

**COVELL'S DIGEST OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR; A
DIGEST OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR: SYNTHETICAL
AND ANALYTICAL,
CLASSIFIED AND METHODICALLY ARRANGED;
ACCOMPANIED BY A CHART OF SENTENCES,
AND ADAPTED TO THE USE OF SCHOOLS**

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Covell's Digest of English Grammar; A Digest of English Grammar: Synthetical and Analytical, Classified and Methodically Arranged; Accompanied by a Chart of Sentences, and Adapted to the Use of Schools by L. T. Covell

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L. T. COVELL

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BY L. T. COVELL,
PRINCIPAL OF THE FOURTH-WARD SCHOOLS,
ALLEGHANY, PA.

Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.
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P R E F A C E .

THE author of the following work, conscious of the responsibility which must be incurred by one who appears before the public in the character of a Teacher of Grammar, has endeavored faithfully to reduce to a concise yet comprehensive system the true principles of that language in which his thoughts are presented to the world: not to deviate widely from those works which have been highly approved, but to form a consistent and practical digest of established rules: not to be satisfied with the researches and labors of others, but to examine, think, and write for himself: not to subvert the popular system of grammar, but to add to it some new features, and to improve upon those already received. While this must be the result of great labor and skill, eighteen years of patient study and practical experience in teaching, give him, he trusts, some ground of confidence upon which to claim the attention and consideration of those, who, like himself, are engaged in the educational profession: a profession, at once, arduous, honorable, and laudable.

About ten years since, at which time the present work was undertaken, the author was engaged in giving Lectures on English Grammar. During the three years thus employed, and his subsequent career in teaching, for his own information, he has critically examined the principal English Grammars which have been issued, of which there are about 400, and diligently compared their definitions and rules with each other, and tested them by a constant reference to the usage of standard writers. While intent upon this investigation, their various arrangements and methods of teaching have been as carefully considered; and he persuades himself that the improvements here offered will be found useful to the learner, and acceptable to the Teacher.

In accordance with a correct and popular sentiment, now quite general, the author permits his work to speak for itself; and wishes its success to rest entirely upon its intrinsic merits. To this end, he would invite the reader to a careful perusal and estimation of its worth. So far as his views, plan, and labors, may contribute to the intellectual culture of the rising generation, it will be the height of his ambition, if, in the opinion of competent judges, he shall be regarded as having neither "run nor labored in vain."

In the plan of the work, each principle has been carefully arranged, and

examined by itself; and at the close of each subject, where it is necessary, a Synthetical Exercise is required of the pupil, by which he must put in practice the very principles which he has under consideration. For example, see pages 81 and 82, the plan of which is continued through the work. These exercises will be found easy and interesting, inasmuch as the pupil has, in each, a definite object in view. By this means, the very design and end of grammar will be attained—"the art of speaking and writing *correctly*."

The plan of *Parsing*, which is the "*best and most thorough method of analysis*," is simple and systematic, requiring the pupil to assign a reason for each principle as he advances. This, which experience shows to be necessary to good improvement, is founded on the principle of "*making haste slowly*."

It has been thought judicious to place the Classification and Analysis of Sentences, which will be found full and complete, in the first part of Syntax. The Models of Analyzing are so uniform and similar, that, after committing two or three, in order to understand the others, the pupil will have little more to do than read them over. Though secondary to parsing, this is an interesting and useful exercise; and, during the last fifteen years, has gradually become more and more prominent, until, in some sections, it has thrown parsing into the shade. This is an extreme. The one ought to be done, and the other ought not to be left undone. The present work teaches to do both. At the same time, the learner is required to illustrate and apply every principle as he advances.

In this edition, a few errors discovered in the former, have been corrected. To secure more exact uniformity and greater simplicity, a few changes have been made: the subject of Analysis has been somewhat improved; and the Chart of Sentences, at the suggestion of several friends of experience, has been omitted, and an Analytical Chart showing the complete classification of sentences, has been substituted. This, if placed before the scholar, or, which is better, if written out upon the black-board, will, during the explanations of the teacher, be highly useful and convenient.

The idea of treating the *subject, &c.*, of a sentence as simple, complex, or compound, has been taken from De Saey; while many important suggestions have been derived from other analytical works, and from the Elements of Reading and Oratory by Prof. Mandeville.

The Elements of Sentences, and their peculiarities as the Materials of Sentences, will be useful and interesting to the advanced student. The Phrase and Clause Elements, as treated of under Rules 11, 16, and 18, will also claim his attention.

The Classes of Sentences which depend on *modes and structure*, are not necessary in Analyzing; but a thorough knowledge of them is indispensable to a complete understanding of the principles of Punctuation and Elocution. Their study will furnish important knowledge in the structure of language.

The subject of Analysis, as presented in this Work, is so simplified, that a teacher of grammar, by ordinary application, can, in one week's time, be prepared to teach it efficiently. This fact has been fully proved by several teachers in the different schools under the author's superintendence.

Pittsburg, Aug. 1862.

L. T. COVELL.

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