

ADVERTISEMENT.

In the first edition of this work, the compiler gave me credit for one passage only, (being nearly three pages of my Grammar,) which he acknowledged to be *chiefly* taken from my work. In the later editions, he says, this is *in part* taken from my book, and he further acknowledges that a *few positions and illustrations*, among the syntactical notes and observations, were selected from my Grammar. Now the fact is, the passages borrowed amount to *thirty* or more, and they are so incorporated into his work, that no person except myself would detect the plagiarisms, without a particular view to this object. It may be further observed that these passages are original remarks, some of them illustrating principles overlooked by all British writers on the subject.

This octavo edition of Murray's Grammar, has been repeatedly published in this country, and constantly used in our higher seminaries of learning; while the student probably has no suspicion that he is learning *my* principles in Murray's Grammar.

For the injustice done to me, by this publication, in violation of the *spirit*, if not of the *letter* of the law, for securing to authors the copy-right of their works, I have sought no redress; but while I submit to the injury, it seems to be my duty to bear testimony against this species of immorality. A man's *reputation*, and *character*, and *writings*, are as much his property, as his *land*, and it is to be hoped that correct morality will, in due time, place the protection of the former on as high ground as that of the latter.

Being perfectly satisfied that some principles of Lowth's Grammar, which constitutes the body of Murray's, are entirely erroneous, I have prefixed a brief Grammar to this Dictionary; which is committed to my fellow citizens, as the mature result of all my investigations. It is the last effort I shall make to arrest the progress of error, on this subject. It needs the club of Hercules, wielded by the arm of a giant, to destroy the hydra of educational prejudice. The club and the arm, I pretend not to possess, and my efforts may be fruitless; but it will ever be a satisfaction to reflect that I have discharged a duty demanded by a deep sense of the importance of *truth*. It is not possible for me to think with indifference, that half a million of youth in our schools are daily toiling to learn that which is not true. It has been justly observed that *ignorance* is preferable to *error*.

Some of the more prominent errors of the English Grammars, are,

1. The admission of the *article*, as a distinct part of speech, and an entire mistake respecting what is called the indefinite article. The word article signifies, if any thing, a *joint*; but there is no class of words, unless it may be the conjunctions, which can, with a shadow of propriety, be brought under that denomination. The words called *articles*, are, in all languages, *adjectives*; words limiting or in some way qualifying the sense of names or nouns. In most languages, they are varied like the nouns which they qualify, and attached to them like other adjectives.

2. The arrangement of words in a class to which they do not belong. Thus, *that* is called sometimes a pronoun, and sometimes a conjunction, when in fact it is always a pronoun or substitute, and never a conjunction. So also *if*, *though*, *unless*, *notwithstanding*, are called conjunctions; which is a most palpable mistake. *Notwithstanding*, is placed by Murray among the conjunctions. But after he procured my Grammar, he inserted, under his twenty-first rule of Syntax, the following remark. "It is very frequent, when the word *notwithstanding* agrees with a number of words, or with an entire clause, to omit the whole, except this word; and in this use of *notwithstanding*, we have a striking proof of the value of abbreviations in language," &c. The whole passage, taken from my Grammar, and the two subsequent passages, are too long to be here recited. The remark to be made here is, that the author, by attempting to patch a defective system, falls into the absurdity of making *notwithstanding* a conjunction, in one part of his book, and in another, he makes it a *word agreeing with a number of words, or with an entire clause*!

3. There is no correct and complete exhibition of the English verb in any British Grammar which I have seen. The *definite* tenses, which are as important as the *indefinite*, are wholly wanting; and the second future in Murray is imperfect. It seems that he had in his first editions inserted this form, *thou shalt*, or *ye shall have loved*, but in his octavo edition, he informs us that *shall* in the second and third persons is incorrectly applied. To prove this, he gives the following examples. "Thou *shalt* have served thy apprenticeship, before the end of the year." "He *shall* have completed his business, when the messenger arrives." Very true; but the author forgot that by placing *when* or *after*, as an introduction to the sentence, the use of *shall* is not only correct, but in many cases, necessary. When thou *shalt* or you *shall* have served an apprenticeship, after he *shall* have completed his business, are perfectly correct expressions. But in consequence of this oversight, Murray's second future is defective throughout the whole paradigm.