

AN ENGLISH GRAMMAR

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An English Grammar by G. P. Quackenbos

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G. P. QUACKENBOS

**AN ENGLISH
GRAMMAR**

AN
ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

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"A NATURAL PHILOSOPHY," "ILLUSTRATED SCHOOL HISTORY
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P R E F A C E .

SEVERAL years ago, the author was engaged by the publishers of Weld's English Grammar to revise that work, with instructions to make such changes in it as would in his opinion perfect the system therein presented. This task he performed to the best of his ability, making as good a book as he knew how to produce on Weld's system. This system, however, was not his own; in many important points it did not represent his views; nor was it his province, being simply its editor, to introduce his own peculiar views into the revised book. They have been retained for the present work, contemplated long before the revision was undertaken, and here presented as a new and distinct System of Grammar.

In offering the present Grammar to the public, the author begs leave to refer to the work itself as the best exponent of those peculiarities by which it is to be approved or condemned. A few words, however, may not be improper here as to its plan and general features.

Grammar has hitherto been a dry and hard subject to teach. It is here sought to make it easy and interesting by combining practice with theory, example with precept, on a more liberal scale than has heretofore generally been done. The matter is divided into short lessons, followed in every case by an Exercise, which applies in every variety of way the principles just laid

down, and frequently embodies a practical review of what has been previously learned.

Definitions are approached by means of preliminary illustrations, which make their abstract language intelligible while it is in process of learning.

Words are classified as parts of speech solely and exclusively according to their *use* in the sentence. This course does away with all *arbitrary* distinctions, and enables the pupil to classify words readily and correctly for himself.

The Rules of Syntax are introduced as they are needed, in connection with etymological parsing. Thus, among other advantages, is avoided the unreasonableness (inevitable, when these rules are kept back) of requiring a pupil to give the case of nouns under circumstances in which he can have no possible clue to it.

A simple method of analyzing sentences is presented, not encumbered with technical terms or requiring labor on the teacher's part to make it available.

There is no avoiding of difficulties. A lesson is expressly devoted to the explanation of perplexing constructions.

Many minor points may also be noticed; such as doing away with the neuter gender, a factitious distinction engrafted on English Grammar from the classical languages; the view taken of comparison; the comprehensive treatment of auxiliaries, and directions for their proper use; the introduction of *need*, as an auxiliary of the present potential; the unusually full Exercises on False Syntax; and the general arrangement and adaptation of the whole.

It is believed that this Grammar will be found to work well in the class-room, and, whether used in connection with the author's books on Composition or independently of them, to impart a thorough knowledge of our language.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

LESSON I.

LETTERS, SYLLABLES, WORDS, SENTENCES.

1. **WHAT GRAMMAR IS.**—Men have minds; with these they think. Men have speech; this enables them to express their thoughts.

Thoughts are expressed with words. Grammar teaches us how to put words together, to express thoughts correctly.

Thoughts may be either spoken or written. Grammar, therefore, teaches us how to speak and write correctly.

Different languages, such as English, French, Latin, have different peculiarities. Hence every language has its own grammar. English Grammar teaches us how to speak and write the English language correctly.

2. **WORDS.**—A **Word** is the sign of an idea.

1. With what do men think? How are they enabled to express their thoughts? With what are thoughts expressed? What teaches us how to put words together, to express thoughts correctly? How may thoughts be made known? What, then, does Grammar teach us? What does English Grammar teach us? What is a Word? Give an example. How are words combined? Give an