

**MACMILLAN'S COURSE OF
GERMAN COMPOSITION: FIRST
COURSE, PARALLEL GERMAN-
ENGLISH EXTRACTS AND PARALLEL
ENGLISH-GERMAN SYNTAX**

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And Parallel English-German Syntax by G. Eugène Fasnacht

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G. EUGÈNE FASNACHT

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GERMAN COMPOSITION

FIRST COURSE

PARALLEL GERMAN-ENGLISH EXTRACTS AND
PARALLEL ENGLISH-GERMAN SYNTAX

BY

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PREFACE

FRAMED on the same plan as the compiler's *French Composition*, this class-book aims at linking the pupil's first attempts at German Composition with the course of his German Readings—making the writing of connected passages go hand in hand with Translation, and *alongside with*, instead of *after*, the systematic study of Syntax.

Experience has shown that familiarity with Grammatical Rules alone—indispensable though these are—is not a sufficient equipment for the mastery of the far greater difficulties of *Diction*: Syntax is reducible to Rules, whilst Diction, defying every attempt at classification, will yield its secrets to none but the sympathetic student to whom the study of a foreign language is a matter of *feeling* as well as of understanding. Nor is it in the crammed columns of a Dictionary, teeming with snares and pitfalls, that the Beginner may fairly be expected to find the suitable brick and mortar for building up a workmanlike structure.* It is only by immersing himself headlong, as it were, in the extraneous atmosphere that he can nerve himself for the struggle; and for this process of immersion to yield its full benefits, it is necessary that the readings in the foreign language should bear upon topics akin to the subject-matter of the composition. It is with a view to meet this want that the *First Part* has been elaborated. The stimulating effects of such a reciprocal process of assimilation and reproduction are obvious: the pupil, aware that on the

* A good Dictionary is, of course, in any case indispensable, though for purposes of composition the shortcomings of even the best of them are glaring; to mention one instance only, how is the student to work out the *idiomatic* rendering of "the squire's broad acres" from the literal equivalents for *squire*, *broad*, and *acre*?

careful construing of the original German extract will depend the adequate reconstruction of the kindred English passage, will have to give concentrated attention to the language in which the subject of the model extract is clothed, and thus an effective check will have been applied to the only too common habit of listless reading and slovenly half-understanding of words and idioms.

The *Second Part*—intended to put the student's power of self-help to a somewhat severer test—contains easy Passages to be translated from the original English into German without further assistance than a few footnotes and occasional references to the *Parallel Syntax* in the *Third Part*. It has been assumed that by the time the pupil has reached the end of the *First Part* he will have gained sufficient familiarity with wordlore to make a discriminating use of his *Dictionary*.

In the *Third Part* (containing a *Parallel English-German Syntax*, intended chiefly for reference) the process followed in the ordinary run of grammars has been reversed: instead of taking the foreign tongue for the starting-point of comparison (*i.e.* proceeding from the unknown to the known), it has been deemed more expedient for purposes of composition to view the differences of idiom from the pupil's own standpoint—his mother-tongue. The systematic grouping of practical illustrations—affording as it does a bird's-eye view of the whole subject—is of far higher value for the training of the mind and for a clear insight into the structural differences of the two languages than footnotes which, scattered throughout the whole book, can only lead to a scrappy knowledge of odds and ends. Special attention has been given to those points in which English and German are most at variance: I mean—the use of *Voices* (pp. 112-115), *Auxiliary Verbs* (pp. 116-131), *Prepositions* (140-166), *Participial Constructions* (pp. 173-183), *Attributive Genitive* (pp. 201-207), and *Complex Sentences*, involving the *Order of Words* (pp. 210-220).

A *Second Course*, on the same lines, but intended for *Advanced Students*, is in course of active preparation.

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