

**PRACTICAL
COMPOSITION: WITH
NUMEROUS
MODELS AND EXERCISES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649677542

Practical Composition: With Numerous Models and Exercises by Mrs. Mary J. Harper

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MRS. MARY J. HARPER

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BY

Mrs. MARY J. HARPER,

PACKER COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

NEW YORK:

CHARLES SCRIBNER & COMPANY

1869.

EdueT 768.69.410

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BOOK MANUFACTURING COMPANY
24, 26, 28 GREENE STREET, N. Y.

TO
PROF. A. CRITTENDEN,
PRINCIPAL OF PACKER INSTITUTE,
TO
WHOSE RIPER WISDOM AND CULTURE
THE AUTHOR WAS INDEBTED FOR EARLY INSTRUCTION,
AND WITH
WHOM SHE WAS A CO-LABORER, IN THE FIELD OF LITERATURE,
IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS,
THIS WORK
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



PREFACE.

REALIZING the difficulties experienced by youth in the acquisition of the Art of Composition, and believing that many obstacles can be removed by *practical* instruction, this little treatise is submitted to American teachers, with the hope that its *simplicity* and *practical* methods will commend it to their earnest and cordial consideration.

All the preliminary instruction the mass of pupils receive may be comprised in the few words, "You are expected to write a composition once in two weeks." No early seeds have been sown, no ground prepared or fertilized, and teacher and pupil find to their disappointment only a barren, sandy desert. But flowers and fruit can be obtained only by early planting, tilling, and culture, and it is to this, as a prominent feature, attention is invited.

When the aged divine was asked "how it was that he was always ready to extemporize upon any subject upon which he was called to address an audience," answered the youthful preacher thus: "*Fill the cask*, my boy, fill the cask! then you can tap it anywhere and it will run." Many a teacher of youth, as well as youth themselves, are lamenting to-day that they have been tapping empty casks, and wondering why the vintage fails.



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