English Grammar, Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners

Murray Lindley
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ENGLISH GRAMMAR:
ADAPTED TO THE
Different Classes of Learners:

WITH
AN APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
RULES AND OBSERVATIONS
FOR ASSISTING THE MORE ADVANCED STUDENTS TO WRITE
WITH PERSPICUIITY AND ACCURACY.

"They who are learning to compose and arrange their sentences with accuracy and order, are learning at the same time, to think with accuracy and order."—Blair.

BY LINDLEY MURRAY.

FROM THE EIGHTEENTH ENGLISH EDITION,
ENLARGED AND IMPROVED BY THE AUTHOR.

BRATTLEBOROUGH:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN HOLBROOK.
1819.
As there are many mutilated editions of Lindley Murray's Works forced upon the public, under the specious name of "Improvements;" the Publishers of this edition of the Grammar deem it not impertinent to observe, that they have copied from the last edition revised by the author. They doubt not, when a comparison is made, that the genuine editions of this author's works will still maintain that superior approbation and eminent standing to which his talents and sound judgment have hitherto entitled them; and that the real views of those book-makers who attempt to prop their fabrics with the veteran name of Murray, will be duly appreciated.

The publishers have been induced to offer these remarks in order to apprize those, who wish for the genuine editions as they came in purity from the pen of the author, to be particular in inquiring for the real and genuine Grammar of Lindley Murray.
INTRODUCTION.

When the number and variety of English Grammars already published, and the ability with which some of them are written, are considered, little can be expected from a new compilation, besides a careful selection of the most useful matter, and some degree of improvement in the mode of adapting it to the understanding, and the gradual progress of learners. In these respects something, perhaps, may yet be done, for the ease and advantage of young persons.

In books designed for the instruction of youth, there is a medium to be observed, between treating the subject in so extensive and minute a manner, as to embarrass and confuse their minds by offering too much at once for their comprehension; and, on the other hand, conducting it by such short and general precepts and observations, as convey to them no clear and precise information. A distribution of the parts, which is either defective or irregular, has also a tendency to perplex the young understanding, and to retard its knowledge of the principles of literature. A distinct general view, or outline, of all the essential parts of the study in which they are engaged; a gradual and judicious supply of this outline; and a due arrangement of the divisions according to their natural order and connexion, appear to be among the best means of enlightening the minds of youth, and of facilitating their acquisition of knowledge. The author of this work, at the same time that he has endeavored to avoid a plan, which may be too concise or too extensive, defective in its parts or irregular in their disposition, has studied to render his subject sufficiently easy, intelligible, and comprehensive. He does not presume to have completely attained these objects. How far he has succeeded in the attempt, and wherein he has failed, must be referred to the determination of the judicious and candid reader.

The method which he has adopted, of exhibiting the performance in characters of different sizes, will, he trusts, be conducive to that gradual and regular procedure, which is
so favorable to the business of instruction. The more important rules, definitions, and observations, and which are therefore the most proper to be committed to memory, are printed with a larger type; whilst rules and remarks that are of less consequence, that extend or diversify the general idea, or that serve as explanations, are contained in the smaller letter: these, or the chief of them, will be perused by the student to the greatest advantage, if postponed till the general system be completed. The use of notes and observations, in the common and detached manner, at the bottom of the page, would not, it is imagined, be so likely to attract the perusal of youth, or admit of so ample and regular an illustration, as a continued and uniform order of the several subjects. In adopting this mode, care has been taken to adjust it so that the whole may be perused in a connected progress, or the parts contained in the larger character read in order by itself. Many of the notes and observations are intended, not only to explain the subjects, and to illustrate them, by comparative views of the grammar of other languages, and of the various sentiments of English grammarians; but also to invite the ingenious student to inquiry and reflection, and to prompt to a more enlarged, critical, and philosophical research.

With respect to the definitions and rules, it may not be improper more particularly to observe, that in selecting and forming them, it has been the author's aim to render them as exact and comprehensive, and, at the same time, as intelligible to young minds, as the nature of the subject, and the difficulties attending it, would admit. He presumes that they are also calculated to be readily committed to memory, and easily retained. For this purpose, he has been solicitous to select terms that are smooth and voluble; to proportion the members of the sentences to one another; to avoid protracted periods; and to give the whole definition or rule, as much harmony of expression as he could devise.

From the sentiment generally admitted, that a proper selection of faulty composition is more instructive to the young grammarian, than any rules and examples of propriety that can be given, the Compiler has been induced to pay pecul-
iar attention to this part of the subject; and though the instances of false grammar, under the rules of Syntax, are numerous, it is hoped they will not be found too many, when their variety and usefulness are considered.

In a work which professes itself to be a compilation, and which, from the nature and design of it, must consist chiefly of materials selected from the writings of others, it is scarcely necessary to apologize for the use which the Compiler has made of his predecessors’ labors; or for omitting to insert their names. From the alterations which have been frequently made in the sentiments and the language, to suit the connexion, and to adapt them to the particular purposes for which they are introduced; and, in many instances, from the uncertainty to whom the passages originally belonged, the insertion of names could seldom be made with propriety. But if this could have been generally done, a work of this nature would derive no advantage from it, equal to the inconvenience of crowding the pages with a repetition of names and references. It is, however, proper to acknowledge, in general terms, that the authors to whom the grammatical part of this compilation is principally indebted for its materials, are Harris, Johnson, Lowth, Priestly, Beattie, Sheridan, Walker, and Coote.

The Rules and Observations respecting Perspicuity, &c. contained in the Appendix, and which are chiefly extracted from the writings of Blair and Campbell, will, it is presumed, form a proper addition to the Grammar. The subjects are very nearly related; and the study of perspicuity and accuracy in writing, appears naturally to follow that of Grammar. A competent acquaintance with the principles of both, will prepare and qualify the students, for prosecuting those additional improvements in language, to which they may be properly directed.

On the utility and importance of the study of Grammar, and the principles of Composition, much might be advanced, for the encouragement of persons in early life to apply themselves to this branch of learning; but as the limits of this introduction will not allow of many observations on the
subject, a few leading sentiments are all that can be admitted here with propriety. As words are the signs of our ideas, and the medium by which we perceive the sentiments of others, and communicate our own; and as signs exhibit the things which they are intended to represent, more or less accurately, according as their real or established conformity to those things is more or less exact; it is evident, that in proportion to our knowledge of the nature and properties of words, of their relation to each other, and of their established connexion with the ideas to which they are applied, will be the certainty and ease, with which we transmute our sentiments into the minds of one another: and that, without a competent knowledge of this kind, we shall frequently be in hazard of misunderstanding others, and of being misunderstood ourselves. It may indeed be justly asserted, that many of the differences in opinion amongst men, with the disputes, contentions and alienations of heart, which have too often proceeded from such differences, have been occasioned by a want of proper skill in the connexion and meaning of words, and by a tenacious misapplication of language.

One of the best supports, which the recommendation of this study can receive, in small compass, may be derived from the following sentiments of an eminent and candid writer* on language and composition. 'All that regards the study of composition, merits the higher attention upon this account, that it is intimately connected with the improvement of our intellectual powers. For I must be allowed to say, that when we are employed after a proper manner, in the study of composition, we are cultivating the understanding itself. The study of arranging and expressing our thoughts with propriety, teaches to think as well as to speak accurately.'

Before the close of this introduction, it may not be superfluous to observe, that the author of the following work has no interest in it, but that which arises from the hope, that it will prove of some advantage to young persons, and relieve the labors of those who are employed in their edu-

*Blair.
cation. He wishes to promote, in some degree, the cause of virtue, as well as of learning; and with this view, he has been studious, through the whole of the work, not only to avoid every example and illustration, which might have an improper effect on the minds of youth; but also to introduce, on many occasions, such as have a moral and religious tendency. His attention to objects of so much importance will, he trusts, meet the approbation of every well-disposed reader. If they were faithfully regarded in all books of education, they would doubtless contribute very materially to the order and happiness of society, by guarding the innocence, and cherishing the virtue of the rising generation.

Holdgate, near York—1795.

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TO THE NINTH EDITION.

The eighth edition of this grammar received considerable alterations and additions; but works of this nature admit of repeated improvements; and are, perhaps, never complete. The author, solicitous to render his book more worthy of the encouraging approbation bestowed on it by the public, has again revised the work with care and attention. The new edition he hopes will be found much improved. The additions, which are very considerable, are, chiefly, such as are calculated to expand the learner's views of the subject; to obviate objections; and to render the study of grammar both easy and interesting. This edition contains also a new and enlarged system of parsing; copious lists of nouns arranged according to their gender and number; and many notes and observations, which serve to extend, or to explain, particular rules and positions.*

*The author conceives that the occasional strictures, dispersed through the book, and intended to illustrate and support a number of important grammatical points, will not, to young persons of ingenuity, appear to be dry and useless discussions. He is persuaded that, by such persons, they will be read with atten-
The writer is sensible that, after all his endeavors to elucidate the principles of the work, there are few of the divisions, arrangements, definitions, or rules, against which critical ingenuity cannot devise plausible objections. The subject is attended with so much intricacy, and admits of views so various, that it was not possible to render every part of it unexceptionable; or to accommodate the work, in all respects, to the opinions and prepossessions of every grammarian and teacher. If the author has adopted that system which, on the whole, is best suited to the nature of the subject, and conformable to the sentiments of the most judicious grammarians; if his reasoning and illustrations, respecting particular points, are founded on just principles, and the peculiarities of the English language; he has, perhaps, done all that could reasonably be expected in a work of this nature; and he may warrantably indulge a hope, that the book will be still more extensively approved and circulated.

And he presumes that these strictures will gratify their curiosity, stimulate application, and give solidity and permanence to their grammatical knowledge.

Holdgale, near York—1804.
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