A SHORTER COURSE IN ENGLISH GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649064243

A Shorter Course in English Grammar and Composition by W. H. Wells

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

www.triestepublishing.com

W. H. WELLS

A SHORTER COURSE IN ENGLISH GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION

Trieste

A SHORTER COURSE

IN

ENGLISH GRAMMAR

AND

COMPOSITION.

By W. H. WELLS, A.M.,

Author of "School Grammar" and "Graded School."

NEW YORK AND CHICAGO:
IVISON, BLAKEMAN, TAYLOR, AND COMPANY.
1881.

PREFACE.

The **Shorter Course** is intended to furnish all the aid that is needed by the ordinary student in learning to speak and write well.

English Grammar, in its application, when properly taught, is always interesting and attractive to pupils, and there is no branch of school instruction that is more valuable or important than the study of our mother tongue.

The present work commences with the knowledge which the pupil already possesses, and carries him directly forward in the practical study and use of the language.

Most of the common principles of grammar are acquired by pupils when they learn to talk, and read, and write, before they commence the study of grammar in school. An opportunity to tell what they know is a source of continual gratification to them, and fresh interest is constantly awakened in their minds as they are called on to make an application of the knowledge which they already possess. See § 23.

The ability to speak well and write well is acquired by listening to good speakers and reading good authors, and by actual practice in speaking and writing, with a careful observance of the principles and rules by which the language is governed.

In the **Shorter Course**, the rules of grammar are nowhere taught as abstract principles, but everywhere in their practical application. The object sought in every lesson is to cultivate the power of expression, and the

rules of grammar are made to take their appropriate place as collateral aids.

The principles of grammar are in most cases applied as follows:

1. When a principle or rule is presented, it is first illustrated by one or more examples.

The pupils are then called on,—

2. To give oral examples of their own construction.

3. To select illustrative examples from their readers, or from other printed matter.

4. To write sentences that embody and illustrate the principle or rule presented.

In addition to the spoken and written exercises which accompany all the important principles and rules, and which render it impossible that they should be passed over without being thoroughly understood and applied, there is also a complete parallel **Course of Lessons in Speaking and Writing** interspersed throughout the work.

The **Art of Conversation**, which is the great art of oral intercourse in every-day life, is as dependent upon cultivation as any branch of school instruction; and any course of grammatical study that does not include lessons in conversation is radically defective. A systematic course of exercises in conversation forms one of the special features of the present work.

The **Exercises in Written Composition** are so shaped and arranged as to furnish constant aid to pupils in enlarging their vocabulary of words, and to teach them how to use in the best manner the words which they have at command.

The **Shorter Course** may properly be defined *A Book of Progressive Exercises in Speaking and Writing Eng-*

lish, accompanied by a constant Application of the Principles and Rules by which the Language is governed.

The system of **Analysis** adopted presents the elements of sentences and their various relations in as simple a manner as possible, and it is made entirely subordinate to **Synthesis**, or the work of putting words together.

The **Diagrams** employed in connection with Analysis illustrate the structure of sentences very clearly by rendering the relations of their several parts visible to the eye. This mode of illustration is now employed in some form by most teachers as a valuable auxiliary to oral and written analysis.

Exercises in tracing the **Grammatical Connection of Words in Sentences,** form one of the special features of the work. They require a careful analysis of thought as well as language, and combine in condensed form the essential advantages of both parsing and analysis. See § 244.

The **Examples for Illustration** throughout the work have been selected with great care from a wide range of reading; and while their first use is to illustrate different forms and modes of expression, they also embody gems of thought which cannot fail to prove both interesting and instructive.

The author's connection with educational work has afforded him the most favorable opportunities for studying the wants of schools and the best methods employed in them. During the progress of this work he has carefully examined all the English Grammars in general use in this country and in Great Britain, and has received valuable suggestions from prominent educators, and from teachers of large experience in teachers' institutes and in schools.

W. H. W.

CHICAGO, JULY 15, 1880.

HISTORICAL NOTICE.

The basis of the English language is the Anglo-Saxon.

The original language of the British isles was the ancient Celtic or Keltic. This language is still spoken to some extent in Wales, in the Highlands of Scotland, in the western part of Ireland, and in the Isle of Man.

The Anglo-Saxon language was brought into Britain in the fifth century, by the Angles and Saxons from the north of Germany. It has a much greater number of grammatical inflections than modern English. The nouns have five cases, distinguished by different endings; adjectives are declined, and have distinctions of gender; pronouns have a greater number of forms, and verbs have more personal terminations.

After the settlement of the Angles and Saxons in Britain frequent incursions were made by the Norsemen and Danes. This led to the introduction of a considerable number of Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian words into the language.

The Norman Conquest occurred in 1066, and for a period of three hundred years following the Conquest Norman-French was mostly spoken by the upper classes and Anglo-Saxon by the lower. This resulted in the incorporation of a very large number of French words.

Many Latin words were brought into England by the Roman missionaries, and a very large number of Latin words have come to us through the medium of Norman-French. By these and other means Latin has become one of the most important elements of the English tongue.

The period of three centuries extending from the middle of the twelfth century to the middle of the fifteenth, is the transition period of the language from Anglo-Saxon to modern English.