

**A PRACTICAL ENGLISH
GRAMMAR: WITH
LESSONS IN COMPOSITION
AND LETTER-WRITING**

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A Practical English Grammar: With Lessons in Composition and Letter-Writing by Judson
Perry Welsh

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JUDSON PERRY WELSH

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A PRACTICAL
ENGLISH GRAMMAR,

WITH

LESSONS

IN

COMPOSITION AND LETTER-WRITING.

BY

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PREFACE.

It has been my aim in preparing this book to treat of the English language just as it is, to explain its constructions according to the logical relation of ideas as they exist in English thought, and not to introduce from the grammars of other languages terms, rules, exceptions, or explanations of things that have no existence in the English language.

I have tried to keep in mind that the grammarian's province is to collect and arrange the facts and principles of language as they are exhibited in the habitual usage of the majority of educated speakers and writers, and that it is not his province to make laws for the government of the language nor to try to make it conform to laws that grammarians have made, or have transferred from the grammars of inflected and, too often, dead languages.

The object of the study of English grammar is not, primarily, "to learn to speak and write the English language correctly," as we have so often been told, but to acquaint the pupil with the logic of thought and expression, to add to his enjoyment of excellent literary productions, to give him mind-discipline, literary culture, and readiness of speech, and perhaps incidentally to correct a few of his inaccurate expressions, and to hinder the acquisition of others.

An erroneous conception of the true end of the study of English grammar and of the duties of the grammarian, as

both are exhibited in many of the grammar books, is responsible for the attempts of certain enthusiastic but well-meaning educators to banish English grammar from our schools. It does not seem to have occurred to them that their energies would be better expended in making English grammar true to its name. It then would embrace substantially what has now been placed under the inappropriate name of language lessons.

This book has been planned so that the pupil will begin with the composition and study of the sentence, and will be made acquainted step by step, inductively, with all the elements which make up the sentence, and with all correct combinations of these elements as they are found in the usage of educated speakers and writers. The analysis of each construction is followed by a composition exercise that requires the pupil to use the construction in expressing his own thought.

Various kinds of composition exercises, including a short treatise on letter-writing, with plans by which pupils may be led to criticise and correct their own and each other's compositions, have been woven into the first part of the book wherever the nature of the subject would permit.

The second part of the book is a systematic study of the parts of speech, including their classes, properties, uses, and peculiarities. It is believed that teachers and pupils will find it an advantage to have all the facts pertaining to one part of speech arranged in consecutive lessons instead of having them scattered through the entire book.

Sentences for illustration have been chosen with a view to their interest and instructiveness as well as to their grammatical construction. Nothing can be gained and much loss is frequently occasioned by having young minds study the construction of sentences whose thought is beyond their

comprehension, and in no way connected with their experience or interest. Few sentences of this nature will be found in this book.

The system of diagrams for illustrative analysis is one that has grown out of my own teaching. I have long felt the need of a system in which the words should all be written on horizontal lines. Systems that require pupils to write on slanting or curved lines interfere with the formation of correct habits of penmanship, produce slovenly diagrams, and make it difficult for pupils in their seats to read and criticise black-board work. It is believed that teachers will appreciate the absence of these disadvantages as well as the simplicity of the system.

The sentences containing errors to be corrected were compiled from an accumulation of faulty expressions, composed, in part, of errors clipped from newspapers and similar sources, and, in part, of those collected from year to year by my pupils, for use in class. They have been carefully classified and placed at the end of each series of lessons on the parts of speech, so that they may be omitted conveniently when it is necessary to gain time for the study of more important parts of the subject, or when the teacher adheres to the questionable theory that bad habits of speech are best amended by being overlooked.

During the preparation of this work I have, of course, consulted many books, and have derived from them hints that have been helpful. I have received also valuable suggestions from my colleagues, and from many of my fellow-teachers elsewhere who have taken a kindly interest in the progress of the work. I am especially indebted to my former instructors, Francis A. March, LL.D., of Lafayette College, Easton, Pa., and D. J. Waller, Jr., Ph.D., Principal of the State Normal School at Blooms-

burg, Pa., from whom both during and since the time I was under their instruction, I received much of the inspiration that has prompted me to make special research in English studies.

My thanks are due also for encouragement received from Supt. Jos. S. Walton of Chester Co., Pa., Supt. R. F. Hoffecker of Montgomery Co., Pa., and Prof. Addison Jones of Conshohocken, Pa., to whom parts of this work were submitted while on its way through the press.

J. P. WELSH.

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL,
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