

**EASY DICTATION  
LESSONS IN  
PROSE AND VERSE**

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Easy dictation lessons in prose and verse by Bennett G. Johns

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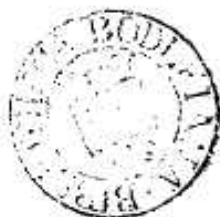


EASY  
DICTATION LESSONS

IN

PROSE AND VERSE,

Original and Selected.



BY

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The few following remarks are extracted from Notes of Lessons, given to Students in the art of Teaching, and specially referring to the subject of Spelling.

## INTRODUCTION.

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IN choosing a subject for Dictation be guided chiefly by the average attainments of the Class in Reading. Let it be a sentence, paragraph, or chapter which you are tolerably sure they can read with some little fluency. If it be complete in itself, and concerning a subject likely to *amuse* as well as *instruct*, a great point is gained. If a boy becomes interested in what he writes he will do it as well as he can.

In dictating a Lesson give out separately single words, or groups of *two* or *three*, or an entire clause, or the whole of a short sentence,—according to the ability of the Class; but do not *repeat* any part or parts of the Lesson, except in special cases where perhaps some strange form of expression, or novel word happens to occur. If the Class be not able to receive more than one word at a time,—so let it be.

Do not imagine that because a Class are not able to write three words from a single dictation, they will be able to write a clause of six or seven words after hearing them repeated a dozen times.

Gradually increase the number of words dictated, as the pupil successively reaches a higher Class.

To make this plan successful, your own enunciation must be slow, clear, and distinct; for to a half of your hearers it may be that many of the words used are entirely new, or perhaps *understood* but by a few.

Let the *subject* of the Lesson be first well understood by all. A few words of explanation will easily effect this much.

It may be well occasionally to allow a Class to choose the subject of their Lesson.

But it will depend on the ability and information of the teacher, whether, if a suitable paragraph can not be found, he be able himself to furnish the Lesson chosen from his own store of knowledge, and also (which is of far greater importance) able to express that information in a simple and pleasing manner.

It is hoped that among the Lessons given in the pages which follow this will be found at least a few which may serve in some measure as *good examples of what a Dictation Lesson should be.*

If an unsuitable topic be chosen, it will be easy to direct the attention of the Class to a more appropri-



ate and useful one. It is not every ordinary subject, simple though it be in name and perhaps nature, which will furnish a lower Class with a good Dictation Lesson.

Let two-thirds of the time devoted to Dictation be given to writing, the remaining third to correction of mistakes.

If more than *one-third* of the time be occupied in correction there must be some mismanagement on the part of the teacher, or the Class are not fit for the Lesson; they must have attempted too difficult a subject, or written too much.

In an upper Class the Dictation Lesson of to-day may be written from memory to-morrow.

The account of some previously explained subject thus given by a Class will afford a good criterion for judging of the style of composition best suited to their capacity.

The boy's own composition will of course always be greatly inferior in point of grammatical construction to what he is able to write from Dictation, but still be an index sufficiently accurate for the above-mentioned purpose.

A Dictation Lesson when once written may be looked over in various ways. The two following have been tried and found to answer reasonably well.

First, let there be an interchange of slates throughout the Class; let A take B's, and B, A's; C take

D's, and D, C's, &c. ; next let the teacher himself take the slate of one of the worst spellers ; crossing off one by one the successive mistakes with which he meets, and making the Class spell syllabically (as in a Spelling Lesson) the words in which errors have occurred. As each word is thus marked, and re-spelt, every boy will in like manner cross off on the slate which he holds all similar mistakes ; and the boy, on whose slate are found the fewest, ranks as No. 1 in the Spelling Class.

A second plan, which however must be well managed to succeed, is this ;—

As each word, or group of two or three words is given out ;—let every *one* in which you think it likely that mistakes will be made, be spelt syllabically by the Class before it be written down.

This method will leave little, if any time, for correction, but will still be found the preferable one in a lower Class ; and for this reason.

The children of a lower Class would find a difficulty in reading the writing of others, and perhaps while crossing off mistakes pay but little attention to the manner in which they are corrected. This method however must be well managed, and care taken that too much time be not spent over individual words. If the Class be small, and the slates to be corrected consequently few in number, the meaning of a few more common words may be added to the spel-

ling; while in an upper Class the Explanation of words will form an important part of the Lesson.

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N.B. The Lessons marked with an asterisk thus, \* Lesson I., are selected.

In some few the words of the Author have been slightly changed,—but in most of them they remain unaltered.

The Lessons increase in difficulty towards the end of the *First Part*; while before using *Part II.* the Class are supposed to be able to write with tolerable ease and correctness.

It would have been easy to multiply such Lessons as VIII., XII., and XV., but it has been thought better to vary the examples as much as possible, both for the sake of the teacher and the pupil.

If it be thought desirable to vary the Lessons in *Part I.* with some of a religious character, this may easily be done by extracting from *Part II.* or other sources.

It has been thought better in the present publication to keep the two parts entirely distinct.