

PREFACE

This work is a revision of the author's Elementary Grammar, first published in 1869. Part I consists of lessons in technical grammar, sentence-making, and composition. Great care has been taken never to define a term or to enunciate a principle without first preparing the mind of the pupil to grasp and comprehend the meaning and use of the term defined or the principle enunciated. Ideas are first developed by intelligent questioning and appropriate illustrations then clothed in words.

Sentence making and composition are, it is believed, presented in a natural and attractive manner. Words are given for the pupil to use in sentences. At first, all the words are given, then a part of them. Having acquired some facility in the construction of sentences, the pupil is next taught to use groups of words, phrases, and clauses as single words.

In composition, the pupil is first taught to tell what he sees in a picture, then to answer questions concerning the objects represented in it. The description and the answers following it make a composition. He is next taught to study a picture and to exercise his inventive powers in writing short stories suggested by it.

This course of instruction is introductory to that given in Part II which contains a concise yet exhaustive statement of the properties and modifications of the different parts of speech, as well as carefully prepared models for parsing and analysis, rules of syntax, and plans for the description of single objects—a continuation of the composition work begun in Part I.

It has been said that there is no royal road to geometry. The same may be said of grammar and composition. The meaning and application of technical terms must be learned, sentences must be analyzed, and words must be parsed, before the student can comprehend the philosophy that underlies the correct use of any language. The labor necessary to secure facility and accuracy in the use of one's mother tongue may be made attractive, but it cannot be dispensed with; neither can it be materially lessened. All that is claimed for this work is that it shows how this labor should be expended to secure the best results.

Thomas Harvey

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