

**THE COMIC ENGLISH
GRAMMAR; A NEW AND
FACETIOUS INTRODUCTION
TO THE ENGLISH TONGUE**

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The comic English grammar; a new and facetious introduction to the English tongue by Percival Leigh & John Leech

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PERCIVAL LEIGH & JOHN LEECH

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THE
COMIC ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

THE COMIC
ENGLISH GRAMMAR;

A NEW AND FACETIOUS

Introduction to the English Tongue.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE COMIC LATIN GRAMMAR.

EMBELLISHED

WITH UPWARDS OF FIFTY CHARACTERISTIC ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. LEECH.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1840.

TO MR. GEORGE ROBINS,

A Writer unrivalled in this or any other Age for

AN ORIGINALITY OF STYLE,

(if the expression may be pardoned) *quite unique*, and a Dexterity in the Use of METAPHOR unparalleled; whose multifarious and sublime—it would not be too much to say talented—COMPOSITIONS would, if may be fearlessly asserted, afford any

ENTERPRISING PUBLISHER

a not-every-day-to-be-met-with, and not in-a-hurry-to-be-relinquished opportunity for an

ELIGIBLE INVESTMENT OF CAPITAL,

forming a Property which, under judicious management, would soon become entitled to the well-merited appellation of a

PRINCELY DOMAIN!

which, without exciting a blush in the mind of veracity, might be said (in a literary point of view) to be fertilised by a meandering rivulet of Poetry, comparable for Beauty and Picturesque Effect to

THE SILVERY STREAM OF THE ISIS;

whose richness (equalled only by his fidelity) of description, presenting a refreshing contrast to the style of his various compeers, precludes the attempt to perpetrate a panegyric, otherwise than by assuming the responsibility and risk of applying to him the words of our

IMMORTAL BARD:

"Take him for all in all
We ne'er shall see his like again."

This little Treatise on

COMIC ENGLISH

is, with the most profound VENERATION, ADMIRATION, RESPECT, even with RESPECT (and the term is used "advisedly")

humbly dedicated

by

HIS MOST OBLIGED AND MOST

OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

It may be considered a strange wish on the part of an Author, to have his preface compared to a donkey's gallop. We are nevertheless desirous that our own should be considered both short and sweet. For our part, indeed, we would have every preface as short as an orator's cough, to which, in purpose, it is so nearly like; but Fashion requires, and like the rest of her sex, requires *because* she requires, that before a writer begins the business of his book, he should give an account to the world of his reasons for producing it; and therefore, to avoid singularity, we shall proceed with the statement of our own, excepting only a few private ones, which are neither here nor there.

To advance the interests of mankind by promoting the cause of Education; to ameliorate the conversation of the masses; to cultivate Taste, and diffuse Refinement; these are the objects which we have in view in submitting a Comic English Grammar to the patronage of a discerning Public. Nor have we been actuated by philanthropic motives alone, but also by a regard to Patriotism, which, as it has been pronounced on high authority to be the last refuge of a scoundrel, must necessarily be the first concern of an aspiring and disinterested mind. We felt ourselves called upon to do as much, at least, for Modern England as we had before done for Ancient Rome; and having been considered by competent judges to have infused a little liveliness into a dead language, we were bold enough to hope that we might extract some amusement from a living one.

Few persons there are, whose ears are so extremely obtuse, as not to be frequently annoyed at the violations of Grammar by which they are so often assailed. It is really painful to be forced, in walking along the streets, to hear such phrases as, "That 'ere homnibus." "Where've you *bin*."

“*Vot’s the hodds?*” and the like. Very dreadful expressions are also used by draymen and others in addressing their horses. What can possibly induce a human being to say “Gee woot!” “Mather way!” or “Woa?” not to mention the atrocious “Kim aup!” of the ignorant and degraded costermonger. We once actually heard a fellow threaten to “pitch into” his dog! meaning, we believe, to beat the animal.

It is notorious that the above and greater enormities are perpetrated in spite of the number of Grammars already before the world. This fact sufficiently excuses the present addition to the stock; and as serious English Grammars have hitherto failed to effect the desired reformation, we are induced to attempt it by means of a Comic one.

With regard to the moral tendency of our labours, we may here be permitted to remark, that they will tend, if successful, to the suppression of *evil speaking*.

We shall only add, that as the Spartans used to exhibit a tipsy slave to their children with a view to disgust them with drunkenness, so we, by giving a few examples here and there, of in-

correct phraseology, shall expose, in their naked deformity, the vices of speech to the ingenuous reader.

