

# **ELEMENTS OF ENGLISH SPEECH**

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Elements of English speech by Isaac Bassett Choate

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**ISAAC BASSETT CHOATE**

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ENGLISH SPEECH**



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OF  
ENGLISH SPEECH.

BY  
ISAAC BASSETT CHOATE.

NEW YORK:  
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1, 3, AND 5 BOND STREET.  
1884.

## P R E F A C E .

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THESE notes were mostly made some time ago, and for a very different use ; but, thinking they may prove suggestive to the reader, I have collected them into this little volume, and publish them, even at the risk of being regarded another such "snapper-up of unconsidered trifles" as Autolycus proclaims himself in the "Winter's Tale" of Shakespeare. They are accompanied by so much of comment and theory as the subject in hand seems to call for to bring into clear view its difficulties, but with no attempt to treat any one topic in an exhaustive manner. The book is not designed for a text-book, nor is it intended to supplement text-books. The object of its publication will be fully accomplished if it encourages any reader to study our language critically in its forms and elements, if it suggests methods of investigation likely to prove useful in solving the many problems peculiar to English, if it exhibits anything of the freshness, the life, and the vigor of a still growing idiom,

and if it discloses any hitherto unnoticed beauty or excellence of our mother-tongue. I am aware that in presenting the theories and conjectures which I have formed, and even in mentioning the doubts which I entertain, I am occupying a field within which criticism has full scope ; nor do I deprecate that which is candid. I have with great diffidence controverted opinions which enjoy the sanction of the highest authority. I can not anticipate for my own any cordial reception, nor do I desire it unless they are founded in truth.

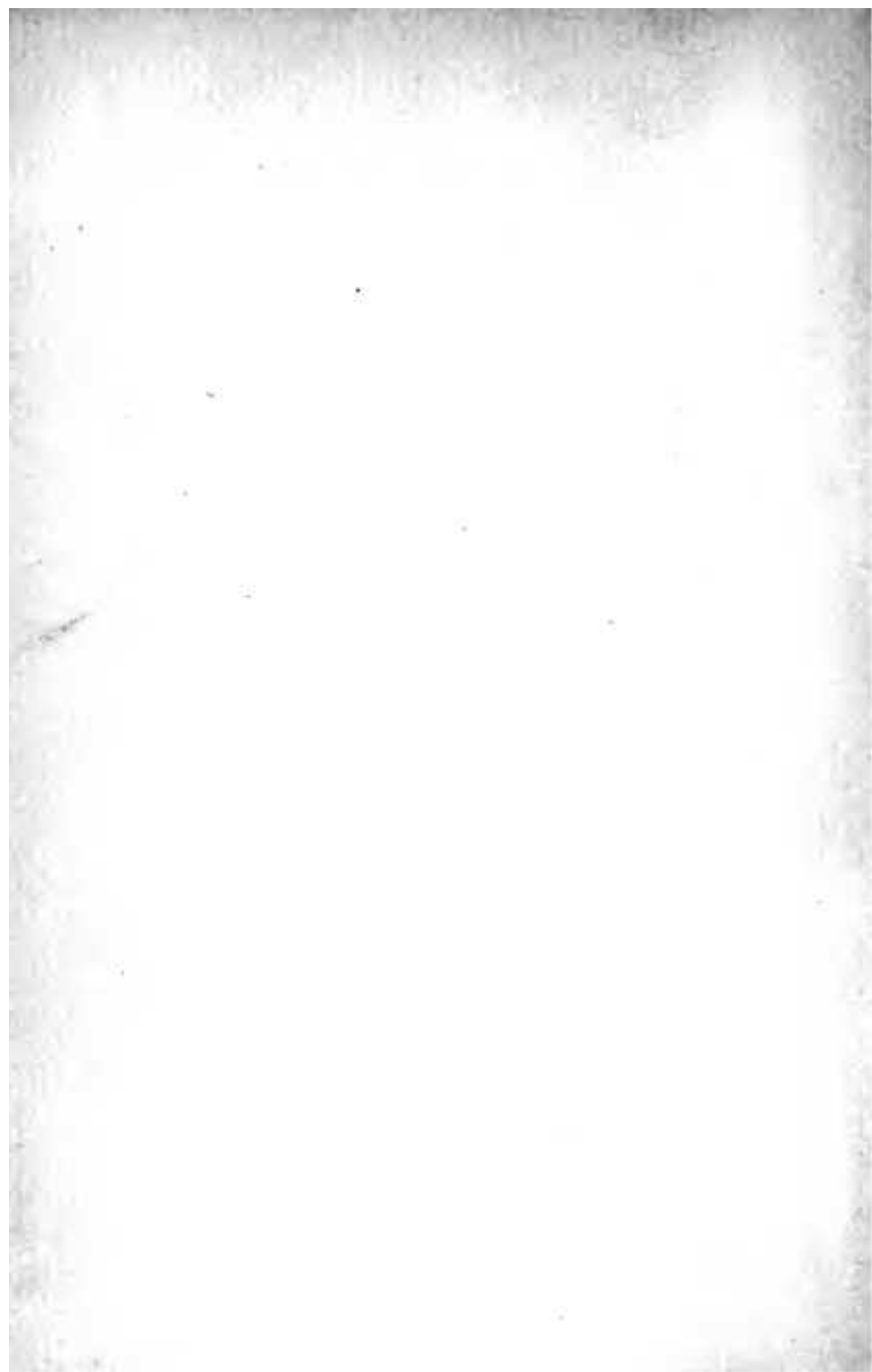
The general reader may object that I have drawn my illustrations too much from other languages, particularly from the Latin ; but as our idiom is the result of the union of the Latin languages of the South with the Gothic languages of the North, its peculiar genius can not be understood without studying the character of its progenitors, and so my method of studying words and constructions is very similar to that which I should follow in studying plants and flowers. The violet of the wood or field, that never knew human care, tells in the clearest and simplest lines the story of its own life and that of all its household, and it looks up to me with the same modest glance which it gave my mother when she was a little child, and I know that centuries hence the violet will give the same look to eyes that can see the truthful-

ness of its expression ; but the heart's-ease of our gardens, which is the violet nurtured by loving care, tells in its variegated petals of its home in another clime from which tender hands have brought it—tells, too, of the constant care with which it has been tended, for I know that if that care were withheld it would soon be heart's-ease no more. The violet wins the recognition of the humblest, but the pansy, *pensée*, “that's for thoughts.”

I. B. C.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, *August, 1884.*





## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	9
I.—DEMONSTRATIVES . . . . .	15
II.—PREPOSITIONS . . . . .	36
III.—CONNECTIVES . . . . .	63
IV.—NOUNS . . . . .	84
V.—VERBS . . . . .	117
VI.—MOOD . . . . .	140
VII.—THE SUBJUNCTIVE . . . . .	158
VIII.—TENSE . . . . .	176
IX.—PRONONCIATION . . . . .	198
X.—WORDS . . . . .	210

