

**A FEW HINTS ON THE
PRONUNCIATION OF THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGES**

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A Few Hints on the Pronunciation of the English Languages by M. Ardor

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M. ARDOR

**A FEW HINTS ON THE
PRONUNCIATION OF THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGES**

A FEW HINTS
ON THE
PRONUNCIATION
OF THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE;

EXHIBITING MANY PREVAILING ERRORS AND CORRUPTIONS
COMMITTED IN WRITING AND CONVERSATION, AND
SUGGESTING A MEANS OF IMPROVEMENT:

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A VARIETY OF ELEGANT EXTRACTS,

FROM THE BEST AUTHORS,

AS EXERCISES FOR READING, AND ACQUIRING A CORRECT
STYLE OF COMPOSITION:

INSTRUCTIVE FOR ALL CLASSES,

AND ALSO

PECULIARLY ADAPTED FOR FOREIGNERS.

By M. ARDOR.

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AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

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NOTE.—It is necessary to mention, that frequently in the accented pages, the monosyllables have been supplied with accents, for the purpose of guiding the Foreigner, as he is liable to mispronounce them. Also some words in which double letters occur, such as *supply*, the accent sometimes is placed on the second *p*; this by no means affects the pronunciation. In words where an improper diphthong occurs, the accent sometimes has been given on the letter which is sounded, as in *defeat* the accent is placed over the *e*, as the *a* is silent, thus to prevent misguiding the student.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no language at present existing in the world so interwoven with technicalities, so complicated in idiom, and so abounding with difficulties to the student, as the English. It cannot be gained by the ear alone, as many persons seem to imagine; and those who are desirous of speaking and writing it *correctly*, can never do so without strict perseverance, and a firm determination regarding *regular* study, which will greatly aid the *memory*, for on this chiefly depends the ultimate and paramount success of the pupil. Many persons possessing good talents and acquirements, fall into a serious error with regard to this branch of education. They suppose that as they are living in a country where every word, letter, and form strike upon the ear and eye in characters peculiarly English, there is no very great necessity for them to devote much time and labour to

its orthography, thinking so much must be, or can be, gathered in reading and conversation. It therefore follows, many individuals are met, even in the higher classes, excelling in the various accomplishments of this age, especially in those bearing the foreign stamp, and yet perchance when they are called upon to compose a simple letter to a friend or acquaintance, their whole nervous system is shaken, and suffering from the mere consciousness of being unable to write pleasantly to themselves, or freely and plainly to others. They have perhaps received a letter, in which some striking imperfections were but too visible, and consequently the idea of transgressing in a similar manner themselves, is presented in a more tangible and humiliating form. There is another evil, if possible even more trying and aggravating to the mind than the above, arising from carelessness in studying the native language. When going into society, young persons naturally and ardently desire to appear willing and able to take a part in conversation, as there always lurks, even in the most humble and retiring nature, a yearning to be known, sympathised with, and loved. The disposition is prompted, therefore, to display the fairest colours. To such, opportunities may arise for refuting certain slanderous charges against the absent; or of answering,

reputably, principles which are advanced antagonistic to our own; or an aspiring candidate may have the chance of proposing to the company a new idea. All these attempts and spirit-soarings may be painfully and eternally crushed beneath the stern relentless barrier, which we ourselves have contributed to render more firm, by planting against it the barricades of our own neglected time. We know very well what words would be proper for us to use in expressing ourselves at such times, but the difficulty remains *how to pronounce them properly*. We have read them over and over again in books, but when it is necessary to use them ourselves, the questions arise—What peculiar sound belongs to each syllable? Where is the accent laid? And which are the silent letters? &c. And by the time we have substituted a simpler expression, or words we have heard spoken by others, the opportunity, and perhaps the freshness and originality of our ideas are lost; and we either follow in the track of another, or, what is worse, content ourselves with an unusual portion of silence. Or, if bold enough to sail by a chart of our own manufacture, of course we may imagine the company will overlook the philosophy of our reasoning, in the glaring inconsistency of our speech, determining at the same time upon our amount of educational

wealth; and the very attempt we have hazarded, with a desire to please, is arrayed so as to invest us with the unenviable title of *ignoramus*.

It can be honestly affirmed, many young persons in this country that can strike off in brilliant style Mozart's or Beethoven's overtures, on harp, piano, &c.—that can paint like nature,—speak French or German like natives,—dance like sylpha,—embroider with fairy fingers,—translate dead languages, &c., &c., yet do they shun correspondence as a pestilence, because of awkward composition, and avoid their birthright of speech, because of not being certain in using the legitimate sound. And when it is too late we learn the bitter truth, that this one accomplishment would ever surpass all others, and that consequently it is the more jealous in preserving its prerogatives for those only who wisely and zealously seek to possess themselves of its mysteries.

And thus it is with the poor Foreigner; he finds it so necessary to labour hard and unceasingly for this acquisition, which, while he sojourns among us, is of much importance, from the following reasons in particular. He feels how easy it is for designing persons to impose upon him in every possible way when once his betraying accent is heard; and he is made to