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A MODERN
ENGLISH GRAMMAR

BY

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EXERCISES IN ENGLISH "

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PREFACE

THIS book is an attempt to present the grammar of modern English in the manner prescribed by modern methods of instruction.

The general treatment of the subject has been determined by two considerations. The first is that when pupils begin the study of grammar, they not only are able to understand the language of standard English literature, but they are continually using sentences of their own with considerable fluency and accuracy. The second is that, though pupils have considerable skill in the use of language, they have little knowledge of the nature of sentences and little insight into the fundamental relations of subject, predicate, complement, and modifier.

The second consideration makes unsuitable for class-instruction those formal treatises that take for granted a knowledge of the elements of sentence structure, and begin with the discussion of single words. The first consideration discredits the method of those text-books which, following the line of progress of a child's first efforts at language, begin with single words, and require pupils to build up the mother tongue bit by bit, as if it were something new and strange. The pupils whom we set to study grammar learn to use the parts of speech and the various types of the English sentence when they are very young; and they naturally find dry and unprofitable a study which ignores the power and knowledge already acquired. When a new language is to be learned, a synthetic treatment is

natural and interesting. But when the mother tongue is the subject of critical study, the aim is, not to learn new forms of speech, but to investigate the nature of forms that are already familiar; therefore the treatment should be analytic.

With regard to arrangement, the starting point is the sentence; for surely the first months given to the formal study of the mother tongue should be spent, not in examining the properties of nouns and the other parts of speech, but in learning to separate sentences into subject, predicate, complements, and modifiers, whether these be single words or groups of words, and whether the sentences be long or short. These larger elements of sentence structure are the foundations of grammar, and they must be familiar before the pupil is ready for the study of separate words. They influence both the classification and the inflection of the parts of speech; therefore neither the classification nor the inflection of the parts of speech can be effectively studied until these are mastered.

With regard to method, the presentation is as far as possible inductive, taking familiarity with English for granted, and leading the pupil to observe, compare, and classify grammatical facts for himself. But while the author has avoided dogmatic instruction, he has, on the other hand, shunned with equal care that vagueness which results from merely asking the pupil questions and leaving him to answer them for himself. The pupil is not only led to observe for himself; he is also guided to the right inferences. Whenever, as in discussing some points of usage, it has been necessary to employ dogmatic teaching, care has been taken to speak no more strongly than the facts of usage warrant. The forms employed to exhibit graphically the logical

structure of sentences—in many books a hindrance to the pupil rather than a help—have received the united attention of the printer and the author in an attempt to make them appeal through the eye directly to the understanding.

The fund of knowledge that pupils bring into the class-room has also determined the limits which the author has set to his work. Many things often elaborately set forth in text-books may be safely taken for granted as already known. To explain them is a violation of the pedagogic maxim, "Teach the pupil what he does not know." Even the analysis of sentences, important as it is, has its limits as a means of instruction and training. In going beyond the general analysis which brings into relief the logical structure of a complex sentence we do not help the pupil, but present him with linguistic riddles that make his native tongue offensive to him.¹

As to inflections and the uses of the various parts of speech, these are already known empirically, and the business of the grammarian is simply to help the pupil to systematize his knowledge and to avoid common errors. Distinctions and classifications, if they are too minute or numerous, confuse the mind and loosen its grasp of important things. The author has tried to make a book that will help teachers to awaken in boys and girls what is sometimes called the language sense, and strengthen their grasp of their mother tongue.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty that confronts the author of a school grammar is the diversity of opinion among grammarians as to the proper classification and nomenclature for certain locutions. Anyone, for example, who undertakes to present the English verb

¹ *S. S. Laurie*: "Lectures on Language and Linguistic Method in the School."

after the method of the most approved grammarians, will soon learn how futile it is to try to please everybody. "High and reverend authorities lift up their heads on both sides, and there is no sure footing in the middle." The author can only say that he has tried to follow those philologists who seem most likely to influence current opinion.

With regard to the exercises, the sentences for analysis have been chosen as far as possible with reference to fine literary quality. Special exercises have been prepared on the subjects that most frequently baffle students. The numerous exercises bearing on questions of good usage have been made practical. No sentences for correction have been admitted. Most of the exercises have been made fuller than usual, since it is much easier to shorten an exercise that is too long than to lengthen one that is too short.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Language.—Everybody has an instinctive desire to tell his thoughts and feelings to others; indeed, exchange of ideas is necessary in social life. One way of expressing thoughts is to make motions with the hands or other parts of the body, as children and deaf and dumb persons do. But the usual and very much better way is to make with the tongue and adjoining organs certain combinations of sounds which by common consent have certain meanings. These combinations of tongue-sounds, by which people express their thoughts and feelings, form **Language** (from Latin *lingua*, “tongue”). Combinations of sounds that stand for single ideas are called **Words**. These are in turn combined into thought-groups called **Sentences**.

2. Why Our Language is Called English.—Our language is called English because it is the language that has been spoken for more than fifteen hundred years in England, whence it has been carried to America and other parts of the world by English colonists,

3. The Early Home of English.—But the English language did not have its beginning in England. It was carried there in 449 A. D. by people who migrated from the banks of the river Elbe and the southwest coasts of the Baltic Sea. These people were from three tribes, called Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. Of the *Jutes* who moved to England nearly all trace has been

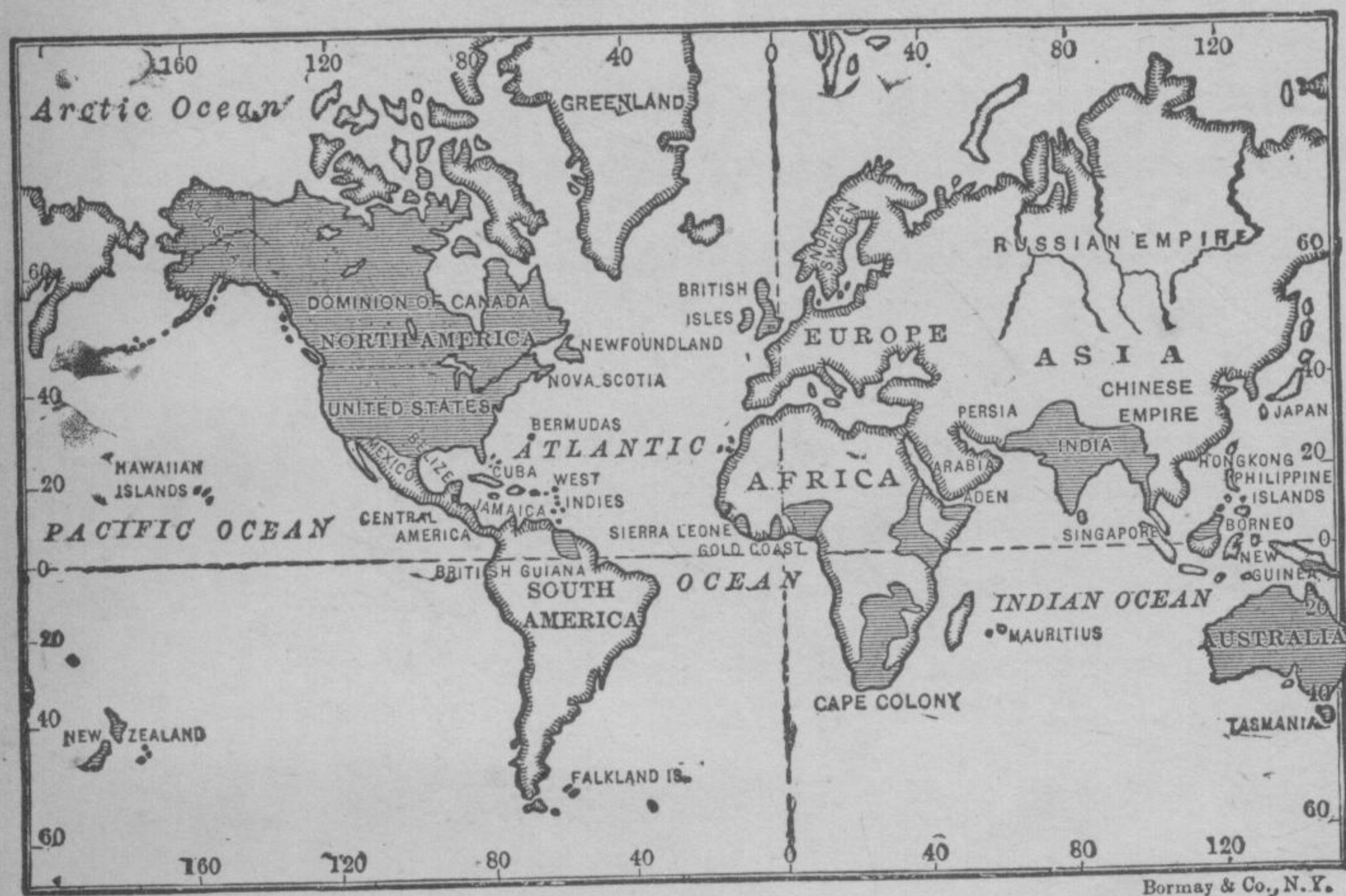


MAP SHOWING THE EARLY HOME OF ENGLISH.

lost. The *Angles* and the *Saxons* drove the original inhabitants—the Britons—into the mountainous parts of the island, and in course of time founded the *Anglo-Saxon* race. They called their new country “Angleland,” or “England;” themselves and their language they called “English.”

The wonderful way in which the English language has spread over the world is shown by the accompanying maps. The map on this page shows

the early home of English, when it was a mere dialect of German, spoken by a few tribes. The shaded portions of the map below show the regions of the world in which English is now used.



MAP SHOWING THE SPREAD OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

How far English has outstripped other languages may be seen from the following table, which shows the number of people speaking the principal European languages in 1890:—

English	111,100,000
German.....	75,200,000
Russian.....	75,000,000
French	51,200,000
Spanish.....	42,800,000
Italian	33,400,000
Portuguese.....	13,000,000

4. Old English Different from Modern English.
—The language carried to England by the Anglo-

Saxons was so unlike the English of to-day that at first glance it seems to be quite a different tongue. Here, for example, is the Lord's Prayer in Anglo-Saxon, or Old English, with the corresponding modern English words printed underneath:—

Fæder ūre, þū þe eart on heofenum

Father our, thou that art in heavens

Si þīn nama gehalgod

Be thy name hallowed

To becume thīn rīce

Arrive thy kingdom

Geweorþe þīn willa on eorþan, swā swā on heofenum

Be-done thy will on earth, so-as in heavens

Urne dæghwamlican hlāf syle us to dæg

Our daily loaf give us to-day

And forgyf us ūre gyltas, swā swā we forgifaþ ūrum gyltendum

And forgive us our debts, so-as we forgive our debtors

And ne gelæde þū us on costnunge, ac alȳs us of yfle

And not lead thou us into temptation, but loose us of evil

Sōþlice.

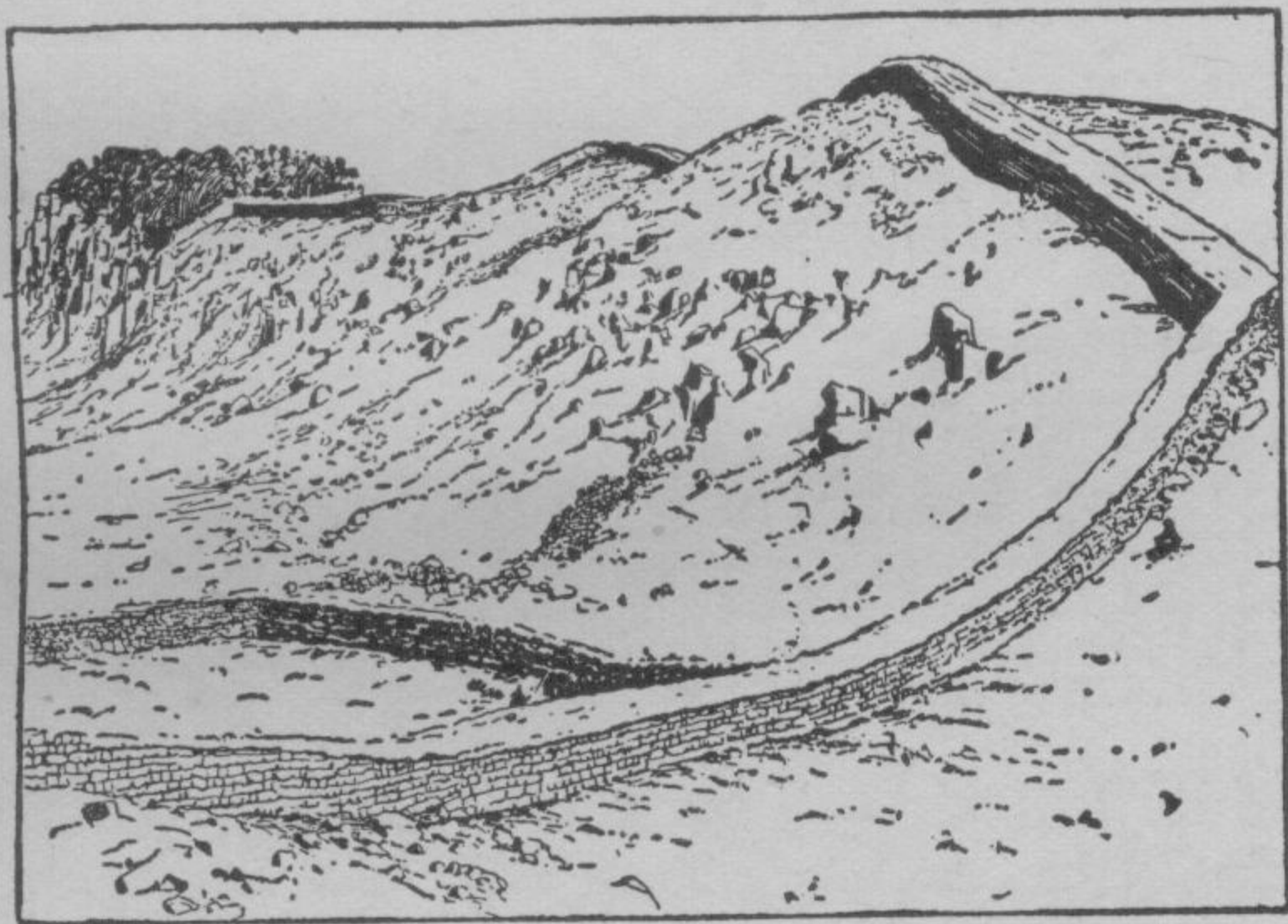
Soothly (Amen).

5. Relation of Old English to Modern English.

—Strange-looking as this Old English is, it is the same language as that which we use. The difference between it and modern English is no more to be wondered at than the difference between a young child and the same child when grown to manhood. Some knowledge of *how* our language has grown and changed is helpful to the study of it as it is to-day.

6. How Our Language has Grown.—When our language was carried to England, it consisted of probably not more than two thousand words; now it contains more than two hundred thousand—a much larger number than any other language. These new words have come into the language in many interesting ways:—

(1) *British Words.*—When the Anglo-Saxons settled in England and drove off the Britons, they adopted some British words, just as the Americans have adopted some Indian words. Of these words, adopted from the Britons, examples are: “cradle” and “crock.”



ROMAN WALL IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

Built by the Romans as a defense against native tribes.

(2) *Latin Words Found in Britain.*—For several hundred years before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons, England had been in the possession of the Romans. When the Romans withdrew from the island in 410 A. D., they left behind a few Latin

words, which were adopted by the Anglo-Saxons. Examples are: “street” (Latin *strata via*, “paved way”), “mile” (Latin *milia passuum*, “a thousand paces”), and “wall” (Latin *vallum*).



ANCIENT DANISH BOAT FOR FOURTEEN PAIRS OF OARS.

78 feet long, 10 feet broad. Found in a peat bog in Jutland.

(3) *Missionary Words*.—About the year 600 A. D. Christianity began to be received by the Saxons through Roman missionaries; and with the missionaries came many new words from the Latin. Examples are: “monk” (Latin *monachus*) and “clerk” (Latin *clericus*).

(4) *Danish Words*.—Toward the end of the eighth century Norsemen or Danes overran parts of England, and many of their words were adopted by the English. Examples are: “sky” and “ugly.”

(5) *Norman-French Words*.—In 1066 William of Normandy conquered England in the great movement known as the Norman Invasion. The Normans, who came from France, spoke Norman-French, which was for the most part modified Latin.

In England they seized the land and all the political power, filled all the offices, and made their language the language of the court, the law, the schools, and the church. We cannot dwell on the particulars of the tremendous change in our language which was wrought by this Norman Invasion. It is enough to say that after three hundred years of contact with Norman-French the English language was very much richer in vocabulary and softer in sound. Of the many hundreds of Norman-French words in our language examples are: "battle," "forest," "duke," and "family."

(6) *Words from Latin Books*.—In the sixteenth century, through the influence of what is called the Revival of Learning, the study of Latin became very popular in England. No one was considered well educated unless he could read Latin; nearly all important books were written in Latin; and Latin words began to appear in English conversation and writing. Since these Latin-English words were learned from books, they closely resembled in spelling the original Latin words. Examples are: "example" (Latin *exemplum*), "fact" (Latin *factum*), and "quiet" (Latin *quietus*).

(7) *Imported Words*.—The descendants of the Anglo-Saxons have always been great travelers and traders; and in their traveling and trading they have collected words from all parts of the world. Examples are: from Spain, "mosquito;" from Italy, "piano;" from Holland, "skate;" from Germany, "zinc;" from Africa, "gorilla;" from

the American Indian, “hammock” and “tomato;” from Arabia, “sofa;” from China, “silk;” from India, “sugar;” from Persia, “awning;” from Turkey, “tulip.”

(8) *New Words for New Things*.—New discoveries and inventions, as they have occurred, have given new words to our language. Examples are: “photograph” and “telephone.”

7. Proportion of Foreign Words in Modern English.—The proportion of words in modern English which have been drawn from the sources just described may be roughly represented as follows:—

Old English Words	
Latin Words (including Norman-French)	
Greek Words	Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, American Indian, etc.

8. Changes in Our Language.—Our language has not only grown; it has changed.

(1) *In Inflections*.—Old English was what is called a highly inflected language. An inflected language is one that joins words together in sentences by means of “inflections” or changes in the words themselves. For example, in Old English *oxan* meant “oxen,” *oxena* meant “of oxen,” *oxum* meant “with oxen.” Accordingly, instead of saying as we do “tongues of oxen,” our Anglo-Saxon ances-

tors said “tungan oxena.” Traces of these word-changes or inflections still remain in our language: as, “sing,” “sings.”

(2) *In Order of Words*.—The order of words in Old English was clumsy and involved. For example, instead of saying as we do,—

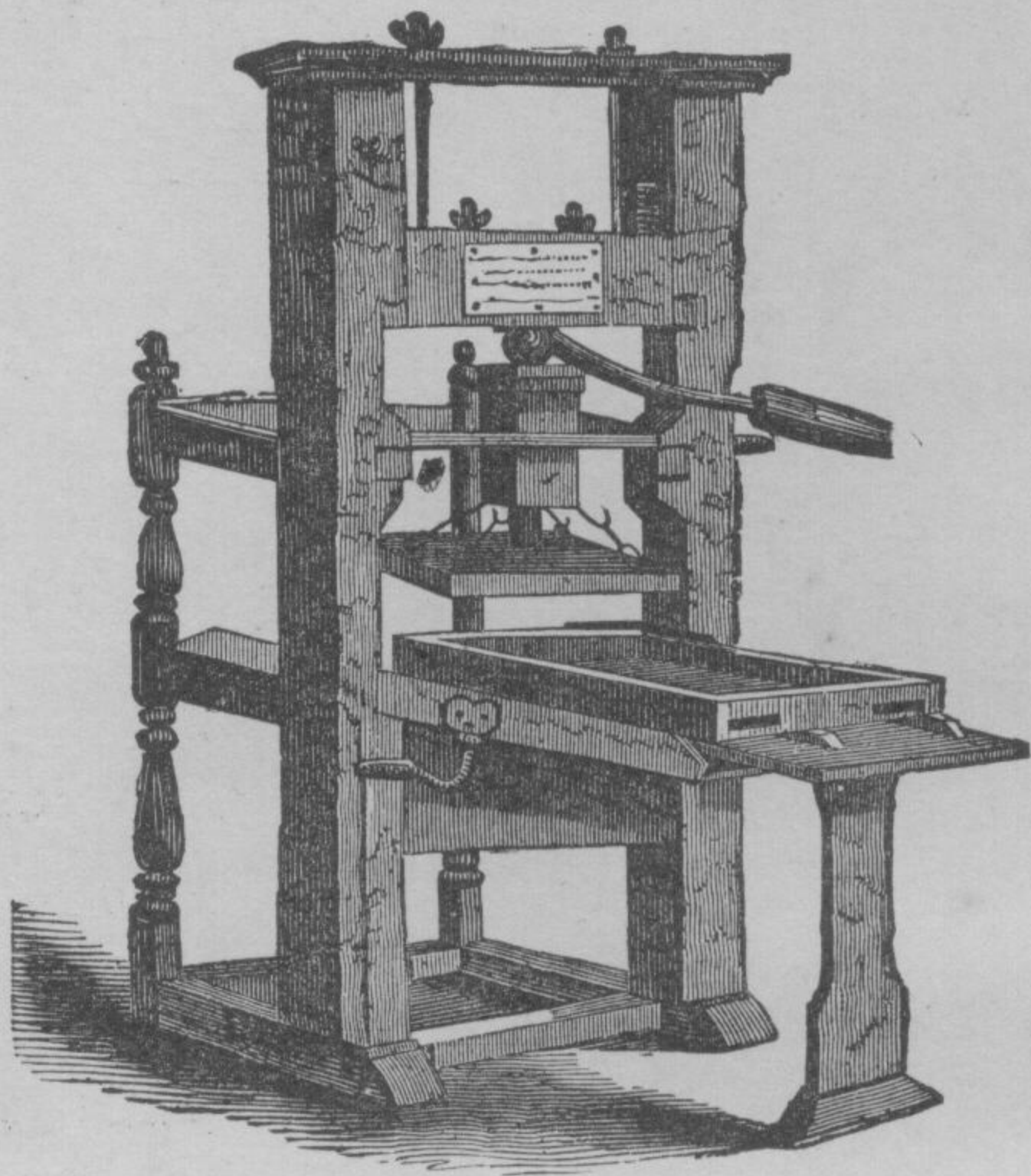
When Darius saw that he would be overcome,
our Anglo-Saxon ancestors would have said,—

When Darius saw that he overcome be would.

(3) *In Sound*.—Old English was a guttural speech, full of harsh, choking sounds. For example, our “holy” was once “hālig,” our “bridge” was once “brigg” (as in Scotland to this day), our “day” was once “daeg,” our “light” was once pronounced like the Scotch “licht.”

9. How Changes Came About.—The greatest changes in our language occurred between 1100 and 1500 A. D., that is to say, during the four centuries that followed the Norman Conquest. The story of the changes is too long to be told here; but some idea of how they came about may be gained by noticing what happens to-day when a foreigner who has only half learned English tries to speak it. He mispronounces the words, arranges them after the manner of his own language, neglects the inflections. In somewhat the same way, when the Anglo-Saxons and the Norman-French became one people, and their languages were fused into modern English, sounds were modified, the order was changed, and inflections were dropped.

10. Language Still Subject to Change.—Since the invention of printing, changes in English have not been numerous; for the vast number of printed



EARLY PRINTING PRESS.

books and papers, and the immense spread of the ability to read and write, have given to our language a rigidity of form which it could not have so long as it existed chiefly on men's tongues. For example, the language of the English Bible, which is sixteenth-century English, differs little from the English of to-day. But some change is still going on, for modifying influences are still at work. English-speaking people in different parts of the world do not talk exactly alike; new words are coming in; old words are dropping out; the forms and uses of other words are changing. An example of this modern change is found in the word "whom." The