

**ENGLISH
COMPOSITION
BY PRACTICE**

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English Composition by Practice by Edward R. Shaw

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EDWARD R. SHAW

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BY

EDWARD R. SHAW, PH.D.

**PROFESSOR IN THE SCHOOL OF PEDAGOGY, UNIVERSITY OF THE CITY OF
NEW YORK**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY**



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MEN, AS A RULE, HOLD SOME ONE OF THE TEACHERS OF THEIR
YOUTH ABOVE ALL OTHERS IN REGARD AND REVERENCE.
IT IS HE WHOSE LOVE FOR HIS WORK AND WHOSE
STRONG PERSONALITY HAVE QUICKENED THE
MIND TO FULLER DEVELOPMENT. IN
TRUE APPRECIATION OF THIS,
THE AUTHOR INSCRIBES
THREE PAGES

TO

Dr. A. G. Merwin,
PRINCIPAL OF PUBLIC SCHOOL NO. 74,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

PREFACE.

THIS work is arranged along two parallel lines,—first, a study, by means of observation, comparison, and inference, of the principles generally observed by good writers; and second, constant practice in connected composition. The work in composition is so designed that the pupil may apply his knowledge of principles as soon as gained, and at the same time acquire those valuable qualities of writing,—unity and fluency.

The conventional use of detached sentences for example and exercise has been discarded, and selections, excerpts, and stories, each of which is a unit in itself, have been substituted. In working upon these, not only does the pupil learn what a *whole* is, but he is, besides, led to an appreciation both of sequence of thought and of transition and connection in construction. His writing, therefore, will not be of the patchwork kind so common in rhetoric classes.

In addition to the fact that the selections are in themselves units, they are interesting, attractive, and often beautiful. They tend to cultivate the taste of the pupil,

and this cultivation is going on especially at that best of times, when he is alone with his book.

Another purpose has been to keep as far away as possible from set directions and the narrowing influence of rules. Rules often grow to be ends in themselves, forcing too strongly upon the pupil's attention what he must avoid. By such means his development as a writer is dwarfed, and instead of learning to write easily and well he becomes only a corrector and critic of what others have written. In punctuation, however, it has been found convenient to formulate for reference what the pupil has been led to discover. This will not interfere, it is thought, with the end sought—that of developing a feeling for punctuation.

The author makes acknowledgments to Messrs. Harper & Brothers for the privilege of using the selections credited to them; to Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons for the extract from Irving's works; and to The Century Company and Messrs. D. Appleton & Co. for other matter. The extracts from "One Year Abroad," from Hawthorne, from "Old Acquaintance," from the poems of E. R. Sill, and Dr. Holmes' poem are used by permission of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., and by arrangement with them.

YONKERS, N. Y., June 1, 1892.

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