

INFLECTIONS.

Inflections, in reading, are turns or slides of the voice, either upward or downward. There are two inflections—the *Rising Inflection* and the *Falling Inflection*. These, when united in the pronunciation of the same word, are sometimes called the *Circumflex*, or Wave.

In the *Rising Inflection*, the voice, beginning at the general pitch at which the preceding part of the sentence was spoken, rises upward, as in the following questions: “Did he act prudently’?” “Has he come’?” In the first, the voice continues on the general pitch until it has pronounced

the first syllable of the word prudently: Thus, Did he act pru-^{dent-ly’?}
The proper reading of the second example may be illustrated thus: Has

he ^{come’?}
In the *Falling Inflection*, the voice usually begins above the general pitch, and suddenly descends to it, but seldom falls below it. Thus: Has

he gone to town to-^{day,} or will he go to-^{mor-row’?} Here the word *morrow*, beginning high, ends on the general pitch at which the preceding part of the sentence was read.

The rising inflection is denoted by a downward dash from right to left (’), the falling by a downward dash from left to right (’).

Those whose ears are not well trained often mistake the *falling* for the *rising* inflection, in cases of short words of one syllable, and for this reason. In the falling inflection, the voice usually rises suddenly above the general pitch to strike the word, and from that point its descending slide, in short words, is scarcely perceived. Thus, in the two examples, “What wilt thou do’?” and “What art thou doing’?” the falling inflection is used in both, although the inexperienced ear might suppose the rising inflection used in the first example. The difference between the rising and the falling inflection in short words, may perhaps be more plainly perceived by using the same words as above, but in questions that require the rising inflection. Thus: “Is this what you do’?” “Is this what you are doing’?” We think almost any person will perceive that the inflections used in the latter two examples differ from those used in the former two.