

**A PRIMER OF
ENGLISH PARSING
AND ANALYSIS**

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A Primer of English Parsing and Analysis by Cyril L. C. Locke

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AND ANALYSIS

BY
CYRIL L. C. LOCKE, M.A.
ASSISTANT MASTER AT CLIFTON COLLEGE

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PREFACE

I HAVE endeavoured to sketch in the following pages a course of English Parsing and Analysis suitable for the lower Forms in Classical Schools. I have omitted altogether to treat of Inflections, Derivation, Punctuation, &c., taking into consideration the very limited time, at most an hour or so a week, that can be spared for English Grammar.*

As a rule, boys begin to turn English Sentences into Latin as soon as they know a Declension or two and a few tenses of a Verb; and such attempts are of course useful in giving facility in the use of Inflections. Unfortunately the learner who starts in this way has not grasped the elementary principles which underlie the construction of an English as well as of a Latin Sentence, and is thus confronted from the first with the difficulties of Syntax. Indeed, this ignorance of principles makes itself evident, even in boys who have been learning Latin for years, as soon as they are cast adrift from the Latin Exercise-book, with its hints and cautions, references and para-

* Also I have taken for granted such a practical acquaintance with English as makes it unnecessary to discuss the Compound forms of the verb; e.g. *am loving, would have loved.*

phrases. On the other hand, a previous training in English Parsing and Analysis, by familiarising the learner with the structure of a Sentence and the bearing of its component parts, clears the ground from the first, and forms the best possible introduction to the study of any language which has to be acquired through Grammar.

It certainly seems strange that, while the mother tongue is available for lessons which are of the utmost value for cultivating the reasoning powers, nothing of the sort should be attempted until a foreign language is begun.

It is probable that, even in forms where there is no systematic teaching of English Grammar, a course of English Analysis might with advantage be substituted for Latin Exercises for the first two or three weeks of term, while the Latin Accidence is being worked up. In this way the principles of Analysis which have been learnt, and learnt with comparative ease, from English may be applied to the teaching of Latin.

I have not thought it necessary to write many Exercises on the Parts of Speech, because any reading-book which is at hand may be used. The Exercises on the Prepositional Phrases may well be supplemented in the same way.

The examples of Simple and Compound Sentences have been chosen with great care, and will, I hope, be found to contain instances of all the commoner constructions.

is impossible to exaggerate the importance of

getting boys thoroughly to understand the simple notions of Subject, Object, and Complement, and of qualifying words and phrases. On this account many of the Examples have been taken from poetry, where the order of words is constantly inverted, so as to require care and thought in distinguishing the various parts of the sentence.

The greater number of the Examples have been taken from Standard writers, so that the learner may have before him good specimens of English, even if only to be pulled to pieces by him.

It cannot be denied that Masters in Classical Schools look askance at English Grammar, regarding it as a subject to which valuable time may be given with no visible results. I venture to think, however, that the fault lies rather with the method of teaching than with the subject. It is a mistake to try to teach too much by rules and too little by examples, instead of multiplying examples and from them deducing rules,—and as few rules as may be.

I may add that the method of Analysis adopted in this book has been tried with boys between the ages of nine and twelve years, and that the results have been satisfactory.

I thankfully acknowledge the assistance I have derived from the Grammars of Professor Mätzner, Mr. C. P. Mason, Professor Bain, and Dr. Adams.

NOTE

THE Exercises may be used, at the discretion of the teacher, quite independently of the sections to which they are referred.

(1) Many of them may be used as practice in picking out parts of speech.

(2) Adverbial Phrases or Clauses may be substituted for Adverbs, and *vice versa*, especially in distinguishing the Adverbial use of the Infinitive from its other uses.

(3) In working the Compound Sentence, a particular clause may be given to be analysed in detail as a Simple Sentence. This is most necessary in the case of Adjectival Clauses, where a thorough knowledge of the construction of the Relative is essential.

(4) A Simple Sentence may be given, and the learner required to qualify it by the addition of Dependent Clauses of one kind or another.

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