

A

TREATISE

ON

ENGLISH PUNCTUATION;

DESIGNED FOR

LETTER-WRITERS, AUTHORS, PRINTERS, AND  
CORRECTORS OF THE PRESS;

AND FOR

THE USE OF SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES.

With an Appendix,

CONTAINING RULES ON THE USE OF CAPITALS, A LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS,  
HINTS ON THE PREPARATION OF COPY AND ON PROOF-READING,  
SPECIMEN OF PROOF-SHEET, ETC.

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BY JOHN WILSON.

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THIRTEENTH EDITION.

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## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

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IN presenting anew the following treatise, the author would say, that, agreeably to the admission contained in the closing paragraph of the Preface to the second edition, he has embraced the opportunity of making what is conceived to be further improvements, by changing occasionally the modes of expression, enlarging the remarks and exercises, rewriting and extending the section on compound and derivative words, drawing up a more copious list of abbreviations, offering to young authors some considerations on the preparation of "copy," and appending a full and minute Index. He feels justified in affirming, that not only in its present form, but in its past, this book is the most complete of any on the subject that he has seen; a great portion of its contents, though in practical operation, not being found in any other work. He mentions this, not by way of boast, but merely to show the incorrectness of an assertion made in the Preface to a work on "Composition and Rhetoric," recently published; in which the writer of it states, that, as Punctuation, "when considered at all in educational text-books, *is treated only in the most cursory manner*, it was regarded as a desideratum to present in this volume a complete and thorough system, which should cover exceptions as well as rules, and provide for every possible case, however rare or intricate;" that writer having forgotten, that the second edition of the present work — which was probably then lying on his table, and the "Introduction" to which, in its plan and thought, if not in its expression, coincides remarkably with his Lesson on "the Principles of the Art" of Punctuation — contains at least double the number of the pages which he devotes to the setting-forth of his system.

22, SCHOOL STREET, BOSTON,  
January, 1855.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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THE writer of the following work, who has had ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with the elements and practice of Punctuation, thinks, for reasons assigned in the "Introduction," that he is justified in submitting it to the consideration of teachers, authors, compositors, and correctors of the press. . . . Eighteen years ago, he published a little book, designed solely for printers, of which a chief portion consisted of matters belonging to Punctuation; the groundwork being mainly, but not altogether, the article of Lindley Murray on that subject, introduced into the larger edition of his "English Grammar." That book has been long out of print, and would have been republished,\* but that, with an increase of years, the writer trusts he has had an accession of experience, which enables him to understand more of the practical bearings of the art of which he has treated. He therefore ventures to publish the present work, so different in its arrangement from the former, and so much augmented, as to entitle it to be regarded as, to a great extent, new. . . . To show the various adaptations of the rules, and to improve the taste or to exercise the judgment of the student, the writer has also introduced numerous examples and copious exercises, partly from books on the subject, but in the main from those having no direct reference to sentential marks; the punctuation of the examples, when wrong, having been rectified in conformity with the principles laid down in this publication.

SALFORD, near MANCHESTER, February, 1844.

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\* Despite of what is here said, the youthful work referred to was, in an enlarged form, republished at Glasgow in the year 1848, having on the titlepage the name of "John Graham" as its author, but with the Preface ostensibly subscribed by "John Wilson" and "John Graham."

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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THE work that follows is a new edition of one published by the writer in England, about six years ago, under the title of "A Treatise on Grammatical Punctuation;" the difference consisting, not in their fundamental principles, but in the mode in which these are stated, in the divisions of the subjects treated of, in the augmentation of the exercises, and in the insertion of matter which is entirely new.

The proper manner of using the book will depend altogether on the capabilities of the learner. If unversed in Punctuation, or but slightly acquainted with the art, it is recommended, that, after a careful study of Sect. II. of the "Introduction," he confine his attention to the leading principles laid down in the definitions and rules, all of which are printed in a larger character, and may be readily seen; and also to their illustrations, which are given under the head of "Examples" and of "Oral Exercises," — in that portion which applies merely to the rules. When he has gone through this course, he will have been furnished with as much information as will enable him to comprehend the exceptions or the additional principles contained in the "Remarks," and to explain or write and punctuate the remaining or second series of exercises in accordance both with the rules and the remarks.

These modes of studying the book, it is conceived, may be advantageously adopted in schools, with more or less variation, to suit the capacity of each individual in a class. The *Italic lines*, under the heads termed "Exercises," are mere general directions, which the teacher may modify according to his own taste and judgment. But, beyond these brief hints, the writer has not prescribed