

## IV. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

The Figures of Speech most frequently used in Composition, are *Personification*, *Apostrophe*, *Hyperbole*, *Comparison*, *Metaphor*, and *Allegory*.

*Personification* ascribes life and action to inanimate objects; as, The sea saw it, and fled; the deep uttered his voice, and lifted his hands on high.

*Apostrophe* turns from the regular object of address, and speaks to the absent or the dead, as if they were present; as, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death! where is thy sting?

*Hyperbole* consists in magnifying or diminishing an object beyond reality; as, They were swifter than eagles; it is less than nothing.

*Comparison* or *Simile* expresses the resemblance which one thing bears to another; as, He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

*Metaphor* expresses resemblance without the sign of comparison; as, Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.

*Allegory* represents one subject by another, without formally mentioning the subject represented; as, Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the Heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars, &c.

The figures of speech are frequently used even in ordinary conversation, as when we say of the sun, *he rises*, of the moon, *she sets*, of a river, *it runs*. By some they have been called the language of nature; by others, the language of fancy and passion. They are introduced into prose composition chiefly for ornament. The following rules should be carefully observed in the use of the figures of speech:—