

**ENGLISH GRAMMER.
INCLUDING THE
PRINCIPLES OF
GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS**

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English Grammar. Including the Principles of Grammatical Analysis by C. P. Mason

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P R E F A C E.

THE present edition of my "English Grammar" is the result of a very careful revision, based on a more thorough study of the earlier forms and idioms of our language, and guided by the light thrown upon these by the best modern authorities. It will be found that, without any material alteration in the general plan and scope of the work, the development of modern English out of the older forms of the language has been treated with sufficient thoroughness to give the learner a clear comprehension of the way in which English has come to be what it is, as regards its elements, its forms, and its constructions, without distracting his attention and burdening his memory with details which are necessary only for the minute study of particular periods or individual authors. Much of the most difficult portion of what was necessary for this purpose has been thrown into the form of notes and appendices, the study of which may, if it be deemed desirable, be postponed until the learner has mastered the general text. The latter is quite within the comprehension of a pupil of ordinary intelligence. I have striven to set down what had to be said in short and clear sentences, every expression in which has been carefully weighed with the view of securing the utmost possible accuracy, and leading the pupil to *think*. There may be teachers to whom this last-named effort is unusual and unwelcome. It will be perfectly easy for such to find books called "English Grammars," which will exactly suit their requirements. Perhaps, however, it may not be superfluous to remind them, that difficulties are not cleared away, or cleared up, by being ignored. It will be found that in several portions of the

Syntax I have been able, by following constructions up to their source, to introduce important simplifications, especially with regard to the use of relatives, and the troublesome little words *as*, *that*, and *than*.

The study of English has made rapid advances of late years, and no grammar, intended for pupils in the upper classes of schools that make any pretensions to teaching of a high character, can be deemed satisfactory, which does not go far beyond the mere statement of the current forms and idioms of our language. The welcome that has been accorded to previous editions of my work will, I trust, be extended to the present, which will be found to be in all respects an improvement on its predecessors.

For the greater portion of the fresh matter which has been introduced I am indebted to the splendid works of Mätzner and Koch, the latter of whom has traced the development of English with such care and fulness, that little of consequence has since been added to his results. I have made special reference to his work from time to time by way of reminding the reader of the source of the information given, lest he should suppose that I have been availing myself without acknowledgment of the results of later investigations. The few instances in which I have been beholden to Dr. Morris's "Historical Outlines of English Accidence" for materials not already to be found in Koch, have been scrupulously noticed. In the prefaces to former editions I have already referred to Dr. Abbott's excellent "Shakspearian Grammar" and Dr. E. Adams's scholarly work on the English Language.

C. P. MASON.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE

THE various languages spoken by mankind admit of being grouped together in certain great *families*, the members of each of which have certain characteristics and elements in common, by which they are distinguished in a very marked manner from the members of other families. One of these families of languages has been called the Indo-European, or Aryan family. It includes the Sanscrit, Persian, Slavonian, Latin, Greek, Keltic, and Teutonic languages. The Teutonic branch of this family is divided into two principal stocks, the Scandinavian and the German; and the German stock is again subdivided into High German languages (spoken in the mountainous districts of the south of Germany) and Low German languages (spoken in the northern lowlands of Germany). English belongs to the Low German branch of the Teutonic stock, and is akin to Frisian, Dutch, Flemish, Platt-Deutsch, and Mosco-Gothic.

The inhabitants of Gaul and Britain, when those countries were invaded by the Romans, were of Keltic race, and spoke various dialects of the Keltic group of languages.

The conquered Gauls adopted the Latin language, and the Franks and Normans, who at a later time established themselves in the country, adopted the language of the people they conquered. Thus it has come about that French is for the most part a corrupted form of Latin, belonging to that group of languages which is called 'Rômançe.'

The Keltic inhabitants of Britain did not adopt the Latin language, but retained their own Keltic dialects. One of these is still spoken by the Keltic inhabitants of Wales.

English is the language brought into England by the Saxons and Angles, who in the fifth century conquered and dispossessed the British or Keltic inhabitants, and drove the remnants of them into the remote mountainous corners of the island, especially Wales and Cornwall. They were a Teutonic race, coming from the lowland region in the north-western part of Germany. The name *Angle* appears to have belonged at first only to one division of these Teutonic invaders; but in course of time, though long before

the Norman Conquest, it was extended over the rest, and the entire body of the Teutonic inhabitants of our country called themselves and their language English,* and their country England (Angle-land). In speaking of themselves they also, at least for a time, employed the compound term *Anglo-Saxon*. English thus became the predominant language in our island from the Firth of Forth† to the English Channel, and has continued so for more than thirteen centuries. During this time, it has, of course, undergone many changes. It has adopted many new words from other languages, and its forms have been altered to some extent; but it has lasted in unbroken continuity from its introduction until now.

Modern English is only a somewhat altered form of the language which was brought into England by the Saxons and Angles, and which in its early form, before the changes consequent upon the Norman Conquest, is commonly called *Anglo-Saxon*. The grammatical framework of modern English is still purely Anglo-Saxon.

As regards its form, Anglo-Saxon (or old English) differed from modern English in this respect, that it had a much greater number of grammatical inflections. Thus nouns had five cases, and there were different declensions (as in Latin); adjectives were declined, and had three genders; pronouns had more forms, and some had a dual number, as well as a singular and plural; the verbs had more variety in their personal terminations. The greater part of these inflections were dropped in the course of the three centuries following the Norman Conquest, the grammatical functions of several of them being now served by separate words, such as prepositions and auxiliary verbs. This change is what is meant when it is said that Anglo-Saxon (or ancient English) was an *inflectional* language, and that modern English is an *analytical* language.

The greater part of the foreign words that have been incorporated into English, and are now part and parcel of the language, may be divided into the following classes:—

1. *Words of Keltic origin.*—The Anglo-Saxons adopted a few Keltic words from such Britons as they kept among them as slaves or wives. These words consist chiefly of geographical

* It has been asserted that from the earliest times, Saxons, as well as Angles, called themselves 'English,' and nothing else. This is at variance with the fact that the names 'West Saxons,' 'South Saxons,' &c., were vernacular, and, as is abundantly evident from the laws and charters, were names by which the several divisions of the Saxons called themselves. The Saxon Chronicle, in dealing with the events of our history up to the time of Alfred the Great, discriminates between the Angles and Saxons, and notices the latter according to their local subdivisions. It would have been quite impossible that Alfred should style himself 'West Saxna cyning,' if his subjects never called themselves anything but 'English.'

† Lowland Scotch is a genuine Anglian dialect, and has kept closer to the Teutonic type than modern English.

names, such as Avon, Don, Mendip, Wight, Kent, Durham, &c.; and words relating to common household matters, such as *basket*, *clout*, *gown*, *button*, *darn*, *gruel*, *mattock*, *mop*, *rug*, *wire*, &c. These are still in common use. Others are provincial words, or are found only in the older literature, and are now obsolete.

2. *Words of Scandinavian origin.*—Men of Scandinavian race (Picts, Norsemen, and Danes) made repeated incursions into this island during several centuries, and established themselves along the eastern coast. In consequence of this a good many Scandinavian words made their way into common use, and Danish or Scandinavian forms appear in many names of places in the districts occupied by the Scandinavian invaders, such as *by* ('town,' as in Grimsby); *Scaw* ('wood,' as in Scawfell); *force* ('waterfall,' as Stockgill Force); *holm* ('island' as in Langholm); *ness* ('headland,' as in Furness); *ey* ('island,' as in Orkney), &c.

3. *Words of Latin origin, and Greek Words introduced through Latin.*—Of these we have now immense numbers in English, the words of classical origin being considerably more than twice as numerous as those of Teutonic origin, there being, according to some authorities, about 29,000 of the former to about 13,000 of the latter. These words came in at various periods, and under various circumstances.

a. A few Latin words, connected with names of places, have come down to us from the time of the Roman occupation of Britain; as in Chester (*castra*), Gloucester, Stratford (*strata*), Lincoln (*colonia*), Fossbury (*fossa*).

b. A good many words of classical origin were introduced between the settlement of the Saxons and the Norman Conquest by the ecclesiastics who brought Christianity into England. These words are mostly ecclesiastical terms, and names of social institutions and natural objects previously unknown to the English. These words came direct from Latin, or from Greek through Latin.

c. A much larger number of words of Latin origin came to us through Norman-French, the acquired language of the Norman conquerors of England. After the Conquest this was of course the language of the Norman nobles and their retainers throughout England. To a more limited extent it had been introduced as the language of the court of Edward the Confessor. Most of the words in our language which relate to feudal institutions, to war, law, and the chase, were introduced in this way. English, however, never ceased to be the language of the mass of the native population, though an important change in it was at least accelerated, if not first commenced, by the influence of the Norman-French, which was established side by side with it. The numerous grammatical inflections of the older English began to be disused, and in the course of the three centuries that followed the Conquest were reduced to little more than their present number.