

**PRACTICAL ENGLISH
COMPOSITION; BOOK I:
FOR THE FIRST YEAR
OF THE HIGH SCHOOL**

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Practical English Composition; Book I: For the First Year of the High School by Edwin L. Miller

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EDWIN L. MILLER

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**PRACTICAL
ENGLISH COMPOSITION**

BOOK I

FOR THE FIRST YEAR OF THE HIGH SCHOOL

BY

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DETROIT, MICHIGAN**



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"Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."

SAMUEL JOHNSON. *Life of Addison.*

"Children learn to speak by watching the lips and catching the words of those who know how already; and poets learn in the same way from their elders."

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL. *Essay on Chaucer.*

"Grammars of rhetoric and grammars of logic are among the most useless furniture of a shelf. Give a boy Robinson Crusoe. That is worth all the grammars of rhetoric and logic in the world. . . . Who ever reasoned better for having been taught the difference between a syllogism and an enthymeme? Who ever composed with greater spirit and elegance because he could define an oxymoron or an aposiopesis?"

THOMAS BARRINGTON MACAULAY.
Trevelyan's Life of Lord Macaulay: Chapter VI.

PREFACE

THIS book may be used during the eighth, ninth, or tenth year of school. It is the first in a series of four, each of which has been planned to cover one stage in the composition work of the secondary school course. These volumes are all designed to furnish material adapted as exactly as possible to the capacity of the pupils. The exercises which they contain have been devised with the idea of reproducing the methods of self-instruction which have been employed by successful writers from Homer to Kipling. Most of them have been subjected to the test of actual classroom use on a large scale. They may be used independently or as supplementary to a more formal textbook. Each volume contains rather more work than an ordinary class can do in one hundred recitations.

In each volume will be found some exercises that involve each of the four forms of discourse; but emphasis is placed in Books I and II on description and narration, in Book III on exposition, and in Book IV on argumentation. Similarly, while stress is laid in Book I on letter-writing, in Book II on journalism, in Book III on literary effect, and in Book IV on the civic aspects of composition, all of these phases of the subject receive attention in each volume.

In every lesson of every book provision is made for oral work: first, because it is an end valuable in itself; second, because it is of incalculable use in preparing the ground for written work; third, because it can be made to give the pupil a proper and powerful motive

for writing with care; and, fourth, because, when employed with discretion, it lightens the teacher's burden without impairing his efficiency.

The fact that writing is only one of several processes involved in composition, is everywhere kept in mind. Due emphasis, it is hoped, has therefore been put on the gathering and organizing of material, on the revision of manuscript, and on the necessity of having a definite audience for the finished composition. In other words, an effort has been made to render the exercises vital.

The quotation at the head of each chapter and the poem at the end are placed there for the purpose of emphasizing the fact that the will and the imagination are indispensable aids to high success. Indeed, the books have all been written on the theory that great practical achievement never has been and never will be divorced from those brave translunary things which we call imagination, inspiration, and idealism.

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