

**SELECTIONS FOR LATIN PROSE, WITH  
OCCASIONAL CRITICAL QUESTIONS,  
TAKEN FROM  
THE WOOLWICH, SANDHURST, AND  
DIRECT EXAMINATION PAPERS, AND  
OTHER SOURCES**

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**R. M. MILLINGTON**

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Occasional Critical Questions,

TAKEN FROM

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PAPERS, AND OTHER SOURCES.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THESE pages are intended specially for those engaged in studying for the various Army Examinations, and the Senior Students for the Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations. In the hints appended, some stress has been laid on the necessity of using particles, which the majority of candidates are almost entirely ignorant of, or suppose not worth attending to.

The Woolwich Examiners have on more than one occasion recommended special attention to one branch of Composition, in place of more ambitious and overstrained efforts, which the result proves to be too often unsuccessful.

To explain this, it may be as well to state that in training for Woolwich, Sandhurst, &c., in most cases, and in most Army Schools, not more than twelve hours in the week can be devoted to Classics, and frequently less than this, where candidates are unusually backward in Mathematics.



Out of this time not more than three or four hours can be given to Composition, whether it be of one or more kinds. Nor can this be considered too short a time, when one bears in mind the importance of such subjects as Mathematics, French, and Drawing, and considers that pupils too often come from a specially favourable nursery for classical attainments, and are compelled to starve their Classics to support other branches of study, of which, even though compulsory, they are almost wholly ignorant. Unless, then, the student be more than ordinarily prepared in other kinds of Composition, it will be well for him to select one, and confine his attention to that alone.

Of course, he is not *obliged* to choose Latin Prose, but, as a rule, it will pay him best to do so, because, although frequently enough, boys from the upper forms of our Public Schools possess a certain facility in writing Elegiacs, and although Greek Prose is much easier than Latin, still, Verse Composition is not so generally attainable as Prose, and is out of favour; while the student's own knowledge of Greek words is rarely sufficient to give him so good a chance as he has of mastering the difficulties of turning pieces of only average difficulty into Latin. It may be well to mention that it is not a knowledge of idioms and unusual expressions that enables one to write Latin,

but acquaintance with the ordinary constructions, some of which are sure to occur in any fair piece of English set for rendering into Latin. Students not unfrequently think they will win many marks by a special attention to critical papers and idiomatic phrases, which not only encourages the worst kind of cram, but must defeat its own end, according to all doctrines of chances. Another delusion exists, too, and that is, that Composition can be learnt by itself or with next to no reading: one might just as well attempt to build a house without bricks or stone. Good Latin Prose is not original, and no one can get material except from reading and learning passages from an author such as Cicero by heart, where the memory is tolerably good and time will allow. Before a student begins to turn a sentence into Latin, he should examine the general sense of the English, and paraphrase it in his mind until he finds the form best suited to the Latin construction. He should remember also that verbs are more his friends than substantives, as, especially in abstract nouns, the Latin language is singularly jejune.

It is wise to do as much as possible without an English-Latin dictionary, and to verify the classical authority of the words used from a Latin-English one, to generally make the subordinate clauses precede the principal ones,

and to avoid an awkward accumulation of verbs at the end of the sentences.

The cautions given in the hints are sometimes repeated purposely, as reiteration is not useless in such cases; and instead of giving always the actual Latin required, the principle of suggestion or paraphrase has sometimes been adopted, as requiring more useful exertion on the part of the student.

