

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

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Latin composition: An elementary guide to writing in Latin; part I. - constructions; part II. - exercises in translation by J. H. Allen & J. B. Greenough

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AN ELEMENTARY GUIDE

TO

WRITING IN LATIN

PART I.—CONSTRUCTIONS

PART II.—EXERCISES IN TRANSLATION

BY

J. H. ALLEN AND J. B. GREENOUGH

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

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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, and 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.

It will be observed that a Vocabulary has been prepared to Part First only ; and that this aims only to give, as a simple mechanical convenience, the Latin terms which may be used in the passages where the English ones actually occur in the book, leaving the mind free to attend wholly to the construction. The learner should be impressed from the start with the need of *habitually consulting his Latin Lexicon*, to obtain the true meaning and use of the terms he employs. Such explanation as could be given in a partial vocabulary would be at best of very doubtful service. Even if on some grounds desirable, the need of it appears to be removed by White's excellent "English Latin Dictionary for the use of Junior Students," which within reasonable limits of size and price furnishes a guide such as every learner should possess, who aims at any thing better than the mere performance of the required task of the day ; while the more advanced student will not be content without something at least as complete as the larger work of Smith or Arnold. The design of Part Second obviously excludes the use of any partial or special list of words. For this, we trust that the suggestions of the Introduction, and the frequent assistance given in the notes,—with the faithful consultation of the Lexicon, which must always be supposed,—will prove a sufficient guide.

THE following works, which have been freely used in the preparation of this manual, will be of service to those who desire to give the subject a more thorough study. Those marked 2, 3, 4, have been used to some extent as text-books in this country.

1. *Theorie des lateinischen Stiles*, von C. J. GRYSAR. 2d ed. Köln: J. G. Schmitz. 1843.

A very complete and elaborate treatise, the source from which excellent material has been largely drawn by others.

2. *Hints towards Latin Prose Composition*. By ALEX. W. POTTS. 3d ed. London: Macmillan & Co. 1872.

A brief but admirable essay on the main points of Latin style and expression (without exercises), with a great number of brief illustrations, some of which will be found in the introduction to Part II. of the present manual (pp. 126-129).

3. *Parallel Extracts, arranged for translation into English and Latin, with Notes on Idioms*. By J. E. NIXON. Part I. Historical and Epistolary. London: Macmillan & Co. 1874.

An excellent working manual, the passages on opposite pages suggesting points of comparison between Latin and English style, and with numerous figured references to the introductory Notes.

4. *A Manual of Latin Prose Composition for the use of Schools and Colleges*. By the Rev. HENRY MUSGRAVE WILKINS. 3d ed. London: Parker, Son, & Brown. 1861.

Numerous exercises, very fully annotated, a portion being "adapted" (in English) to the Latin idiom. With introductory remarks and a table of idiomatic expressions. A Key is published for the use of teachers.

5. *Principia Latina*. Part VI. *Short Tales and Anecdotes from Ancient History for translation into Latin Prose*. By WILLIAM SMITH, D.D. 3d ed. London: John Murray 1870.

CONTENTS.

PART. I. — CONSTRUCTIONS.

	PAGE
LESSON 1. The Order of Words	1
2. Rules of Agreement. — 1. Apposition	3
3. " " 2. The Verb	4
4. " " 3. Adjectives	6
5. Adjectives : Special Uses	8
6. Pronouns. — 1. Personal and Reflexive	10
7. " 2. Demonstrative	12
8. " 3. Relative	14
9. " 4. Interrogative and Indefinite	17
10. Cases. — 1. As Objects of Verbs	20
11. " 2. As Modifying Adjectives	23
12. " 3. Indirect Relations	25
13. " 4. Cause, Means, and Quality	28
14. " 5. Separation and Comparison	32
15. " 6. Special Uses of the Genitive	34
16. " 7. Use of Two Cases	37
17. " 8. Time and Place	39
18. " 9. Prepositions	42
19. Verbs. — 1. Narrative Tenses	45
20. " 2. The Passive Voice	48
21. " 3. Infinitive Constructions	53
22. " 4. Participial Constructions	57
23. " 5. Gerundive Constructions	60
24. " 6. Subjunctive Constructions	62
25. Relations of Time	66
26. Purpose and Result	69
27. Conditional Sentences	72
28. Substantive Clauses	74
29. Intermediate Clauses	77
30. Indirect Discourse	80
31. Certain Special Constructions	83