

CONSTRUCTIVE ENGLISH

DERIVATION, SPELLING, PRONUNCIATION
GRAMMAR, USAGE, CAPITALIZATION
PUNCTUATION, AND LETTER
WRITING, WITH EXERCISES

BY

FRANCIS KINGSLEY BALL

The foundation of every state is the education of the youth.

DIOGENES



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PREFACE

Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little, he had need have a great memory, if he confer little, he had need have a present wit, and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not.— LORD BACON.

This book aims to present, in the most useful form for reference and study, those principles which are essential to effectiveness in speaking and writing. The purpose has been to provide definite help on such points as usually cause difficulty to anybody who is seeking correct, clear, and forcible expression of his ideas.

To accomplish this end, the scope of the book has been made comprehensive. Grammar, effective diction and sentence structure, punctuation and capitalization, spelling, and letter writing are each carefully treated in a detailed but simple manner. The many illustrative sentences under each point, collected during a period of some years, show correct usage more clearly than can any amount of explanation. Thus the student cannot fail to know what is right and why it is right.

That this fund of material may be easily accessible to all, the book has been organized with the greatest care, even in its unusually complete table of contents and its detailed index. The helpful system of cross references has made it possible to treat subjects in their proper places; for example, a point of grammar under grammar, with a cross reference under rhetoric when necessary.

To drive home the practical application of these various principles, numerous exercises have been added (Chapter XI); and thus, without interrupting the continuity of the subject matter, this handbook becomes a *vade mecum* for students in school and college.

Especial thanks are due to the generous scholars and teachers who have improved the book by their suggestions and painstaking criticism. For the letter on page 153 the author is indebted to Mr. Ernest Cobb, of Newton Upper Falls. For permission to reprint the letter on page 344, from Letters of James Russell Lowell, edited by Charles Eliot Norton, he is indebted to the courtesy of the publishers, Harper and Brothers. For the reading of the manuscript he is indebted to Mr. George W. Lee, librarian of Stone and Webster, to Doctor D. O. S. Lowell, formerly Head Master of the Roxbury Latin School, to Mr. Clarence W. Gleason, senior master of the Roxbury Latin School, and to Mr. Homer K. Underwood, Head Master of the Bulkeley School, New London, Connecticut. For the reading of the galley proof he is indebted to Doctor Lowell, to Professor James Arthur Tufts, of The Phillips Exeter Academy, to Mr. F. W. C. Hersey, Instructor in English in Harvard University, to Professor William Marshall Warren, of Boston University, and to the Reverend Jones I. J. Corrigan, S. J., Professor of Social Ethics at Boston College. For the reading of the page proof he is indebted to Doctor E. Charlton Black, of Boston University.

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