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**An English Grammar, Methodical, Analytical and  
Historical, Tr. by C.J. Grece**

**Maetzner Eduard Adolf**

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# AN ENGLISH GRAMMAR:

METHODICAL, ANALYTICAL, AND HISTORICAL.

WITH A TREATISE ON THE ORTHOGRAPHY, PROSODY, INFLECTIONS  
AND SYNTAX OF THE ENGLISH TONGUE;

*AND NUMEROUS AUTHORITIES CITED IN ORDER OF HISTORICAL  
DEVELOPMENT.*

By PROFESSOR MAETZNER,  
OF BERLIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, WITH THE SANCTION OF THE AUTHOR,

By CLAIR JAMES GRECE, LL.B.,  
FELLOW OF THE PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.—Vol. I.



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# PREFACE

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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While the lexicographical department of the English tongue has been cultivated, and further productions are awaited, the grammatical has been almost completely neglected. The works of this class have not striven after a higher aim than the constitution of certain arbitrary formulæ for the attainment of a superficial propriety in the use of the stores of the language; formulæ tried by which the greatest lights of English literature would, almost without exception, stand condemned, while a scientific foundation for the formulæ and rules has hardly been attempted. English grammar has, in fact, under the hands of native grammarians, barely emerged from the region of dogmatism. From this observation the work of Dr. Latham must be excepted, yet the purport of that work is rather archeological than grammatical; and the learned author probably never contemplated that his work would be resorted to for the elucidation of a doubtful construction or idiom.

While Englishmen have thus been content to leave the usage of their own tongue, so far as its more delicate grammatical features are concerned, blind, instinctive and unconscious, the nation in which erudition and scientific philology are, as it were, indigenous, having already subjected the classical tongues to an exhaustive scientific treatment, as well lexicographically as grammatically,



has undertaken the scientific treatment of the grammar of the English tongue. That the grammar of the tongue should have been approached by Germans from that purely scientific point of view, from which natives have not hitherto regarded it, will not surprise us when we consider the relations of German to the classical tongues of antiquity and to our own vernacular. The German is the living classical tongue. While the modern tongues of the West of Europe are constructed out of the débris of Latin, as English is from the débris of Romance and of a decayed and decapitated Germanic idiom, the modern Highdutch, or German, exhibits, even more than the classical tongues themselves, a systematic orderly development from indigenous materials. The growth and development of language, which, to a Frenchman or an Englishman lie external and remote, are, to a German, ready to hand; and, as the cloudless nights of the plains of Shinar prompted the ancient Chaldeans to study the motions of the heavenly host, the purely indigenous structure of their native speech has suggested to the Germans the investigation of the laws of the vocal material in which thought is deposited and communicated.

Moreover, as each new conquest in the territory of the Unknown would be fleeting, but for the invention of terms to impart stability to each acquisition, the people which pursues with success an investigation in a fresh field has the prerogative of creating the appropriate terminology. Such was the prerogative of the Greeks in Logic and Metaphysics, and, if it be allowed to term it a prerogative, in Theology. Such, likewise, was the prerogative of the Romans in Law and administration, and such, in our own age, is that of the Germans in scientific Philology. The instruments of thought which had been invented and perfected in subjecting the classical tongues to analysis stood ready to be applied upon the English. To a foreigner, moreover, the language presents itself denuded of the debasing usages of life, as a homely landscape, beheld from a distant eminence, becomes inviting, so that common place associations do not obtrude themselves upon the enquirer and disturb his contemplation in his purely scientific pursuit.

The Grammar of Professor Mätzner is the fruit of researches

and labours, astounding in their extent and completeness, ranging over the entire history of the English tongue. Previous investigations in the field of Old-French, one of the mightiest tributaries of Modern-English, had paved the way to similar researches in the ancient Germanic idioms, and these have been completed by a thorough study of the standard luminaries of Modern-English literature, with especial regard to the light they were adapted to throw upon the grammatical peculiarities of the tongue. Calculated to supply a void in the linguistic literature of our country, I have, in order to render it accessible to those of our nation who are either unacquainted with the language in which the text is composed or are not sufficient masters of it to read it with facility, ventured upon a translation. I have become painfully conscious with the progress of the work how unequal I am to cope with the difficulties which even a simple translation has presented. The difficulty has been that a translation from a more powerful into a feebler vehicle is sometimes unattainable. The coarser lineaments are capable of reproduction, but the finer traits vanish in the alembic. This will be generally conceded as regards the rendering of the artistic productions of a language, but the conception is prevalent that scientific treatises are capable of being transferred, without loss, from any one cultivated tongue into any other. The difference, however, is one of degree only. Even for purely scientific exposition the members of one cultivated tongue never precisely cover those of another. That the German inherits, as its special prerogative, the terms of scientific philology and of modern metaphysics, the creation of the post-Kantian philosophy, I have already indicated, and this is precisely the walk to which the present work belongs. A cumbersome periphrasis has therefore been in many cases the sole mean of rendering some of the neatest and most exact expressions of the original. In the Prosody, for instance, *An-laut*, *In-laut* and *Aus-laut*, with their paronyms, are frequently recurring. The generic element *laut*, meaning sound, is here differentiated with perfect propriety by the prepositions *an*, signifying inception, *in*, signifying inclusion, and *aus*, signifying finality: so that the first means the sound at the beginning; the second that in the middle; and the latter that at the end of a

syllable. How poor in meaning, notwithstanding their vocal complexity, are the expressions, I will not call them equivalents, by which the poverty of our vernacular has constrained me to render them, is obvious at once. While I am thus sensible of the defects of my translation, I hope that the circumstance above mentioned will lenify any hostile criticism which they may provoke.

It is due to the eminent author of the vast monument of industry and erudition which is now ushered into the British public to furnish them with a sketch of his biography. Edward Mätzner, the son of a house-painter, was born on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 1805 at Rostock in Mecklenburg. He was a pupil at the gymnasium, or grammar school, of Greifswald in Prussian Pomorania, where he began his career as an author by the publication, in 1822, of a romantic drama in five acts, called *Hermann and Thusnelda*. Philology and theology were the subjects of his studies, both at Greifswald, and afterwards at Heidelberg, but philosophy, or thought in the most elevated and abstract forms of its activity, and philology, or the study of the vehicle of thought in its manifold manifestations, presented to his vigorous and enquiring mind so many more attractions than the theology which had been his destined career that the latter was gradually abandoned. In 1830 he became a tutor at Yverdun in French Switzerland, but quitted that post the following year to become the master of a French gymnasium at Berlin, which, after about another year, he quitted for a gymnasium at Bromberg in Posen. He was constrained by ill-health to give up this appointment in 1834, and remained in private life till 1838, when he accepted the post of director, or head-master, of a collegiate establishment at Berlin for the higher education of girls, which he still fills. The duties of his appointment leave him leisure for the prosecution of his favourite studies and pursuits. His wife Ida, was sister of Dr. Gustav Ebert, now Stadtgerichtsrath, or one of the members of the central court of justice for Berlin, and also one of the members for Berlin in the Prussian House of Representatives. She died in 1870.

His published works are as follows:—

A Latin Essay upon the Homeric Zeus, 1834.

Licurgi Oratio in Leocatem. Berlin, 1836.

Aristophanis Orationes XV. Berlin, 1838.

Aphorismen aus Theodor Parow's Nachlass. Berlin, 1837.

Dinarchi Orationes III. Berlin, 1842.

Ueber volksthümliche Getränke in cultur-historischer Beziehung, in den Verhandlungen der polytechnischen Gesellschaft. Berlin, 1857.

Syntax der Neufranzösischen Sprache. Theil I. Berlin, 1843. Theil II. 1845.

Ueber das Geschworenengericht und das Schuldwesen; in der Zeitschrift für volksthümliches Recht und nationale Gesetzgebung, von Gustav Ebert. Halle, 1844.

Französische Grammatik, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Lateinischen. Berlin, 1856.

Altfranzösische Lieder, berichtigt und erläutert, nebst Glossar. Berlin, 1853.

Vorwort zu: Aus Stadler's Nachlass. Berlin, 1865.

Englische Grammatik. Theil I. 1860.

— —. Theil II. Berlin, 1865.

Alt-Englische Sprachproben. 1869.

Several essays and reviews in Noack's Jahrbücher für speculative Philosophie and in Bergmann's philosophische Monatshefte.

Essays in the philosophical periodical: Der Gedanke; edited by Michelet.

He was elected an honorary member of the Philological Society of London in 1869.