

**LETTER-WRITER'S VADE-MECUM  
AND DICTIONARY SUPPLEMENT:  
A COMPLETE HANDBOOK TO  
THE EPISTOLARY ART**

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Letter-writer's Vade-mecum and Dictionary Supplement: A Complete Handbook to the Epistolary Art by R. D. Blackman

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**R. D. BLACKMAN**

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THE  
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LETTER-WRITER'S VADE-  
MECUM AND DICTIONARY  
SUPPLEMENT

A COMPLETE HANDBOOK  
TO THE EPISTOLARY ART

EDITED BY  
R. D. BLACKMAN

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8 Feb 11 - R.B.R.

## PREFACE.

THE success which attended the previous editions of this work has been such as to justify the publishers in endeavouring so to extend its scope as to appeal to a still larger section of the public than heretofore.

It was felt that something more was needed to secure the ultimate aim of the work; and that to effectually assist those desirous of acquiring facility in the art of Letter-Writing, it was necessary to begin from the very foundation, and, by presenting to them in a convenient and compact form the most useful rules in every subsidiary branch of that art, to enable even the comparatively uneducated amongst them to practice it with ease.

With a view to stimulate curiosity, and to show what delightful results accrue from proficiency in that too rare accomplishment, an account of the most Brilliant Letter-Writers of the World, and of their style and productions, is prefixed to the main body of the work. This is followed by a series of useful hints on those elementary subjects which should first engage the Letter-Writer's notice; and some veritably *golden rules* are here set forth and illustrated by appropriate and forcible examples.

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The next portion of the work is in reality an introduction to Composition and Style in their essential elements, and should receive an attention corresponding to their importance.

At this stage full explanations are inserted on all matters which bear on Punctuation; and a full and useful chapter is introduced on the Blunders and Blemishes that most commonly beset the path of Young Writers in every department, and mar their best endeavours.

The contrast between the well-educated and those who have had fewer opportunities, or who have turned their opportunities to less account, is nowhere more conspicuous and painful than in the region of orthography. Many would confess their deficiency in this respect; and few indeed are they who have never, in writing a letter, felt a moment's hesitation as to the correct spelling of some probably familiar word. Difficulties of spelling relate principally either to Inflected words (as Participles, Plurals of Nouns, etc.) or to Homonyms (words of nearly similar orthography and sound, but often of widely different meaning). The former class, regulated by a number of more or less arbitrary rules, are not to be met with at all in the ordinary dictionary, and the latter are only to be found by a separate and troublesome search. To obviate this great inconvenience, a collection has been made of all those words the spelling of which may be expected to offer any perplexity to the average Letter-Writer, and which are not found in the dictionaries in general use. It contains a complete list of the Participles of Verbs that can present the smallest

difficulty as to spelling ; every example being referred to the rule which affects it ; and a very full list of Homonyms is included. Other points, necessary to be observed, and therefore, useful to the Letter-Writer, for example, the Prepositions proper to be employed after particular Verbs or words possessing verb force are noticed at length.

Some attention has also been given to the correct Pronunciation and Accentuation of certain words which present difficulty in this respect. A list of the most important of these words has been prepared ; and it is hoped that a successful effort has been made to convey to the reader as exact an idea of the pronunciation as can possibly be conveyed by symbols. The so frequently embarrassing question of the correct Division of Words is also fully elucidated.

To keep pace with the growing interest felt in technical terms and ideas, a list of those Greek Words, which, either in their original or a modified form, have been pressed into this service, will be found in its proper place.

In order to fully justify the title of a Complete Handbook, a list is given—more complete and exact than any hitherto published—of the Forms of Epistolary Address, with full directions for beginning, concluding, and addressing letters to persons of all degrees, ranks, and denominations. A full account of the Order of their Precedence and the relative social position of the various grades in the service of the Crown is included in this section.

One of the most valuable divisions of the work, considered as a handy book of reference, is that devoted to Postal Information and cognate matters. The mass of details comprised in the many separate Official works on these subjects, are here shown in a single section.

The publishers are not aware of any similar work to this, which attempts within the same compass to deal with all the obstacles, little and great, which present themselves to the average Letter-Writer, and which at the same time furnishes him with so much extraneous assistance. In the full expectation that this little volume will be found in every way worthy of being a Constant Companion, it is respectfully offered to the public for their acceptance.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "C. W. Deacon" with a horizontal line underneath.

CHARING CROSS CHAMBERS,  
LONDON, W.C.