

**INTRODUCTORY TEXT-
BOOK OF ENGLISH
COMPOSITION, BASED ON
GRAMMATICAL SYNTHESIS**

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Introductory Text-Book of English Composition, Based on Grammatical Synthesis by Walter Scott Dalglish

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OF
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BY
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By the same Author,
ADVANCED TEXT-BOOK
OF
ENGLISH COMPOSITION,
IN PROSE AND VERSE.

CONTENTS.

PART I.—ON STYLE.

II.—THE STRUCTURE OF THEMES.

III.—VERSIFICATION.

APPENDICES:—Correction of the Press; and Vocabulary of Rhetorical Terms.

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PREFACE.

THIS Book is intended as a sequel to the ordinary Text-Books on English Grammar and Analysis. It takes up the subject where analysis leaves it; and as its method is synthetical throughout, its processes form the natural and necessary complement to those of analysis.

The process of grammatical Synthesis which forms the fundamental peculiarity of the work (*vide* § 55, *et seq.*), will be found to differ widely from the so-called synthesis hitherto in use. This latter process, which is little else than the conversion of a series of similar simple sentences into one complex or compound sentence, corresponds rather with what in the following pages is termed Contraction (§ 31),—an exercise which, however useful incidentally, neither requires great skill, nor conduces to much mental exertion. This work, on the contrary, aims at making the building up of sentences by Synthesis, as exact and useful a discipline as the breaking down of sentences by Analysis is now admitted to be. Accordingly, in the following exercises,—especially will this be noticed in those on complex and compound sentences,—each element in the data has a specific function to perform; so that if the sentence, constructed according to the

given formula, were to be again analyzed, the relations of its clauses and parts would be the same as those in the formula. It is in this sense that the Synthesis here proposed forms the exact counterpart of grammatical Analysis. The process, it may be added, is simply that of nature reduced to a system; for there is no one who, in making a sentence, does not, however unconsciously, go through the same process of considering and combining the items of thought of which it is to be composed. It is hoped that, by this method, the teaching of English Composition,—hitherto the least systematic, and when professing to be systematic the least profitable, of school subjects,—may be rendered as valuable an instrument of mental training as English Grammar has of late become.

A glance at the Table of Contents will show that this synthetic character has been maintained throughout the entire work. It requires Words to be built into Sentences; sentences into Paragraphs; and (in the "Advanced" volume) paragraphs into Themes. While this general outline has been adhered to, the usual details and applications of composition have not been omitted, but have been systematically wrought into the plan of the work. Thus the often meaningless and loose exercise of filling up "elliptical sentences" has, under the head of *Enlargement* (§ 33), been employed as a test both of thought and of grammatical knowledge. *Transposition* has been applied to the change from the Direct to the Indirect form of speech, which in classical schools may, in some measure, prepare the pupils for understanding the difficulties of the "*oratio obliqua*." *Punctuation* is treated of in connexion with each kind of sentence, separately.

In the present Edition (the sixth), Part I., on the Sentence, has been remodelled, and simplified in those particulars in which it was found, from practical experience, to present unusual difficulties. Part II., on the Paragraph, has been entirely rewritten. Here also the method of procedure has been very much simplified, especially in the direction of aiding the pupil by supplying outlines of the Exercises which he has to write under each kind of composition.

In former editions of the work, Reflection was given after Narration and Description, as the third kind of composition. The author has seen cause to abandon this division of the subject as inadequate, especially as it is difficult in practice to separate Reflection from the other two kinds of writing referred to. He has therefore adopted from Professor Bain the term Exposition as more accurately descriptive of that kind of composition which deals with abstract subjects.

The author has further transferred to the chapter on Exposition the exercise known as Paraphrasing, believing that, in the case of young pupils, the Expanded Paraphrase is the best and simplest form in which the thought of a writer can be explained and amplified.

The present volume closes with Summary, or Précis Writing, an exercise which, as implying both analysis and synthesis, stands appropriately between the Paragraph and the Theme.

The chapter on the Selection of Words has been postponed to the "Advanced" volume, where it is incorporated with a new part treating of Style in its higher aspects. Whatever it is important for pupils to know on this subject at the initiatory

stage has been retained in the chapters on the "Principles of Construction," applied both to the Sentence and to the Paragraph.

Though the Theme or Essay is not systematically treated of in the present volume, the exercises in the later chapters, on the Paragraph, are really short Essays, such as are usually prescribed in Schools, and are fully adequate to test the powers of original composition of pupils in all but the most advanced classes.

DEGROSE COLLEGE, EDINBURGH,

June 1867.

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