

**LATIN COMPOSITION: AN
ELEMENTARY GUIDE TO
WRITING IN LATIN;
PART I. - CONSTRUCTIONS**

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Latin Composition: An Elementary Guide to Writing in Latin; Part I - Constructions by J. H. Allen & J. B. Greenough

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TO

WRITING IN LATIN

PART I.—CONSTRUCTIONS

BY

J. H. ALLEN AND J. B. GREENOUGH

BOSTON

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P R E F A C E.

THIS book completes the series of preparatory text-books announced by the present editors. It has been prepared with a view to furnish a sufficient amount of study and practice in Latin composition, during the last year of preparation for college, or the first of a college course. It supposes in the learner a fair acquaintance with the language, gained by the reading of the usual authors and the careful study of grammar and notes, with some elementary practice in writing, at least as much as that given in the "Method," to which this is intended as a sequel.

"Latin Composition," so called, has often been taught solely by the use of detached sentences illustrating the various constructions of syntax, translated out of Roman authors, to be re-translated into the original form. We are persuaded that, however serviceable this may be to give a certain mechanical familiarity with the formal rules of Grammar, it is not a good preparation for "composition," in the sense that properly belongs to that word. The best way to learn intelligently the usages of the language is to put *real English into real Latin*. While we seek, therefore, to cover the entire ground of syntactical constructions, the suggestions given in this book are throughout from the English point of view. The question we have attempted to answer is not "How closely may this or that phrase in Cicero be imitated by the learner?"

but, "How may good common English be best represented in Latin forms?" We would thus suggest a comparison not merely of the words or the constructions, but (so to speak) of the genius and spirit of the two tongues, which, we are convinced, is the true way of appreciating what is most characteristic and best worth knowing in the ancient authors.

With this view, the passages to be rendered into Latin are freely selected from the sources which seemed suitable to our purpose.* It will be observed that we have very early introduced continuous paragraphs or narratives; which, we believe, are not only more interesting in themselves, but will be found easier in practice than detached sentences, besides the advantage of exhibiting the rarer constructions *in situ*, and not as mere isolated puzzles. The extracts have been very carefully selected, with a view not to anticipate constructions not already given; or, where this is inevitable, it is hoped they are sufficiently helped by notes and vocabulary, while they are accompanied in every case by full preliminary instruction.†

The earlier of these extracts are chiefly anecdotes from Roman history, or other matter within a range already familiar to the pupil. In the later ones we have been obliged to introduce, here and there, modern material and ideas. These, it is likely, will tax more severely the pupil's knowledge and capacity; but it seems evident that the more intricate constructions of Latin prose can be best understood when we meet them from our own point of view, and find the need of them to express our own forms of thought. It should be understood that the difficulties they include are *those of the language itself*; and it is best to meet them fairly at the start, rather than evade or disguise them. There is no such thing

* Of these we may specify Smith's "Smaller History of Rome," and Sargent's "Easy Passages for Translation into Latin."

† It may be worth while to suggest that the teacher may at his pleasure select single passages or phrases for elementary practice.

as making a Ciceronian period or an indirect discourse in Cæsar or Livy an easy thing to boys ; and the student is not fairly master of them until he can to some extent follow and reproduce them in his own work. The difficulties may, however, be lightened to any extent, at the discretion of the teacher, even to the extent of going over in detail the whole ground of each exercise in advance.

CAMBRIDGE, July 10, 1875.

ERRATA.

LATIN COMPOSITION.

Page 12, line 5 from bottom, read *laudis*.

” 17, ” 14 ” ” ” § 21.

” 26, ” 12 ” ” ” Lesson 17.

” 56, ” 4 ” ” ” with pres. ind. (or subj.).

” 93, ” 21 for *conjurator* ” *conjuratus, i*.