

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

"The Christian, who, with pious horror, abominates the abominations of the circus or the theater, found himself encompassed with infernal snarers." &c.
Gib. Rom. Emp. ch. 15.
 "The heart likes naturally to be moved and affected."
Campbell's Rhet. ch. 2.

NOTE 1.—This definitive is also used before names employed figuratively in a general sense; as,
 "His mates their safety to the waves consign." *Lusind, 2.*
 Here *waves* cannot be understood of any particular *waves*; but the word is a metaphor for a particular thing, the *ocean*.

NOTE 2.—The definitive *the* is used before an attribute, which is selected from others belonging to the same object; as, "The very frame of spirit proper for being diverted with the laughable in objects, is so different from that which is necessary for philosophizing on them." *Campbell's Rhet. 1. 2.*

Number.

As men have occasion to speak of a single object, or of two or more individuals of the same kind, it has been found necessary to vary the noun or name, and usually the termination, to distinguish plurality from unity. The different forms of words to express one or more are called in Grammar, *numbers*; of which there are in English, two, the *singular* and the *plural*. The *singular* denotes an individual, or a collection of individuals united in a body; as, a man, a ship, an office, a company, a society, a dozen. The *plural* denotes two or more individuals, not considered as a collective body; as, men, ships, offices, companies, societies. The plural number is formed by the addition of *s* or *es* to the singular.

RULE 1. When the terminating letter of a noun will admit the sound of *s* to coalesce with the name or the last syllable of it, *s* only is added to form the plural; as, seas, seas; hands, hands; pens, pens; grapes, grapes; vales, vales; vow, vows.

2. When the letter *s* does not combine in sound with the word or last syllable of it, the addition of *s* increases the number of syllables; as, houses, houses; grace, graces; page, pages; rose, roses; voice, voices; maze, mazes.

3. When the name ends in *r*, *ss*, *sh*, or *ch* with its English sound, the plural is formed by adding *es* to the singular; for a single *s* after those letters cannot be pronounced; as, fox, foxes; glass, glasses; brush, brushes; church, churches. But after *ch* with its Greek sound, like *k*, the plural is formed by *y* only; as, monarch, monarchs.

4. When a name ends in *y* after a consonant, the plural is formed by dropping *y* and adding *ies*; as, vanity, vanities. *Alkali* has a regular plural, *alkalies*.

But after *ay*, *ey*, and *oy*, *y* only is added; as, delay, delays; valley, valleys; joy, joys; money, moneys.

NOTE.—A few English nouns deviate from the foregoing rules in the formation of the plural number:—

CLASS 1.—In some names, *f* in the singular, is for the convenience of utterance, changed into *v*; as,

life,	lives.	self,	selves.	sheaf,	sheaves.
knife,	knives.	half,	halves.	shelf,	shelves.
wife,	wives.	beef,	beefes.	wolf,	wolves.
leaf,	leaves.	staff,	staves.	wharf,	wharves.
calf,	calves.	loaf,	loaves.	thief,	thieves.

CLASS 2.—The second class consists of words which are used in both numbers, with plurals irregularly formed; as,

child,	children.	hypothesis,	hypotheses.
foot,	feet.	brother,	brothers or brethren.
tooth,	teeth.	penny,	pennies or pence.
man,	men.	die,	dies or dice.
woman,	women.	pea,	peas or pease.
ox,	oxen.	criterion,	criteria or criteria.
loose,	loose.	focus,	foci.
goose,	geese.	radius,	radii.
bean,	beans.	index,	indexes or indices.
thesis,	theses.	calc,	calces or calces.
emphasis,	emphases.	phenomenon,	phenomena.
antithesis,	antitheses.		

Pennies is used for real coins; *pence* for their value in computation.—*Dies* denotes stamps for coining; *pence*, pieces used in games.—*Pens* denotes the seeds as distinct objects; *pence* the seeds in a game.—*Brothers* is the plural used in common discourse; *brethren*, in the scripture style, but is not restricted to it.

Cherubim and *Seraphim* are real Hebrew plurals; but such is the propensity in men to form regular inflections in language, that these words are used as in the singular, with regular plurals, *cherubims*, *seraphims*. In like manner, the Hebrew singulars, *cherub* and *seraph*, have obtained regular plurals.

The influence of this principle is very obvious in other foreign words, which the sciences have enlisted into our service; as may be observed in

the words *radius*, *focus*, *index*, &c. which now begin to be used with regular English plural terminations. This tendency to regularity is, by all means, to be encouraged; for a prime excellence in language is the uniformity of its inflections. The facts here stated will be evinced by a few authorities.

"Vesiculated corallines are found adhering to rocks, shells and fucuses."
Eneye. art. Corallines.
 "Many fetuses are deficient at the extremities."
Dar. Zoon. Sect. 1, 3, 9.

"Five hundred *denarii*."
Baker's Syn. 4, 491.
 "The saliculus of the tree and its fruit, the prideful *faucis* of which are in the Maldivia Islands."
Hunter's St. Pierre, vol. 3.
 "The reduction of metallic calces into metals."
Ency. art. Metallurgy.

See also *Mediums*, Campbell's Rhetoric, 1, 150—*Calyses*, Darwin's Zoon, 1, 74—*Caudexes*, Phytologia, 2, 3—*Irises*, Zoon, 1, 444. *Reguluses* and *residuum*.
Ency. art. Metal.

In authorities equally respectable, we find *stemens*, *stratum*, *funguses*; and in pursuance of the principle, we may expect to see *lamens* for *lamina*; *lanels* for *lanelle*; *bayle* for *banytes*; *pyrite* for *pyrites*; *strontite* for *strontites*; *stalaetite* for the plural *stalaetites*. These reforms are necessary to enable us to distinguish the singular from the plural number.

CLASS 3.—The third class of irregulars consists of such as have no plural termination; some of which represent ideas of things which do not admit of plurality; as, eye, barley, wax, heap, flour, cloth, pitch, and the names of metals, gold, silver, tin, zinc, antimony, lead, bismuth, quicksilver. When, in the progress of improvement, any thing, considered as not susceptible of plurality, is found to have varieties, which are distinguishable, this distinction gives rise to a plural of the term. Thus in early ages our ancestors took no notice of different varieties of *wheat*, and the term had no plural. But modern improvements in agriculture have recognized varieties of this grain, which have given the name a plural form. The same remark is applicable to fern, clay, marl, sugar, cotton, &c. which have plurals, formerly unknown. Other words may hereafter undergo a similar change.

Other words of this class denote plurality, without a plural termination; as cattle, sheep, swine, kine, deer, horse; trout, salmon, carp, perch, and many other names of fish. *Fish* has a plural, but it is used in the plural sense without the termination; as,

"We are to blane for eating these fish."
Anacharsis 6. 272.
 "The fish retired in seas and crystal foulds,"
Hoole T. 2. 726.
 "The beasts reposed in covert of the woods."
Canon, shot and sail, are used in a plural sense; as,
 "One hundred *canon* were landed from the fleet."
Burchett, Naval Hist. 732.

"Several shot being fired,"
Ibm. 435.
 "Several sail of ships."
Ibm. 426.
 In the sense in which *sail* is here used, it does not admit of a plural ending.

Under this class may be noticed a number of words, expressing time, distance, measure, weight, and number, which, though admitting a plural termination, are often, not to say generally, used without that termination, even when used with attributes of plurality; such are the names in these expressions, two year, five mile, ten foot, seven pound, three tun, hundred, thousand, or million, five bushel, twenty weight, &c. Yet the most unlettered people never say, two minute, three hour, five day, or week, or month; nor two inch, yard or league; nor three ounce, grain, dram, or peck.

A like singularity is observable in the Latin language. "Triciti quadraginta millia modium." *Liv. lib. 26. 47.* Forty thousand modium of wheat. "Quatuor millia pondo auri," four thousand pound of gold. *Ibm. 27. 10.*

Here we see the origin of our *pound*. Originally it was merely *weight*—four thousand of gold by *weight*. From denoting weight generally, *pound* became the term for a certain division or quantity; retaining however its signification of unity, and becoming an indeclinable in Latin. *Twenty pound* then, in strictness, is twenty divisions by *weight*; or as we say, with a like abbreviation, *twenty weight*.

The words *horse*, *foot* and *infantry*, comprehending bodies of soldiers, are used as plural nouns and followed by verbs in the plural. *Cavalry* is sometimes used in like manner.

CLASS 4.—The fourth class of irregular nouns consists of words which have the plural termination only. Some of these denoting plurality, are always joined with verbs in the plural; as the following:

Annals,	drawers,	loes,	customs,
archives,	downs,	lungs,	shears,
ashes,	drugs,	malins,	scissors,
asets,	embers,	mallows,	shambles,
bettors,	entrails,	orgies,	tidings,
bowels,	fetters,	nippers,	tongs,
compasses,	fitings,	pincers, or	thaunks,
clothes,	goods,	pincners,	verspers,
calends,	hatches,	pleads,	vitals,
breeches,	ides,	snuffers,	victuals.

Letters, in the sense of *literature*, may be added to the foregoing list. *Manners*, in the sense of *behavior*, is also plural.