

**WELLS'S SCHOOL GRAMMAR. -
REVISED EDITION. A GRAMMAR
OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE:
FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS**

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Wells's School Grammar. - Revised Edition. A Grammar of the English Language: For the Use of Schools by W. H. Wells

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WELLS'S SCHOOL GRAMMAR.—REVISED EDITION.

A

GRAMMAR

OF THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS.

BY

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PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION.

WHEN the first edition of this Grammar was published, it contained more principles and exercises in Grammatical Analysis than had appeared in any work previously issued in this country. It would have been easy to embody the more abstruse principles of Analysis which are contained in the works of Kühner, Crane, De Sacy, and other foreign writers, but it was feared that such a system would rather confuse than aid the pupils in our schools. All the fundamental principles of Analysis were presented, and teachers were urged to introduce their pupils as early as practicable to this important branch of grammatical study. It was not, however, intended to recommend that Grammatical Analysis should supersede the essential exercises of Etymological and Syntactical Parsing.

The tendency of our schools is to reach at once toward that which is called *higher*, and neglect that which has the misfortune to be regarded as *lower*; while it is obvious that the lower departments of study are at least equally important with the higher, and that neither should be allowed to take the place of the other. It is not then remarkable, that many teachers should have gone from a mere routine of common parsing to the opposite extreme, and devoted their attention almost exclusively to Analysis. Hence we find at the present time not a few schools in which pupils know very little of Etymological and Syntactical Parsing, while they are able to recite with uncommon fluency in all the forms of technical Analysis.

It is this tendency to an extreme, that has in so many instances brought the whole system of Grammatical Analysis

into disrepute. The experience of the last few years has satisfied intelligent Teachers and Boards of Education that pupils need to be thoroughly instructed both in the elements of Etymological and Syntactical Parsing, and in the principles of Grammatical Analysis; and it is to be hoped that each department will hereafter receive its due share of attention in the study of our mother tongue.

In the present edition of the School Grammar, that portion of the work which is devoted to Analysis has been re-written and greatly enlarged. It will now be found characterized by completeness in the presentation of principles, and by copiousness in the illustrations. The remarks which accompany the illustrative examples explain a great variety of idioms and forms of construction, and will be found more useful to the learner than the same number of special rules.

The chapter on the Grammatical Connection and Relation of Words, p. 134, has met with special favor among intelligent teachers. It has been carefully revised in the present edition.

Several pages of the Grammar have heretofore been devoted to the *Sounds of the Letters*. As this subject is now fully illustrated in all the principal series of School Readers, it is omitted in the present edition.

CHICAGO, February 27, 1858.

ORIGINAL PREFACE.

ABOUT nine years since, while engaged in the instruction of a class of Teachers, the author commenced a critical examination of several grammatical works, in connection with a systematic course of English reading. All the important principles of the language were familiarly discussed before the class. The definitions and rules of different grammarians were carefully compared with one another, and tested by constant reference to the usage of standard writers. In conducting the exercises of successive classes of Teachers, a similar course has been repeated from year to year till the present time. The result of these labors is embodied in the work now offered to the public.*

English Grammar is too often taught as if it were merely the art of *Parsing*. It is hoped that instructors will find the present work adapted to teach "the art of *speaking* and *writing*." Copious exercises and illustrations have been introduced, and the learner is required to make constant application of the principles as he advances.

The essay on Oral Instruction was prepared at the request of Henry Barnard, Esq., Commissioner of Public Schools for the State of Rhode Island, and first appeared as one of his series of Educational Tracts.

W. H. W.

PHILLIPS ACADEMY, ANDOVER, MASS., 1846.

* In pursuing these investigations, the author has collected more than four hundred different treatises on English Grammar, and noted above twenty thousand illustrative examples in the productions of the best English writers.

CATALOGUE OF ENGLISH GRAMMARS.

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