

**LATIN PROSE AFTER THE
BEST AUTHORS. PART I.
CAESARIN PROSE**

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Latin Prose after the Best Authors. Part I. Caesarin Prose by Francis P. Simpson

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FRANCIS P. SIMPSON

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PART I.

CAESARIAN PROSE.

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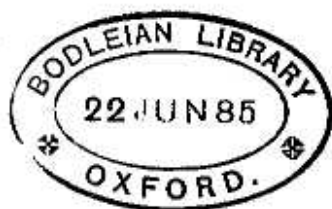
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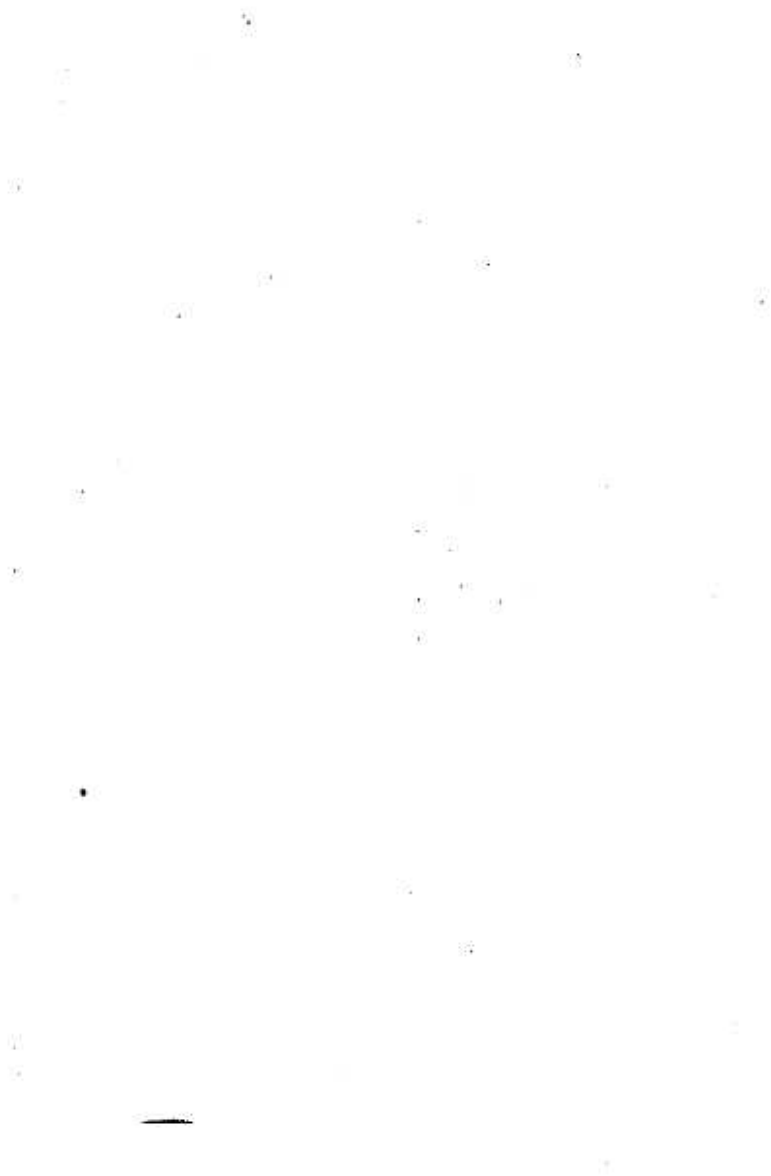
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE	v
NOTES I. The Mood	ix
The Conditional Sentence	xi
II. Reported Speech	xiv
III. The Style of Caesar	xxv
TABLE OF EXERCISES	i
EXERCISES	3
APPENDIX	86



PREFACE.

EACH group of these Exercises is founded on a passage of Caesar¹. All the words, phrases and constructions needed for the translation of the English into Latin will be found in the specified portion of the Commentaries, and on the other hand all, or practically all, of the words, phrases and constructions to be found in that portion of the Commentaries are brought into use: these two conditions I felt bound to lay down for myself, as in no other way was it possible seriously to attain the end desired.

Everybody knows how many more Latin phrases he can translate into English than are at his command when he has to compose in Latin. It is desired, in the series of which the present is the first part, to try to reduce this disproportion, by making books, which are generally read for purposes of translation, serve also to increase the vocabulary for purposes of composition. At the same time there should grow a precise and definite sense of style, a practical and experienced ability to discriminate and imitate different styles. Of course neither the aim nor the method is new—both are as old, perhaps, as the first learner of a language not his

¹ I have confined myself to *Bell. Gall.* Bks. I.—VI., 'ut, si saepius decertandum sit, ... semper novus veniam.'

own: but I think teachers will be glad to have ready at hand exercises which may help to supply the necessary means. If these exercises often limp, as they often do, it should be remembered that it may sometimes have been hard to dance in the fetters necessarily imposed.

It will, at any rate, be an advantage to avoid the habit of depending on English-Latin dictionaries, a habit which, even if it were sure the dictionaries did not mislead, tends to make the composer helpless when they are not by. It seems likely, too, that what we draw for ourselves from original sources will show especially bright and fresh in use. A good Latin-English Lexicon, of course, can hardly be read too much, particularly if, according to the good old rule, 'when you look up a word, you read the article through.' But when we require, in composition, to pass from our own to another language, it is surely best

'vivas audire et reddere voces.'

The translation of each portion, and if possible of the previous portions, of the *Caesar*, must, obviously, have been thoroughly mastered, before a group of exercises be set about. At first a pupil may complain that the necessary materials are not to be found in the original. But all the exercises have been tested in practice, and so far is the complaint from being true, that there is often a choice of diction. Gradually he will acquire an almost unconscious habit of appropriating new and serviceable phrases as they

are met with, and so adding to his stock, which will, each week, be remarkably enlarged by an almost unearned increment.

The exercises are graduated in difficulty: few will find the earlier ones too hard, or the later ones too easy. They may be begun as soon as the accident and the more elementary rules of syntax are known; in fact, as soon as Caesar can be read. The advantage of beginning continuous prose as soon as possible need only be named.

A note on the Subjunctive Mood, in special reference to the Conditional Sentence, has been inserted, because even good class-books¹ begin to explain the Conditional Sentence from certain usages of the Indicative—which is, surely, to take hold of the stick by the wrong end.

The note on 'Reported Speech' is absolutely necessary, as younger students must have constantly before them, for reference, a connected and tabular statement of its special forms, until familiarity shall have made them infallible.

¹ Even Professor W. W. Goodwin begins the account of the Greek Conditional Sentence with the example *ei τοῦτο ποιεῖς θύραται, ἴσως*: and does not hint at the fact that 'impossible conditions' took the Indicative form in Attic *by accident*. Comparative syntax shows that 'impossible conditions' required to be expressed in Greek by a past tense of the Optative mood. But Greek had no past tense of the Optative mood—as we are emphatically told by Curtius (*Ælucid*, trans. E. Abbott, c. xx.) "that language possesses no other means whatever to denote past time generally than the augment." Hence either tense or mood had to be sacrificed: Homer sacrificed the former; Attic came to sacrifice the latter, though doing its best to make up the loss by means of *ἄν* or periphrases.