

ORTHOGRAPHY.

I. Sounds and Letters.

§ 7. All sounds are not produced exactly in the same way. Some sounds are produced by means of the tongue and cavity of the mouth, which modify the breath before it passes into the air, as *a* in *father*, *i* in *machine*, *oo* in *fool*, &c. These simple sounds are called **vowels**.

Vowels were so called because they made distinct *voices* or utterances and formed syllables by themselves. (Fr. *voyelle*, Lat. *vocalis*.) Two vowels sometimes unite to form a *Diphthong*, as *oi* in *boil*, *ai* in *aisle*, &c.

§ 8. Other sounds are produced by the direct means of the *lips*, *teeth*, &c., which are called the organs of speech. These sounds are called **consonants**, as *b*, *d*, &c.

Lip-sounds are called *Labials*; *teeth*-sounds *Dentals*; *throat*-sounds *Gutturals*; *hissing*-sounds *Sibilants*.

Consonants (Lat. *consonare*, to sound along with) were so called because they could not make a distinct syllable without being *sounded along with* a vowel.

Some consonant sounds seem to have a little breath attached to them and may be prolonged. Such sounds are called **spirants** (Lat. *spirare*, to breathe), as *f*, *th*, &c.

The other consonants, in sounding which the breath seems stopped, are called **mutes** or *dumb* sounds.

Of the mutes and spirants some seem to have a flat sound, and others a sharp sound, as:—

b (flat) p (sharp): z (flat) s (sharp)