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PROFESSOR STEWART FRASER
AN AMERICAN SELECTION
OF
Lessons in Reading and Speaking,
CALCULATED TO
IMPROVE the MINDS and REFINe the
TASTE of YOUTH.

AND ALSO TO
Instruct them in the GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY,
and POLITICS of the UNITED STATES.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,
RULES in ELOCUTION, and DIRECTIONS for EXPRESSING the principal PASSIONS of the MIND.

BEING THE THIRD PART
OF A
GRAMMATICAL INSTITUTE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
AN APPENDIX,
CONTAINING SEVERAL NEW DIALOGUES.

BY NOAH WEBSTER, JUN. ESQUIRE.

A NEW EDITION.

"Begin with the Infant in his Cradle: Let the first Word he hear be WASHINGTON."—Mirabeau.
DISTRICT of CONNECTICUT, to wit.

BE it remembered, That on the thirteenth day of January, in the twenty-eighth year of the independence of the United States of America, NOAH WEBSTER, jun. of said district, Esq. hath deposited in this Office, the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as author, in the words following, to wit.

"An AMERICAN SELECTION of LESSONS in READING and SPEAKING, calculated to improve the minds and refine the taste of Youth—to which are prefixed Rules in Elocution, and Directions for expressing the principal passions of the mind.—By NOAH WEBSTER, jun. Author of Dissertations on the English Language, Collection of Essays and Fugitive Writings, the Prompter, &c. In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."

CHARLES DENISON, Clerk of the District of Connecticut.

District Clerk's Office, Jan. 30, 1804.
A true copy of record.—Attest,

CHARLES DENISON, Clerk.
THE design of this Third Part of the Grammatical Institute of the English Language, is to furnish schools with a variety of Exercises for Reading and Speaking. Colleges and Academies are already supplied with many excellent collections for this purpose; among which, the Art of Speaking, Enfield's Speaker, Enfield's Exercises, the Preceptor, the Young Gentleman and Lady's Monitor, and Scott's Lessons, are used with great reputation. But none of these, however judicious the selection, is calculated particularly for American schools. The essays respect distant nations or ages; or contain general ideas of morality. In America, it will be useful to furnish schools with additional essays, containing the history, geography, and transactions of the United States. Information on these subjects, is necessary for youth, both in forming their habits and improving their minds. A love of our country, and an acquaintance with its true state, are indispensable: They should be acquired in early life.

In the following work, I have endeavoured to make such a collection of essays as should form the morals as well as improve the knowledge of youth.

In the choice of pieces, I have been attentive to the political interests of America. I consider it as a capital fault in all our schools, that the books generally used, contain subjects wholly uninteresting to our youth;
while the writings that marked the revolution, which are perhaps not inferior to the orations of Cicero and Demosthenes, and which are calculated to impress interesting truths upon young minds, lie neglected and forgotten. Several of those masterly addresses of Congress, written at the commencement of the late revolution, contain such noble sentiments of liberty and patriotism, that I cannot help wishing to transfuse them into the breasts of the rising generation.

This part completes the system I had purposed to publish for the use of schools. To refine and establish our language, to facilitate the acquisition of grammatical knowledge, and diffuse the principles of virtue and patriotism, is the task I have labored to perform; and whether the success should equal my wishes or not, I shall still have the satisfaction of reflecting that I have made a laudable effort to advance the happiness of my country.

In this edition, are added a short history of the settlement of the United States, and some geographical descriptions, which will be of great utility to the youth of this country.
AN

AMERICAN SELECTION, &c.

RULES for READING and SPEAKING.

Rule I.

Let your articulation be clear and distinct.

A GOOD articulation consists in giving every letter and syllable its proper pronunciation of sound.

Let each syllable, and the letters which compose it, be pronounced with a clear voice, without whining, drawling, limping, stammering, mumbling in the throat, or speaking through the nose. Avoid equally a dull drawling habit, and too much rapidity of pronunciation; for each of these faults destroys a distinct articulation.

Rule II.

Observe the Stops, and mark the proper Pauses, but make no pause where the sense requires none.

The characters we use as stops are extremely arbitrary, and do not always mark a suspension of the voice. On the contrary, they are often employed to separate the several members of a period, and show the grammatical construction. Nor, when they are designed to mark pauses, do they always determine the length of these pauses; for this depends much on the sense and the nature of the subject. A semicolon, for example, requires a longer pause in a grave discourse, than in a lively and spirited declamation. However, as children are incapable of nice distinctions, it may be best to adopt, at first, some general rule with respect to the pauses,* and teach them to pay the same attention to these characters as they do to the words. They should be cautioned likewise against pausing in the midst of a member of a sentence, where the sense requires the words to be closely connected in pronunciation.

Rule

* See the First Part of the Institute, where the proportion of the comma, semicolon, colon, and period, is fixed at one, two, four, six.
RULE III.

Pay the strictest attention to Accent, Emphasis, and Cadence.

Let the accented syllables be pronounced with a proper stress of voice; the unaccented with little stress of voice, but distinctly.

The important words of a sentence, which I call naturally emphatical, have a claim to a considerable force of voice but particles, such as, of, to, as, and, &c. require no force of utterance, unless they happen to be emphatical, which is rarely the case. No person can read or speak well unless he understands what he reads; and the sentence will always determine what words are emphatical. It is a matter of the highest consequence, therefore, that a speaker should clearly comprehend the meaning of what he delivers, that he may know where to lay the emphasis. This may be illustrated by a single example. This short question, Will you ride to town today? is capable of four different meanings, and consequently of four different answers, according to the placing of the emphasis. If the emphasis is laid upon you, the question is, whether you will ride to town or another person. If the emphasis is laid on ride, the question is, whether you will ride or go on foot. If the emphasis is laid on town, the question is, whether you will ride to town or another place. If the emphasis is laid on today, the question is, whether you will ride to day or some other day. Thus, the whole meaning of a phrase often depends on the emphasis; and it is absolutely necessary that it should be laid on the proper words.

Cadence is a falling of the voice in pronouncing the closing syllable of a period.* This ought not to be uniform, but different at the close of different sentences.

But in interrogative sentences, the sense often requires the closing word or syllable to be pronounced with an elevated voice. This, however, is only when the last word is

* We may observe that good speakers always pronounce upon a certain key; for although they modulate the voice according to the various ideas they express, yet they retain the same pitch of voice. Accent and emphasis require no elevation of the voice, but a more forcible expression on the same key. Cadence respects the last syllable only of the sentence, which syllable is actually pronounced with a lower tone of voice; but when words or several syllables close a period, all the syllables but the last are pronounced on the same key, as the rest of the sentence.
is emphatical; as in this question, "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" Here the subject of inquiry is whether the common token of love and benevolence is prostituted to the purpose of treachery; the force of the question depends on the last word, which is therefore to be pronounced with an elevation of voice. But in this question, "Where is boasting then?" the emphatical word is boasting, which of course requires an elevation of voice.

The most natural pitch of voice is that in which we speak in common conversation. Whenever the voice is raised above this key, pronunciation is difficult and fatiguing. There is a difference between a loud and a high voice. A person may speak much louder than he does in ordinary discourse, without any elevation of voice; and he may be heard distinctly, upon the same key, either in a private room or in a large assembly.

**Rule IV.**

*Let the sentiments you express be accompanied with proper Tones, Looks and Gestures.*

*By tones are meant the various modulations of voice by which we naturally express the emotions and passions. By looks we mean the expression of the emotions and passions in the countenance. Gestures are the various motions of the hands or body, which correspond to the several sentiments and passions, which the speaker design to express.*

*All these should be perfectly natural. They should be the same which we use in common conversation. A speaker should endeavor to feel what he speaks; for the perfection of reading and speaking is, to pronounce the words as if the sentiments were our own.*

*If a person is rehearsing the words of an angry man, he should assume the same furious looks; his eyes should flash with rage, his gestures should be violent, and the tone of his voice threatening. If kindness is to be expressed, the countenance should be calm and placid, and wear a smile; the tone should be mild, and the motion of the hand inviting.*

*An example of the first, we have in these words. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" Of the last, in these words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*
A man who should repeat these different passages with the same looks, tones and gestures, would pass, with his hearers for a very injudicious speaker.

The whole art of reading and speaking—all the rules of eloquence, may be comprised in this concise direction: Let a reader or a speaker express every word as if the sentiments were his own.

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GENERAL DIRECTIONS for expressing certain Passions or Sentiments.

[From the Art of Speaking.]

**MIRTH or Laughter** opens the mouth, crisps the nose, lessens the aperture of the eyes, and shakes the whole frame.

**Perplexity** draws down the eyebrows, hangs the head, casts down the eyes, closes the eyelids, shuts the mouth, and pinches the lips; then suddenly the whole body is agitated, the person walks about busily, stops abruptly, talks to himself, &c.

**Vexation** adds to the foregoing, complaint, fretting, and lamenting.

**Pity** draws down the eyebrows, opens the mouth, and draws together the features.

**Grief** is expressed by weeping, stamping with the feet, lifting up the eyes to heaven.

**Melancholy** is gloomy and motionless, the lower jaw falls, the eyes are cast down and half shut, words few, and interrupted with sighs.

**Fear** opens the eyes and mouth, shortens the nose, draws down the eyebrows, gives the countenance an air of wildness; the face becomes pale, the elbows are drawn back parallel with the sides, one foot is drawn back, the heart beats violently, the breath is quick, the voice weak and trembling. Sometimes it produces shrieks and faintings.

**Shame** turns away the face from the beholders, covers it with blushes, casts down the head and eyes, draws down the eyebrows, makes the tongue to stammer, or strikes the person dumb.

**Remorse** casts down the countenance, and clouds it with anxiety. Sometimes the teeth gnash, and the right hand beats the breast.

**Courage,**
Courage, steady and cool, opens the countenance, gives the whole form an erect and graceful air. The voice is firm, and the accents strong and articulate.

Boasting is loud and blustering. The eyes stare, the face is red and bloated, the mouth pouts, the voice is hollow, the arms akimbo, the head nodding in a threatening manner, the right fist sometimes clenched and brandished.

Pride assumes a lofty look, the eyes open, the mouth pouting, the lips pinched, the words flow and stiff, with an air of importance, the arms akimbo, and the legs at a distance or taking large strides.

Authority opens the countenance, but draws down the eyebrows a little, so as to give the person an air of gravity.

Commanding acquires a peremptory tone of voice, and a severe look.

Inviting is expressed with a smile of complacency, the hand with the palm upwards, drawn gently towards the body.

Hope brightens the countenance, arches the eyebrows, gives the eye an eager wishful look, opens the mouth to half a smile, bends the body a little forward.

Love lights up a smile upon the countenance; the forehead is smoothed, the eyebrows arched, the mouth a little open, and smiling, the eyes languishing, the countenance assumes an eager wishful look, mixed with an air of satisfaction. The accents are soft and winning, the tone of the voice flattering, &c.

Wonder opens the eyes, and makes them appear prominent. The body is fixed in a contracted stooping posture, the mouth is open, the hands often raised. Wonder at first strikes a person dumb; then breaks forth into exclamations.

Curiosity opens the eyes and mouth, lengthens the neck, bends the body forward, and fixes it in one posture, &c.

Anger is expressed by rapidity, interruption, noise and trepidation, the neck is stretched out, the head nodding in a threatening manner. The eyes red, staring, rolling, sparkling; the eyebrows drawn down over them, the forehead wrinkled, the nostrils stretched, every vein swollen, every muscle strained. When anger is violent, the mouth is opened, and drawn towards the ears, showing the teeth in a gnashing posture; the feet stamping, the right hand thrown out, threatening with a clenched fist, and the whole frame agitated.
Peevishness is expressed in nearly the same manner, but
with more moderation; the eyes a-fquint upon the object
of displeasure, the upper lip drawn up disdainfully.

Malice sets the jaws, or gnashes with the teeth, sends
flashes from the eyes, draws the mouth down towards
the ears, clenches the fist, and bends the elbows.

Envy is expressed in the same manner, but more mod­
erate.

Aversion turns the face from the object, the hands
spread out to keep it off.

Jealousy shews itself by restlessness, peevisness, thought­fulness, anxiety, absence of mind. It is a mixture of a
variety of passions, and assumes a variety of appearances.

Contempt assumes a haughty air; the lips closed, and
pouting.

Modesty or humility bends the body forward, casts
down the eyes. The voice is low, the words few, and tone of
utterance submissive.

EXAMPLES for ILLUSTRATION.

Interrogation, or questioning.

ONE day, when the moon was under an eclipse, she
complained thus to the sun of the discontinuance of his
favors. My dearest friend, said she, why do you not shine
upon me as you ufed to do? Do I not shine upon thee?
said the sun: I am very sure that I intend it. O no! replies
the moon; but I now perceive the reafon. I fee that dirty
planet, the earth, has got between us. _Dodgley’s Fables._

Life is short and uncertain: We have not a moment to
lofe. Is it prudent to throw away any of our time in tor­
menting ourselves or others, when we have little for honest
pleasures? Forgetting our weaknesses, we fpir up mighty
enmities, and fly to wound, as if we were invulnerable.

Wherefore all this buffle and noise? The best ufe of a
short life is, to make it agreeable to ourselves and to others.

Have you caufe of quarrel with your servant, your master,
your king, your neighbor? forbear a moment; death is
at hand, which makes all equal. What has a man to do
with wars, tumults, ambushes? You would deftroy your
enemy; you lose your trouble; death will do your busi­
ness whilst you are at reft. And after all, when you have
got
While we are among men let us cultivate humanity: let us not be the cause of fear nor pain to one another. Let us despise injury, malice, and detraction; and bear with an equal mind such transitory evils. While we speak, while we think, death comes up and closes the scene.

[Art of Thinking.]

Then let us haste towards those piles of wonder
That seem to bow beneath the weight of years—
Lo! to my view, the awful mansions rise,
The pride of art, the sleeping place of death! [Freneau.]

Let this auspicious day be ever sacred;
No mourning, no misfortune happen on it:
Let it be mark'd for triumph and rejoicing;
Let happy lovers ever make it holy,
Choose it to bless their hopes, and crown their wishes;
This happy day, that gives me my Calista. [Fair Penitent.]

Then is Orestes blest!—My griefs are fled!
Fled like a dream!—Methinks I tread in air!
Surprising happiness! unlook'd for joy!
Never let love despair! the prize is mine!
Be smooth, ye seas, and, ye propitious winds,
Blow from Epirus to the Spartan coast! [Diflrest Mother.]

Grief.

All dark, and comfortless!
Where are those various objects, that but now
Employ'd my busy eyes? Where those eyes?
Dead are their piercing rays, that lately shot
O'er flow'ry vales to distant sunny hills,
And drew with joy the vast horizon in.
These groping hands are now my only guides,
And feeling all my sight.
O misery! what words can sound my grief?
Shut from the living whilst among the living;
Dark as the grave amidst the bustling world.
No more to view the beauty of the spring,
Or see the face of kindred, or of friend. [Trag. of Lear.]

Courage.

A generous few, the vet'ran hardy gleanings
Of many a hapless fight, with a fierce
Heroic fire inspir'd each other;
Resolv'd on death, disdaining to survive
Their dearest country—"If we fall," I cry'd,
"Let us not tamely fall like passive cowards!
No, let us live, or let us die like men!
Come on, my friends. 'To Alfred we will cut
Our glorious way; or, as we nobly perish,
Will offer, to the genius of our country,
Whole hecatombs of Danes." As if one soul
Had mov'd them all, around their heads they flash'd
Their flaming falchions—"Lead us to those Danes!
Our country! vengeance!" was the general cry.

[Masque of Alfred.]

Fear.

How ill this taper burns!—Ha! who comes here?
I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
That shapes this monstrous apparition!
It comes upon me—Art thou any thing?
Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,
That mak'lt my blood cold, and my hair to stand?
Speak to me, what art thou?

Love.

Who can behold such beauty and be silent?
Oh! I could talk of thee forever;
Forever fix and gaze on those dear eyes:
For every glance they send, darts through my soul.

[Orphan.]

Anger.

Hear me, rash man; on thy allegiance hear me.
Since thou hast striven to make us break our vow,
(Which, nor our nature nor our place can bear)
We banish thee forever from our sight
And kingdom. If, when three days are expir'd,
Thy hated trunk be found in our dominions,
That moment is thy death. Away!
By Jupiter, this shall not be revoked. [Tragedy of Lear.]

Contempt.

Away!—no woman could descend so low.
A skipping, dancing, worthless tribe you are.
Fit only for yourselves, you herd together;
And when the circling glass warms your vain hearts,
You talk of beauties that you never saw,
And fancy raptures that you never knew. [Fair Penitent.

Pity.
Pity.

As, in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well grac'd actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious;
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on Richard. No man cried, God save him!
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home;
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,
(His face still combating with tears and smiles,
The badges of his grief and patience)
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steel'd
The hearts of men, they must have melted,
And barbarism itself have pitied him. [Richard II.]

Hatred.

How like a awning publican he looks!
I hate him, for he is a Christian;
But more, for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice;
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat—the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Ey'n there, where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well won thrift,
Which he calls usury. Cursed be my tribe
If I forgive him! [Merchant of Venice.]

Pride.

Ask for what end the heavenly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use—Pride answers, "'Tis for mine.
For me kind nature wakes her genial power,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flower;
Annual, for me, the grape, the rose renew
The juice nectarious, and the balmy dew;
For me the mine a thousand treasures brings,
For me health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise,
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies." [Essay on Man.]

Humility.

I know not how to thank you. Rude I am,
In speech and manners; never till this hour
Stood I in such a presence: Yet, my Lord,
There's
There's something in my breast that makes me bold
To say, that Norval ne'er will shame thy favour. [Doug.

Melancholy.

There is a stupid weight upon my senses,
A dismal sullen stillness, that succeeds
The storm of rage and grief, like silent death
After the tumult and the noise of life.
Love was the informing active fire within;
Now that is quench'd, the mass forgets to move,
And longs to mingle with its kindred earth. [Fair Penseros.

Commanding.

———Silence, ye winds,
That make outrageous war upon the ocean;
And thou, old ocean, still thy boisterous waves;
Ye warring elements, be hushed as death,
While I impose my dread commands on hell.
And thou, profoundest hell, whose dreadful sway
Is given to me by fate demorgorgon——
Hear, hear my powerful voice through all thy regions;
And, from thy gloomy caverns, thunder thy reply. [Rinaldo and Armida.

Hope.

O hope, sweet flatterer, whose delusive touch
Sheds on afflicted minds the balm of comfort,
Relieves the load of poverty, sustains
The captive bending with the weight of bonds,
And smooths the pillow of disease and pain;
Send back the exploring messenger with joy,
And let me hail thee from that friendly grove. [Boadicea.

Boasting.

My arm a nobler victory never gain'd;
And I am prouder to have pass'd that stream,
Than that I drove a million o'er the plain. [Lee's Alexander.

Perplexity.

Go, fellow, get thee home, provide some carts,
And bring away the armour that is there.
Gentlemen, will you go and muster men?
If I know how to order these affairs,
Disorderly thus thrust into my hands,
Never believe me. All is uneven,
And every thing is left at fix and even. [Richard II.

Revenge.
Revenge.

If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me and hindered me of half a million, laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies. And what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Is he not fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard, but I will better by the instruction. [Merchant of Venice.]

Remorse.

I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. O that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains; that we should, with joy, pleasure, revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!—I will ask him for my place again—he shall tell me I'm a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! Every inordinate cup is unblest, and she ingredient is a devil. [Tragedy of Othello]