

## PREFACE.

**M**ANY selections of excellent matter have been made for the benefit of young persons. Performances of this kind are of so great utility, that fresh productions of them, and new attempts to improve the young mind, will scarcely be deemed superfluous, if the writer make his compilation instructive and interesting, and sufficiently distinct from others.

The present work, as the title expresses, aims at the attainment of three objects: to improve youth in the art of reading; to meliorate their language and sentiments; and to inculcate some of the most important principles of piety and virtue.

The pieces selected, not only give exercise to a great variety of emotions, and the correspondent tones and variations of voice, but contain sentences and members of sentences, which are diversified proportioned, and pointed with accuracy. Exercises of this nature are, it is presumed, well calculated to teach youth to read with propriety and effect. A selection of sentences, in which variety and proportion, with exact punctuation, have been carefully observed, in all their parts as well as with respect to one another, will probably have a much greater effect, in properly teaching the art of reading, than is commonly imagined. In such constructions, every thing is accommodated to the understanding and the voice; and the common difficulties in learning to read well are obviated. When the learner has acquired a habit of reading such sentences, with justness and facility, he will readily apply that habit, and the improvements he has made, to sentences more complicated and irregular, and of a construction entirely different.

The language of the pieces chosen for this collection has been carefully regarded. Purity, propriety, perspicuity, and, in many instances, elegance of diction, distinguish them. They are extracted from the works of the most correct and elegant writers. From the sources whence the sentiments are drawn, the reader may expect to find them connected and regular, sufficiently important and impressive, and divested of every thing that is either trite or eccentric. The frequent perusal of such composition naturally tends to infuse a taste for this species of excellence; and to produce a habit of thinking, and of composing, with judgment and accuracy.\*

That this collection may also serve the purpose of promoting piety and virtue, the Compiler has introduced many extracts, which

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\* The learner, in his progress through this volume and the Sequel to it, will meet with numerous instances of composition, in strict conformity to the rules for promoting perspicuous and elegant writing contained in the Appendix to the Author's English Grammar. By occasionally examining this conformity, he will be confirmed in the utility of those rules; and be enabled to apply them with ease and dexterity.

It is proper further to observe, that the Reader and the Sequel, besides teaching to read accurately, and inculcating many important sentiments, may be considered as auxiliaries to the Author's English Grammar; as practical illustrations of the principles and rules contained in that work.