A

GRAMMAR

OF THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE;

EXPLAINED ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH AND COMMON SENSE, AND ADAPTED TO THE CAPACITIES OF ALL WHO THINK.

DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS, ACADEMIES, AND PRIVATE LEARNERS.

BY WM. S. BALCH.

"It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe, that, if our language is not here fully displayed, I have only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed."—*Johnson.*

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PREFACE.

WORKS on English Grammar are so numerous, that whoever increases the list owes an apology to the public. The apology for the present work will be found in the work itself. It is believed to possess, at least, one merit which will secure for it a favorable hearing, its agreement with truth and common sense.

Improvement is the order of the day. Most branches of literature, science, and art, have, within the last two centuries, been wonderfully improved. Geography, Arithmetic, Chemistry, Botany, Geology, and the higher branches of Mathematics, Natural and Moral Philosophy, have been adapted to the capacities of children, because explained according to fact and common sense. In [illegible] received the improving and perfecting touch, except the system of teaching our own language. That remains nearly the same that it was in the dark ages, when ignorance and error, bigotry and folly, reigned supreme in the sanctuary of religion and in the halls of legislation, and the dim light of scholastic learning was confined within the precincts of the cloister.

We might stop here and inquire, Why is it so? Are teachers of common schools, preceptors of academies, professors of colleges, and men of science generally, satisfied with this antiquated system of exposition? So far from it, it is believed very few teachers or learners approve it. Hence the manifold attempts to "improve, simplify, and explain", a system with which none are satisfied. Of all these labors, commenced in benevolence and pursued with faithfulness, what has been the sum? Has there been any real change, save, perhaps, in the manner of teaching? Is not the system virtually the same?

The attempt here made is not to remodel the old system but to divulge a new one, in which the study of language is treated as a science instead of an "art," and the whole subject so presented to the student as to become matter of thought and investigation. The inseparable connexion between words, ideas, and things, is carefully observed, and the whole structure of language explained according to the guiding laws which operate in matter and mind.

One great obstacle which has hitherto prevented the advancement of this science, is the deference which has been paid to the innumerable arbitrary "rules" and their "exceptions" which have been substituted for reasons. In Arithmetic, no other rule than the simple fact is required to teach the child that two and two make four; or that "two things mutually equal to a third are equal to each other." Why then are rules necessary to teach that a "verb must agree with its nominative case in number and person?"

An essential defect in the old system of explanation is the imposition of mere forms and rules upon the memory, instead of facts and evidence upon the understanding. When these forms and rules are forgotten, hardly a relic is left behind. As soon as the school is finished, and the text book closed, the whole is evaporated like a morning mist. The amount of time and money expended in the study of language on this method, to little or no good purpose, is incalculable, and the task has been any thing but pleasant.

Another cause of the difficulty of which all complain is that our language, which is purely Teutonic in its character; that is, formed from the dialects spoken in the north of Europe; depends upon its manner of *meaning* for an explanation, but has been studied by the aid of the Greek and Latin, and languages in the south of Europe which are learned by the manner of *formation*.

Certain we are, that whatever has been the cause, unconquerable difficulties have hitherto attended the study of our vernacular tongue. Some have imagined that a knowledge of it can not be gained without a tedious study of the "learned" or "dead languages;" languages as unlike ours in their principles of construction as were the habits and institutions of the Greeks and Romans compared with the Goths, Huns,

and Vandals, or even our own. It was the strangest idea that ever entered the head of an Englishman, that his language could not be learned without following the dark windings of subtle schoolmen, thro the labyrinths of feudal times, to nations whose very language was driven from speaking lips by a race of men who gave him substantially the character of his own tongue.

The success which has attended this course of exposition is too well known to need comment. Notwithstanding the *seventy eight* attempts which have been made, in our own country, since the days of Lindley Murray, to "explain, improve, and simplify" the system so "carefully compiled" by him, the study of our own language still remains as dull, dry, uninteresting, and profitless as ever. Whoever would have a thoro knowledge of it are still directed to the dusty parchments of Greek and Latin.

Can it be possible that the study of our language, if rightly explained, is dull or useless? Our language is the essential instrument of a great share of our happiness, knowledge, and improvement, and is employed from the cradle to the grave by millions of thinking beings who have attained as high a degree of human excellence as any of the nations on earth, in the arts, sciences, philosophy, government, and religion; and yet we are told, its principles can not be explained or understood without a knowledge of the "dead languages!" The idea is preposterous.

When language shall be studied on philosophic principles, and learned according to reason and fact, it will be found that what exists in truth can be as correctly expressed in our language as in any other; and that what is opposed to fact in plain English can not be proved correct by the best Greek and Latin quotations. It is very proper to study the "learned languages" as a means for revealing the truths contained in them. But when they are studied to acquire a knowledge of the structure of our own, they injure rather than benefit. The idioms of the languages are radically different, and can not be made to harmonize.

The object in studying English Grammar is not merely to acquire a knowledge of mechanical *parsing* according to a system of arbitray rules. It is to learn the essential principles of human speech, and the best method for constructing sentences to express ideas according to the

established idioms of the English language. Reasons instead of [illegible] should be taught to scholars, that they may rely more upon themselves, the convictions of their own minds, and the facts in the case, for the correctness of their positions, than upon a mere rule or remark of some celebrated author.

Human testimony is valuable as evidence in a case of truth and error, plainly within the reach of common minds; but it is poor authority where first principles are concerned. An essential fault heretofore has been, that human authority has been too obsequiously obeyed; and scholars have been taught to think the end of grammar attained when they could construe a sentence according to a given author. This deference for great names and antiquated theories may not attach exclusively to the study of language. Every improvement has encountered it. Gallileo did not explode the Alexandrian theory, and establish a truer one, without the denunciation of kindred philosophers. Even Ecclesiastics, forgetting that a knowledge of nature's laws would bring the enlightened soul into closer communion with the all-pervading spirit of the great Author of matter and mind, chastised the heretic for his presumption in daring to depart from standard theories, and doubt the decisions of the Church in questions of astronomy!

The author of this work believes that there is not only a willingness, but a strong desire pervading the community, to introduce a reform in the method and system of studying the English language. In many minds there seems to be a conviction that there must be a radical change, or that the study must be abandoned altogether.

Fourteen years experience in the study and application of the principles involved in this work, and the testimony of every individual who has examined them with candor and reason, has confirmed in the mind of the author their truth and importance. They have been approved and adopted by some of the greatest scholars, and introduced into some of the best schools in our country, where they have proved triumphantly successful.

By the urgent request of many friends of education, and after deliberate reflection, the author ventures before the public with the present work. And tho he sincerely regrets that it had not fallen into abler hands, he feels encouraged by the many kind promises of aid from the

distinguished teachers and friends of learning, who have urged him to undertake its publication, and from a firm conviction that the principles here explained are true and of vital importance to the rising generation.

The author has no titles nor public character to foster his production or recommend it to the favorable attention of the community. He sends it forth, like a poor man's child, dependant upon its own merits for success. He asks for it a candid examination, a frank adoption of what is proved to be correct, and as ready rejection of what is found to be false. If this is done, whether his book is generally circulated and adopted, or is left to slumber upon the shelf, he will be content, and feel that satisfaction which is the boon of well-meant tho unsuccessful labors.

April, 1839.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Mr. Daniel H. Barnes, the first Principal of the New-York High School, a gentleman of the highest literary acquirements, answered certain interrogatories proposed to him in relation to the system of exposition involved in this work, as it had been previously exhibited to the public by the labors of Mr. Cardell, in the following expressive language:—

"The remarkable difference between this new system, and the old one, induced me to institute a very rigid scrutiny, before any decision was made. Not being able myself to detect its fallacy, and finding no other person who even attempted it on reasoning principles, I made trial of it with a class of very active and intelligent boys. We discussed every point, we combated every novelty, we fully convinced ourselves; and the strong conviction of truth thus obtained is confirmed by every hour's reading and every day's experience. To us the demonstration is irresistable.

"Such alacrity in learning I have never before witnessed. Such a habit of thought and clearness of understanding; such a determination to take nothing for granted was induced as convinced me that this system *is* in practice all that it promises in theory, and as far superior to the old system, as truth is to falsehood. The subject of language becomes intelligible and delightful, the multitude of phrases which are inexplicable by former rules become plain, beauty arises out of deformity, and order out of confusion.

"This system, coinciding with the immutable laws of nature, appears to be true universally in its application to languages, infallible in its results, and indeed the only one which properly illustrates the very important subject of which it treats.

"The economy of time and money, which would result from the general adoption of these principles, is incalculable; and it is "most devoutly to be wished" that prejudice, bigotry and self interest may not prevent the accomplishment of so great a public good."

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF LANGUAGE.

1. LANGUAGE is the expression of ideas, the means by which one person conveys his thoughts to the mind of another.

Language* applies primarily to those sounds of the human voice which are significant of ideas.

In its common acceptation it is applied to any system of *sounds* or *signs* by which the ideas of one person are made known to another. It is the vehicle of thought. If the signs have no meaning, the vehicle goes empty.

2. It employs sounds or signs, and may be spoken or written. The written sign is intended to correspond with the spoken sound.

These sounds or signs are varied according to the customs of the people who use them; and their meaning may be simple or compound, literal or figurative.

3. The English language was first spoken in England. It is now extensively used in America, in the south of Asia, in some parts of Africa, and in many islands of the seas.

*Language, from the Latin *lingua*, French *langue*, (the tongue,) and *agir*, (to do,) signifies, literally, *tongue-work*.

Languages generally follow the course of emigration, commerce, and conquest. The nation which exerts the greatest influence over another usually introduces its own language, which, in process of time, becomes generally spoken.

In some countries one language is employed in conversation, another in business transactions, and another still in religious services.

The English and American nations are at present the most powerful and commercial nations in the world, and the English language is becoming the most extensively spoken of any on the earth.

4. It is not a simple language, but is compounded of many of the European dialects, retaining an idiom peculiar to itself.

REMARKS ON THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

The Anglo-Saxon, which was a branch of the ancient Teutonic, is regarded as the parent stock of the English language.

The Angles and Saxons were two powerful tribes, or nations, who inhabited the northwest part of Germany, near the mouth of the river Elbe.

They were descended from the Teutons, the most ancient inhabitants of Germany, whose early history is unknown.

After the withdrawal of the Roman forces from Britain, (A. D. 426,) the Scots and Picts, who inhabited the northern portion of the island, invaded the country.

The Britons applied to the Angles and Saxons for assistance, to repel the incursions of the Scots and Picts; who, under Hengist and Horsa, having forced them to retire from the country, took, in their turn, possession of Britain and forced the inhabitants to submit to their authority.

Some of the Britons retired to Cambria, now Wales; others to the northwest part of France, to which they gave the name *Bretange;* but many submitted to the authority of the Angles and Saxons, and adopted, in the main, their language, now called the *Anglo-Saxon.*

Afterwards the Danes invaded England, and under Canute and his sons, held possession of it forty years. They of course, introduced their language into the country, which, however, like the

Anglo-Saxon, was a dialect of the ancient Teutonic, the parent stock of the cognate languages of northern Europe.

After the Danish authority was destroyed, Edward undertook to frame a code of laws for the Saxons and Danes, written in the unsettled dialect of the country.

William, the conqueror, again changed the political condition of the country, and gave a new aspect to the whole affairs and language of the country.

It was probably in the twelfth century, under the reign of Plantagenet, Henry II, that the English language assumed its present distinctive character, and became the language of the court and common people.

Since that time, it has been continually changing; new or foreign words have been added; many old ones have been altered in form or meaning; some have become obsolete, and a few remain the same.

5. The English language, tho peculiarly Teutonic in its construction, has received copious additions from the Greek, Latin, French, and other languages of Europe.

CONSTRUCTION AND CHANGES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

The introduction of christianity, the arts and sciences, and refinement, into England from Greece, Rome, and other parts of Europe, required also the introduction of a vocabulary suited to their expression.

Hence, many words used in theology, the arts, sciences, and refinement, were borrowed from the Greek, Latin, French, and occasionally from the Hebrew, Italian and Spanish, while the plain matter of fact was expressed in words purely Gothic.

EXAMPLE. The words *ox, swine, sheep, &c.* are native, while *beef, pork* and *mutton,* are borrowed. So *father, mother, boy, wood, grief, thought, &c.* are native; but *paternal, maternal, boyish, sylvan, dolorous,* and *pensive,* are foreign; and altho father*ly*, mother*ly*, boy*ish*, wood*y*, griev*ous*, and thought*ful*, are as correct and expressive, and far more poetical, they are not regarded by the fastidious quite so refined and elegant.*

One kind of music has been brought to a high state of perfection by the Italians; and most other nations copy largely from them. Hence, many Italian words are employed in musical expressions, as *pia, fortissimo, mæstoso, largo, piano forte.*

*Turner's Hist. Anglo-Saxon; and Lect. on Language, p. 75.

Some writers, to make a show of erudition, adopt extensively foreign words and expressions, the meaning of which is, for a long time, perhaps for ever, unknown to common readers.

Literary and commercial men, and travellers, have introduced other words from more remote nations, which they found necessary, or more convenient to convey their ideas, than any word already in our language; as *divan, sherbet, bastinado, tattoo, souchong*.

Words of Gothic or Teutonic origin, are much more bold, strong and expressive, and are better suited to poetry and eloquence, than those borrowed from the south of Europe; because more in keeping with the character, habits, and ideas of those who use them, tho regarded by some less chaste and refined.

The most perfect samples of the original *style* of our language in common use, may be found in the authorized version of the Bible, and in Shakspeare's works. But all works published previous to them, exhibit the peculiar structure of our language, and should be studied by those who would seek the true etymology of our words.

The most ancient specimen of English poetry extant is Chaucer's "Court of Love," written in 1346. The New Testament translated by Wiclif, in the same century, and his other writings, give a fair view of the condition of our language in that age.

Our language may be considered rude and unsettled in its orthography and syntactical construction, till the sixteenth century, when learning began to take a high and independent stand in England. It was then shorn of many of its excrescences and received a purer, simpler, and more expressive style; which, with few changes, has continued to the present time. See examples at the end of Chap. III.

By a knowledge of Latin, Greek, French and other languages, we can easily trace the etymology of words derived from them; but the *parent* stock of our language—the Teutonic dialect—has not been studied as it ought; and hence the true etymology of many important words are unknown.

6. The design in studying language, is to become acquainted with the best means for learning the ideas of others, and for expressing our own.

7. Three things are to be observed in the study of language.

1st. *Things* exist.

2d. Thinking beings have *ideas* of things.

3d. *Language* is employed to convey ideas to other minds.

In the study of language as well as in every thing else, the learner should go back to *first principles*, and look through signs to things

sign-i-fied. He will thus become acquainted with *realities* instead of *shadows*.

In teaching, the tutor should labor to make his pupils comprehend distinctly every *idea* and *fact* represented by words. Too much attention can not be given to this point.

The only course to learn language correctly is to follow from *signs* or *words* to *ideas*, and from ideas to *things*.

8. Language depends on the two fundamental principles.

1st. On the undeviating laws of nature which operate in the regulation of matter and mind.

2d. On the conventional agreement of those who use it.

Under the first principle all languages are alike, depending on a common principle for their explanation.

Under the second, languages differ, receiving slight or extensive modifications, according to their origin, and the condition of knowledge and the customs of the people who use them.

Previous to the dispersion from Babel and the confusion of tongues, "the whole earth was of one language, and one speech;" that is, the descendants of Noah had one language and one manner of speaking it.

Since that event, *different signs* have been adopted in different countries, to express the *same ideas*, derived from the *same things*.

FURTHER REMARKS ON THE HISTORY AND MANNER OF STUDYING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

The descendants of Noah, as we are informed by the sacred historian (*Gen. chap.* 10) and posterior to the confusion of tongues, scattered abroad and peopled the whole earth. The names of many of these decendants were given to their tribes, and the places where they dwelt, some of which have continued to the present day.

A large tribe passed into the east and adopted the *Sanscrit*, or sacred language of India; others into the north of Asia; these had the language of the Massagetæ. Some went to the south and west, and hence came the Persic, Arabic, Hebrew, and Chaldee. The two last spoken nearest the ancient land are, by some, considered the purest languages.

Some tribes went farther still and settled in Asia Minor, and from thence passed over the Hellespont and settled in Greece, or passed into Italy, Spain, and France (Celtæ.)

Other tribes passed farther north, over the mountains of Armenia, and settled on the north and west of the Euxine sea, in Dacia and Bastarnæ; from thence they subdivided into lesser tribes, and spread over the whole extent of country between the Danube, Rhine, and Baltic. Afterwards they crossed over the Baltic and settled in Scandinavia—Norway, Sweeden, and Denmark.

This branch of the human family bore the original name of *Teutons*, supposed to be derived from their great ancestor, *Teut;* according to others, *Theut* or *Thuiscon*, the god of the Northern Mythology, from whom the ancient Germans and Gauls believe themselves descended. Thuiscon and Hertha (earth) gave birth to men who were hence called *Teutons*. They were called by the Romans when first known to them *indigenæ* (natives.)

From the same word comes *Teutsche*, *Deutsche* or Dutch, (still called in Westphalia *Dusk.*) Germany was also called *Teutschland* or Deutschland.

From the same word also is derived our name for the third day of the week, *Theut's day*, *Tuet's-day*, or *Tuesday*.

From this ancient stock, sprang the numerous tribes who inhabited what is now called Germany, Prussia, Austria, Hungary, Norway, Denmark, Sweeden, Gaul or Celtæ, Britain, Scotland, Iceland, and Ireland. They were at first divided into three branches, the Istævones, Ingævones and Hermiones. The latter inherited the central part of Germany, between the Elbe and Vistula; the Istævones emigrated to the west, probably as far as Gaul; and the Ingævones settled in the north.

These were again divided into numerous tribes or nations; such as the Suavi, Quadi, Cimbri, Franci, (who passed the Rhine and gave their name to Celtæ or Gaul—France,) Sygambi, Catti, Saxons, Angles, Goths, Vandals, &c.

As their language was oral, and not written, and as these tribes had little intercourse with each other, except in the wars and petty feuds which are common to barbarous and wandering people, it could not be expected to remain long entire. It would naturally branch out into various dialects, each receive new terms and idioms, but all retain some likeness to the parent stock.

When these tribes became united for the purpose of self-defence, and consolidated into a nation, intelligent and free, a more general system of language was adopted from the leading dialects, which, however, retain to this day several of their respective characteristics, such as are marked in the *High*, *Low*, and *Upper* German.

From the Angles and Saxons, two of these tribes, who, at the call of the Britons, passed into England, as has been already remarked, the English language was more directly derived.

Such being the facts, briefly stated, the whole difficulty hitherto attending the study of our vernacular tongue can be easily explained. Instead of studying and teaching it in its true character, in relation to its Teutonic origin, attempts have been made to explain it by the rules and idioms of the *Greek* and *Latin;* languages for which it has as little affinity or affection as had the Goths and Vandals under Alaric with the Romans whose country they overran in the fifth century.

The common method of studying our language was devised in the monasteries in the dark ages, and comports very well with the notions of those feudal times. The attempt was made by a dissolute priesthood to retain the control of learning in England, in order to maintain the Papal supremacy. Their system of mere scholastic learning, comporting with the miserable philosophy of that age, has come down to us as the only correct method by which to explain the principles or obtain a correct knowledge of our own language.

It is even contended, and by many believed, that a complete, or even a tolerable knowledge of the English language can not be gained without a thoro acquaintance with the Greek and Latin, which are correctly and emphatically denominated the *dead* languages. It would be analogous, and quite as consistent, to take a journey from New-York to Montreal and Quebec, and thence ship to Gibralter, South-America, New-Orleans and Pittsburg, to get to Philadelphia. This method is not unlike the papal notion of reaching heaven thro purgatory.

Science has dawned upon the world and shed a bright luster on the English nation, and changes and improvements have been made in almost every department of human learning. But our language is still studied by arbitrary, false, and exceptionable rules, as a mere

"*art*,"* the same that it has been since the reign of ignorance and error.

It is no marvel that English Grammar is a "dry, uninteresting," and profitless study, when conducted on this method (as it usually is) by a system of arbitrary signs without any knowledge of the things signified.

Is our language a language? or is it not? If it is, it must of itself be a system of signs by which ideas are communicated from one to another, and needs not the assistance of the "*dead languages*" to explain it; for the English language borrowed nothing of its distinctive character from Greek or Latin, only some of their words. If it is not, it is folly to attempt to explain or teach it.

It is but a few years, time within the memory of all of us, since it was thought impossible to study Greek without a previous acquaintance with the Latin. And altho Grammars were afforded us in English, the meaning of all words were sacredly expressed by Latin definitions. But the spell has been broken, and old Schrevelius is laid upon the shelf, or drifted off thro the auction room.

How long will we consent to believe and teach that there are "*six tenses* in English," because this number "is confessedly applicable to the learned languages;"† when in *fact*, and in use, and in *form*, there can be but *three* distinct divisions of time? or that there are "*nine*" parts of speech, because there are the same number in Latin?

It is believed the time has come when a radical reform in this matter is loudly demanded, and every philanthropist will hail with joy the introduction of a system of explanation, suited to the peculiar structure of our speech, based on truth, accordant with common sense, and, of consequence, suited to the capacity of learners.

Whether the system here presented is such an one, is left to the decision of those who, having examined it on reasoning principles, are willing to render a "*true* verdict."

9. The study of language is properly divided into three branches, *Logic*, *Grammar*, and *Rhetoric*.

*"English grammar is the *art* of speaking and writing with propriety."

†There were *nine* in Greek, and *two* in Hebrew, and the Royal Academy of Spain have decided on *seven future tenses*.

10. LOGIC treats of the principles of thought, and the proper arrangement of ideas; or, it is right reasoning.

Children begin to learn Logic from the moment they begin to think, or to receive ideas from the observance of things, and they cease learning only when the operation of thought ceases.

There is much natural logic; that is, the habit of thinking and the arrangement of ideas depend on the natural vigor and apparently undirected exercises of the mind.

Logic, or right reasoning, receives an important bias from the instructions of childhood. The first impressions made upon the mind are usually lasting as life.

The best logician (reasoner) is he who studies most closely the qualities, conditions, relations, and tendencies of things, as exhibited in matter and mind.

11. GRAMMAR is an explanation of the principles of language.

It is derived from a word which applies to the rudiments or first principles of literature and science in general. Hence we have a *grammar of botany*, a *grammar of astronomy*, a *grammar of music*; *surgical grammar*, &c.

Grammar, as treated in the present work, regards the formation, sound, meaning, and changes of words, and their proper arrangment into sentences, so as to express ideas.

12. RHETORIC relates to the style of composition.

It teaches the best method of clothing ideas to give elegance and force, to pursuade, excite, and please the hearer or reader.

Various words and forms of expression may be employed to convey the same ideas; one may be bold and expressive; another soft and beautiful; a third familiar and easy; a fourth cold and insipid; a fifth vulgar and disgusting.

A knowledge of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric are indispensible in the use of language. They should be carefully studied and well understood by all reasonable beings.

The study of them begins with the first germs of reason, the earliest observation of things by the infant mind, and maturer years should ripen them to perfection.

All who have the care of children should teach them to observe and understand correctly things as they are; they will then reason right — this is Logic; to express their ideas intelligibly — this is Grammar; to do it in the most appropriate and expressive manner — this is Rhetoric.

Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric, should be studied in connexion. They should never be separated. They are parts of the interesting science of human thought and speech.

A person without *speech* can say nothing. A person without *ideas* has nothing to say.

It has been the fault in studying grammar that mere *forms* of expression have been taught by arbitrary rules, instead of the essential principles of human speech.

Both teacher and learner are exhorted to enter into the study of the following treatise in the free and full exercise of reason, and never adopt a sentiment or pass a remark they do not understand.

The study of language will thus become easy, delightful, and interesting, because *true* and useful.

For the convenience of teachers and learners this work is divided into short chapters and sections. The definitions necessary to be committed to memory are printed on large type, with leading questions at the end of each chapter to correspond with them. Beginners should be required to learn only the numbered sections. On a review they may be questioned upon the explanations in small type.

Advanced scholars may commence with Chapter I. It is recommended to young scholars to begin at Chapter II, and on a second or third review to canvass the contents of Chapter I.

The author earnestly solicits those teachers who may introduce this work into their schools, for a text book, to avoid a mechanical and parrot-like style of learning, and endeavor to teach scholars to be *thinkers*, to carefully scrutinize not only the style of composition, but the *sentiments* advanced in all the books they read. They will then become logicians, rather than logomachists.

The examples and illustrations are as extensive thro out this work as it was proper to make them. Teachers will find no difficulty in adding to them such as may be necessary to make their scholars comprehend the principles of the English language.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER I.

1. What is language?

To what does it apply primarily? In its common acceptation?

2. What does it employ?

Are these sounds or signs ever varied?

3. Where is the English language spoken?

What general course does language follow?
Is the same language always employed in the same country?
What is the prospect of the extension of the English Language?

4. Is ours a simple language?

What is regardad as the parent stock of our language?

[The teacher, on a second or third review, can question his scholars upon the history of our language as here stated or gathered from other authentic sources.]

5. From whence has our language received additions?

What circumstances have produced great changes in our language?
From what nations have words been most frequently borrowed?
Can you give examples?
What of literary men and travellers?
What is the characteristic of Teutonic words?
What are the most perfect samples of ancient English style?

6. What is the design in studying language?

7. What three things are to be observed in the study of language?

Are signs to be studied without the things signified?

8. On what fundamental principles does language depend?

How are languages considered under the first?
How under the second?
What of language previous to the dispersion from Babel?
What since that event?

[Here let the history be examined, on a third review.]

9. How is the study of language divided?

10. What is Logic?

Do children know any thing of logic?
On what does it, in a measure, depend?
What bias does it receive?
Who is the best logician?

11. What is Grammar?

To what does the term apply?
What does it regard as used in this work?

12. What is Rhetoric?

What does it teach?
Can ideas be expressed in different ways?
Are these things important?
When does the study of them begin?
Should they be studied together?
What of a person without speech? without ideas?

ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

CHAPTER II.

GRAMMAR.

1. GRAMMAR is an explanation of the principles of language.

2. English grammar is the explanation of the principles of the English language.

3. Its design is to teach the form, meaning, and correct use of words and sentences.

4. It is divided into four parts, *Orthography*, *Etymology*, *Syntax*, and *Prosody*.

5. Orthography teaches the sounds and use of letters, and the proper method of arranging them into syllables and words. It is right spelling.

6. Etymology treats of words, their derivation, changes, meaning, and classification.

7. Syntax teaches the proper arrangement of words into sentences.

8. Prosody relates to the quantity of syllables, words, and sentences, and the manner of their pronunciation. It applies specially to poetry and elocution.

9. *Parsing* is the resolution of sentences into their elements, phrases, words, or letters, according to the principles of grammatical construction.

The study of language is, in one sense, like the study of anatomy or mechanics: the various parts are dissected to learn how the whole is put together.

Words are to be observed in all their changes of form, meaning, and combination, that general principles may be learned, by which the student can be directed in the expression of his own ideas, and in obtaining a knowledge of others.

It is also important to understand the ellipses which abound in most sentences, and to be able to supply the omissions of speakers or writers, that their ideas may be fully known.

The teacher will exercise his pupils with the examples which are given thro out this work, and will present such others as will aid the illustration of the principles laid down.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER II.

1. What is grammar?
2. What is English grammar?
3. What is its design?
4. How is it divided?
5. What does Orthography teach?
6. Of what does Etymology treat?
7. What does Syntax teach?
8. To what does Prosody relate?
9. What is parsing?

What is the study of language like?
How are words to be observed?
What else is important?

CHAPTER III.

ORTHOGRAPHY.

1. ORTHOGRAPHY teaches the sounds and use of letters, and the proper method of arranging them into syllables and words.

2. Letters are intended to represent the different sounds of the human voice.

Letters originally represented simple articulate sounds uniformly the same; but, by accidental variations, the sounds of letters change according to their combinations and relations.

3. Twenty-six letters are employed in writing the English language.

The number of letters vary in different languages, from sixteen to two hundred and fifty-six, the present number of which the Sanscrit or sacred language of India is composed. But that is a language of syllables rather than letters.

Many languages use different characters for letters; others use the same.

4. In the English language, the Roman characters are commonly employed; but for distinction, the *Italic* is often used, and sometimes the Old English.

In writing, different characters are employed to represent the same letters.

Printed letters are of various sizes, but generally retain similar forms except in fancy printing. The regular distinctions are Pica, Long Primer, Brevier, Minion, Nonpareil, and Pearl.

5. Letters have two forms, usually called CAPITALS, and small letters.

graphs and whole chapters. No matter how short their sentences are, provided they are correct. They will soon enough learn to make *long* sentences.

Proper attention bestowed upon this subject, will be of immense service to the rising generation. Children will be prepared to begin the study of Logic and Rhetoric; and will acquire, at an early age, a habit of correct thinking, speaking, and writing.

QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER XII.

1. What is Parsing?

How is it employed in the study of language?

2. How may it be considered?

How should words be studied?

What habit should scholars acquire?

What authority should be relied on?

In the first example given, what is *good?* What degree of comparison is it?

What is *children?* What is the singular of it? In what gender may it be?

What is *obey?* What is its past tense? What would be the form of the third person singular? The imperative mood? Infinitive?

What is *the?* Is it very definite?

What is *expressed?* Does it also define by way of contrast with the *un*expressed?

Wishes? What is the singular? Would the *verb* be in the same form? I wish; he wishes. Has it any gender? Is it a *material* thing, or a desire of the mind?

Of? What does it mean? How was it formerly spelled? Is it ever used as a verb? Is it ever compounded with other words as an adjective? *Off*-als, *off*-spring, *off*-set.

Their? How does it define? By *personal relation* to whom?

Teachers? Is it properly the name of a thing? or a character, vocation, or condition of employment? What is the verb?

CHAPTER XIII.

ERRORS IN PRACTICE.

1. Errors frequently occur both in spoken and written language, which mar its beauty, and hinder a correct and forcible expression.

2. These errors exist in fact. They are produced either by a lack of correct ideas, or they originate in mistake, in the selection of improper words to signify our thoughts, or in not arranging such words according to the principles of Grammar.

The common method of teaching [illegible] *true* principles, is as absurd as it is pernicious. It is like teaching a child falsehood that it may learn to tell the truth. Besides, most of the examples given under the head of false grammar, never existed, save as *intended* mistakes. Why should it be thought necessary to make imaginary mistakes and learn children to know and correct them, when there are so many real ones to be removed? The errors offered for correction are not generally bad English, but are bad grammar.

3. A very common error in practice is occasioned by a disregard of the exceptionless rule that an action expressed by a verb "must agree with the person and number of its agent;" as, If thou *would* (wouldst) know the truth: There *was* (were) three or four present: If he *were* (was) here.

Such errors generally occur in one of three ways.

1. When two or more nouns, in the singular number, are united and stand as agents of a verb; as, John and James *was* [were] there yesterday."

2. When the agents come after the verb; as, "There *was* [were] two men drowned last week;" "What *signifies* [y] our good *words*, if our works do not correspond therewith?" "There *is* [are] *as many* as *five* or *six* of them."

3. When the verb is placed at some distance from the agent; as, "The *objections*, on which he insisted so strongly when he undertook to remove the difficulty, *was* [were] found to be unimportant."

4. *Was* and *were* are often incorrectly used; as, "*we was* [were] in the country." "If *he were* [was] here." "*Were* [was] *I* to write." "*Was* [were] *you* there?"

Much time and talent have been wasted in the attempt to prove that *you* is in the singular number. It is always plural in form, at least, and should have a verb agreeing with it in the plural. If it is right to say *you was*, why not to say *you art?* Is the *number* of the pronoun changed on account of the *tense* of the verb?

5. Wrong adjectives which define by personal relation are often used; as, "There was no *one* of them who had *their* [*his* or *her*] allowance granted."

"I do not mean that I think any *one* to blame for taking due care of *their* [his or her] health."—*Addison.*

Our language may be regarded as defective in wanting some word or words to signify a third person singular, without distinction of gender, the same as in the first or second person, and in the plural number. We are now compelled to use two words, *he* or *she; him* or *her*; as, "They shall grant to *him* (or *her*) *his* (or *her*) portion."

When no particular distinction is made, *he* and *him* are commonly used. *Man* is often used in the same way, including the human race, male and female.

The want of words of this character is the occasion of the error noted above. Who shall coin a word to make up this evident deficiency?

6. When defining adjectives are used without nouns expressed, errors often occur in the use of the verb; as, "*Each* of the witnesses *have* [has] testified." "*One* of them *are* [is] wrong."

7. The same error sometimes occurs when several nouns are mentioned in connexion; as, "Peter, or Paul, or some *other* apostle, *have* [has] said." In this instance, altho the verb agrees with each agent, it affirms of each *separately* or alternately, and not in connexion.

8. Unnecessary words are frequently used, which exceedingly injure the style of composition, and add nothing to its meaning or force; as, "I have *got* a new book;" "She has *got* a beautiful dress;" "I have *got* it at last;" "I have *got* to be there at noon;" "He has *got* ready." It is altogether preferable to omit the superfluous *got*, and say, "I *have* a new book." "I *am* to be there at noon," "He *is* ready."

The word *going* is often redundant, especially in conversation; as, "I am *going* to do it;" "I am *going* to *come*;" "he is *going* to enter college next Commencement." It is better to omit this continual *going*, or change the form of the expression, as, "I am to do it;" "I intend to do it;" "I shall do it soon," or some other way to avoid this bungling form.

Students should be very careful to avoid all redundancies. They should choose the simplest and most expressive forms of utterance.

9. The past tense and past participles are sometimes erroneously used; as, "He has *went* [gone]," or "he is gone." "I *done* [did] it." "Who *done* [did] this?"

10. The words *have* and *had* are often unnecessarily employed; as, "I *had* rather not *do* it." "You *had* better *do* it." "I would, if I had *have* known it." Omit the adjectives, *rather*, *better*, and *known*, and the error will appear obvious.

11. Pronouns are occasionally improperly used as adjectives; as, "Give me *them* [those] books." "Hand her *them* [those] pens." We do not say "give me *him* book."

12. In poetry (or what is called poetry) pronouns are

sometimes unnecessarily used, to fill out the measure; as,

"John *he* was blithesome and gay."
"My dog *he* is trusty and true."
"My banks *they* are furnished with bees."

The same error sometimes occurs in conversation and prose writing.

13. No direction can be given for the use of those nouns which express a multitude; as, an *army*, a *jury*, etc. which may be considered either singular or plural. Judgement must govern.

14. It is not in keeping with a pure and elegant style, nor consistent with the character and dignity of our language to employ *foreign* terms which are not understood, and do not belong to our tongue.

It is better to say *a day, a quarter, a hundred, which see, therefore, example*, &c. than *per diem, per* quarter, *per* centum, *quod vide, ergo, e. g.* Abbreviations which are understood are allowable.

15. The contracted phrases, "*don't, can't, shan't, tain't, twon't,*" &c. should never be tolerated in writing, except by those who have "poetic licenses." They should be avoided in conversation.

16. To conclude: a particular error which the scholar should study to avoid, is the habit of using language *erroneously*, whether oral or written. If he studiously avoids this *error*, he may save himself from the commission of others, and from the necessity of studying "false grammar."