

**LATIN
COMPOSITION; PART
I, BASED ON CAESAR**

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Latin Composition; Part I, Based on Caesar by William Gardner Hale

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WILLIAM GARDNER HALE

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HARRY K. MESSENGER

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PART I. BASED ON CAESAR

BY

WILLIAM GARDNER HALE

WITH THE COLLABORATION OF
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PART I

**BASED ON CAESAR'S GALLIC WAR
BOOKS I-IV**

PREFACE •

My book is short. I allow myself a longer preface than is usual, since its plan differs considerably from the plans of its predecessors.

The problem of the best handling of Latin composition is confessedly a hard one; and, of all years, the second year of the high-school course presents the greatest difficulty.

In no field are the existing materials for Latin study so unsatisfactory. In the first place, our books give us, on the average, at least three times as many lessons as can actually be used. The necessity to which the teacher is put of omitting two-thirds of the material seriously impairs any merits which the general plan of a book may possess, and makes impossible, for either him or his pupils, a feeling of definite accomplishment at the end. In the second place, while some "connected prose" is now included in all the books, the matter for translation in those lessons which provide syntactical treatment, and from which, accordingly, the teacher will naturally make his selections for class work, consists of disconnected sentences, often meaningless or even absurd, and not infrequently in direct contradiction to the statements of the Latin author on whom they are supposed to be based. Seemingly, too, the writers of our books have taken little account of the opportunity given by the Latin author here and there for an especially effective illustration of constructions, and have also had no thought for the gradual developing of an organic syntactical whole. It is no wonder if the entire business of writing Latin seems to the student dull and unreal, and if this dullness and unreality are reflected back upon the reading of his Latin author.

The present book is conceived upon a different plan. The points which I have had especially in mind are the following:

1. *To preserve truth to the actual narrative.* The effect, it is hoped, will be to help the student's understanding of the story, in place of adding, by a needless confusion of the facts, to his inevitable difficulties in this, the hardest year of all Latin study.

2. *To present a continuous narrative*, though the individual sentences, and sometimes parts of sentences, are numbered for practical convenience in the criticism of the students' papers, or for work at the blackboard. Continuity of narrative, under the constant and conflicting conditions of variation from the author's form of the story, conformity to his actual vocabulary in a given passage, without repetition of his phrase, adaptation to a carefully formed syntactical plan, and compression — often of several pages into a dozen lines — makes immense difficulty for the writer of the book; but for the student, a sentence is *not* harder to write because it is natural in its place. For the writer of a composition book, a constant jumping from one subject to another makes the manufacture of a set of sentences a simple thing. For the student, it *increases* difficulty. Imagine what the reading of Caesar would be to him, if no sentence had any connection with the one which precedes it! And back, also, of this whole matter of continuity, lies the desirability of not making it so difficult for the student to realize that Latin is a language in which people once said sensible things, and said them consecutively.

3. *To help to make sure that every grammatical principle actually dealt with in the exercises shall become a part of the student's working equipment*, through an express mention, by topics, of every new construction employed, in place of the mention of a single "special topic," with the actual use of a number of others. My adoption of this principle will give to one who does not look below the surface the impression that I demand of the student a larger range of constructions than is usually asked for. A comparison of this book with others will show that the opposite is the case. Thus, in my first lesson, in which twelve syntactical principles are employed, I have twelve topics. The first lesson in one of the books most commonly used *refers to two*, but actually employs *fifteen*.

The fact is that I demand *less* than others. In general, the constructions I have used are those which are very common. The lowest limit admitted is that of three examples in the Gallic War, I-IV, and this only in the case of the Genitive with

reminiscor and *obliviscor*, the Question of Deliberation, and Conditions Contrary to Fact. The only exception made is in the case of the Independent Subjunctive expressing Exhortation or Command, Possibility, and Certainty in an imagined case. These uses do not occur in I-IV, but they underlie, and are necessary to the understanding of, common subordinate constructions that do occur. I wholly omit all other constructions which occur less than three times, such as the case-constructions with *rēfert* and *interest* (occurring twice in I-IV), Genitive of Value (twice), Ablative of Price (twice), Genitive with *paenitet*, etc. (once), two Accusatives with a verb of asking (once), and others, such as the Subjunctive Relative Clause with *dignus*, the Proviso, Prohibitions in the second person with *nōlī*, *cavē*, or the Perfect Subjunctive, "Concessive" clauses with *quamquam*, *quamvis*, and *licet*, and Wishes capable of realization or contrary to present or past fact, no one of which occurs. Most of these constructions are treated in most of the existing composition books of the Caesar year, and many of them in all. My own plan is to treat in the Caesar composition book the constructions which are common in Caesar, and to postpone to a later book those which are better illustrated from Cicero.

For the easiest constructions, presumably already fairly familiar to the student, the mere name is given, with references to the grammars; for the slightly more difficult ones, examples are given; and, for the remainder, both examples and explanatory statements. These examples, with the exception of those for two topics in the whole book, are from the reading which the given lesson immediately follows. Regularly, too, a construction is not taken up at its first occurrence, but after it has occurred several times.

It does not follow from the number of the headings that the student will need to look up a corresponding number of references to his grammar. That is for the teacher to decide. In this matter, much will depend upon the emphasis which has been placed by him, in the classroom work, upon the constructions illustrated in a given lesson and especially the example cited.

4. *To guide the student, by reasonable help given in footnotes, the aim being, not to save him from observing and thinking, but to lead him to observe and think, and thus to develop in him the power of self-direction.*

5. *To adopt a practicable total of lessons, and divide this up as wisely as possible among the various constructions treated, in place of printing a large number of exercises, of which the teacher can use only a part.* My plan has been to arrange for one lesson a week, which is all that most teachers give. Accordingly the lessons, after the first three, have to cover more than a single chapter each. Teachers of course differ somewhat in their rate of progression. But some rate has to be assumed. The one adopted is based on a very carefully studied increase in rate, small at the beginning, and relatively large at the end. My own experience and careful planning have been checked by the experience of several other teachers.

The Helvetic War is ordinarily finished by Christmas. Thirteen composition lessons have been based on this portion of the text, making one a week, with one or two additional lessons, according to the date of the opening of the school year. After Christmas, allowance has been made for the loss of two weeks from the theoretical working year. There will then be time for the remaining twenty-two lessons, at the rate of one a week.

In a large number of schools, the reading of the war with Ariovistus—by far the most difficult part of Caesar—is postponed until after the reading of the fourth book; and this order has been followed in the planning of the lessons.

The vocabulary called for is wholly from Caesar (excepting *tū, tuus, vōs* and *vester*, given in footnotes), and is mainly made up of very common words. The few exceptions are words which, in a part of the history too important to omit, are demanded by truth to Caesar's narrative; and these rarer words are in every instance directly under the student's eye, in the exact Chapter indicated in the margin against the passage which he is translating. The greater part of all the words, even