

The English Language: Its Grammar, History and Literature, With Chapters on Composition (Classic Reprint)

J. M. D. Meiklejohn

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Excerpt from The English Language: Its Grammar, History and Literature, With Chapters on Composition

This book is divided into four parts, arranged in the sequence in which they would naturally be studied. Each part, however, is independent of the others, and may be studied by itself.

It is hoped that the book will prove useful in high schools, academies, and seminaries, as well as to candidates for teachers' examinations and civil service examinations. The various topics have been prepared upon the assumption that the student has already studied a part of the work in an elementary form.

The most salient features of the language have been described, and minor details have been left for the teacher to fill in as needed. The utmost clearness and simplicity have been the aim of the writer, and he has been obliged to sacrifice many interesting details to this aim.

The study of English grammar is necessarily becoming more and more historical. There are scores of inflections and constructions and idioms which cannot be truly or adequately explained without a reference to the past states of the language, to the time when it was a synthetic or inflected language, like German or Latin.

The subject of syntax has been set forth in the form of rules. This is thought to be better for young students who require firm and clear dogmatic statements of fact, but the skilful teacher will work up to these rules by the interesting process of induction, and, when possible, will induce his pupils to draw the general conclusions from the data given.

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