the costumes of various nations, as presented at a world's fair.—The dress adapted to different climates and habits of life.—Oddities of dress.—Fashions.—Importance of neatness and propriety in our dress.



WORLD'S FAIRS.—The London World's Fair.—The purposes of these fairs, and their usefulness.—The new styles of building invented for them.—American triumphs at the London Fair.

A DAY IN THE CRYSTAL PALACE.—A letter giving an account of a day spent in the New York World's Fair, describing the most interesting objects, particularly the building.

DRAWING AND PAINTING.—The pleasures and usefulness of drawing.—The best way to learn the art, and the importance of cultivating it while young.—The different kinds of painting.—Notices of celebrated painters.—The art of engraving.—Describe some fine picture you have seen.

NATIONS OF THE EARTH.—Number of inhabitants.—The various races and nations.—Why they differ so greatly.—Describe the concourse of all nations in large cities, and at world's fairs.—The contrast of these peaceful meetings with warlike encounters.

NIGHT.—Its cause.—Difference in length.—Polar nights.—Effect on mankind, animals, and plants.—Appearance of nature and of the heavens.—Usefulness.—Night thoughts.

MOONLIGHT RAMBLE.—Write a story, or a letter to your friend describing one.

ASTRONOMY.—What it tells of.—Its history.—Mistakes of ancient astronomers.—The great astronomers: Copernicus, Newton, Herschel.—Importance of the study.—Sublime thoughts arising from it.

TELESCOPES.—Appearance and use.—When and by whom invented.—Philosophical description.—Herschel's, Lord Ross', and the Cambridge instrument.—Wonderful discoveries by them.—How to make a cheap telescope.

THE MOON.—Appearance.—Ancient ideas.—"Man in the moon."—Astronomical description of size, distance, motions, and changes.—Its effect on tides and the weather.—Is it inhabited?—Its beauty and usefulness.



COMETS.—Describe one you have seen.—Superstitious fears.—Wonderful facts about them.—Mention some remarkable ones.

FIXED STARS.—Why so called.—What they were supposed to be.—What we now know of them.—Star clusters.—Milky way.—Nebulae.—Reflections.

SOLAR SYSTEM.—Describe it.—Ancient errors.—Our earth a planet.—Newton's discoveries of gravitation, etc.—Motions of the planets.—Describe Venus, Jupiter, Mars, etc.—How to distinguish planets from fixed stars.—The Moons.—Reasons for supposing them to be inhabited.—The order and immensity of our system a proof of God's power and goodness.

THE GROVE.—What are the best shade trees.—Groves around country houses.—Picnic parties in the grove.

TEACHERS.—Describe their business.—What should be their qualifications.—The respect due to them.—The best way to teach astronomy.

