

**PRACTICAL  
GRAMMAR AND  
COMPOSITION**

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Practical grammar and composition by Thomas Wood

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**THOMAS WOOD**

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# PRACTICAL GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION

BY

UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

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## PREFACE

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THIS book was begun as a result of the author's experience in teaching some classes in English in the night preparatory department of the Carnegie Technical Schools of Pittsburg. The pupils in those classes were all adults, and needed only such a course as would enable them to express themselves in clear and correct English. English Grammar, with them, was not to be preliminary to the grammar of another language, and composition was not to be studied beyond the everyday needs of the practical man.

Great difficulty was experienced because of inability to secure a text that was suited to the needs of the class. A book was needed that would be simple, direct and dignified; that would cover grammar, and the essential principles of sentence structure, choice of words, and general composition; that would deal particularly with the sources of frequent error, and would omit the non-essential points; and, finally that would contain an abundance of exercises and practical work.

It is with these ends in view that this book has been prepared. The parts devoted to grammar have followed a plan varying widely from that of most grammars, and an effort has been made to secure a more sensible and effective treatment. The parts devoted to composition contain brief expositions of only the essential principles of ordinary composition. Especial stress has been laid upon letter-writing, since this is believed to be one of the most practical fields for actual composition work. Because such a style seemed best suited to the general scheme and purpose of the book, the method of treatment has at times been intentionally rather formal.

Abundant and varied exercises have been incorporated at frequent intervals throughout the text. So far as was practicable the exercises have been kept constructive in their nature, and upon critical points have been made very extensive.

The author claims little credit except for the plan of the book and for the labor that he has expended in developing the details of that plan and in devising the various exercises. In the statement of principles and in the working out of details great originality would have been as undesirable as it was impossible. Therefore, for these details the author has drawn from the great common stores of learning upon the subjects discussed. No doubt many traces of the books that he has used in study and in teaching may be found in this volume. He has, at times, consciously adapted matter from other texts; but, for the most part, such slight borrowings as may be discovered have been made wholly unconsciously. Among the books to which he is aware of heavy literary obligations are the following excellent texts: Lockwood and Emerson's *Composition and Rhetoric*, Sherwin Cody's *Errors in Composition*, A. H. Espenshade's *Composition and Rhetoric*, Edwin C. Woolley's *Handbook of Composition*, McLean, Blaisdell and Morrow's *Steps in English*, Huber Gray Buehler's *Practical Exercises in English*, and Carl C. Marshall's *Business English*.

To Messrs. Ginn and Company, publishers of Lockwood and Emerson's *Composition and Rhetoric*, and to the Goodyear-Marshall Publishing Company, publishers of Marshall's *Business English*, the author is indebted for their kind permission to make a rather free adaptation of certain parts of their texts.

Not a little gratitude does the author owe to those of his friends who have encouraged and aided him in the preparation of his manuscript, and to the careful criticisms and suggestions made by those persons who examined the completed manuscript in behalf of his publishers. Above all, a great debt of

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gratitude is owed to Mr. Grant Norris, Superintendent of Schools, Braddock, Pennsylvania, for the encouragement and painstaking aid he has given both in preparation of the manuscript and in reading the proof of the book.

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T. W.