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A GRAMMAR OF LATE MODERN ENGLISH

FOR THE USE OF
CONTINENTAL, ESPECIALLY DUTCH, STUDENTS,

BY

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1902

PART II THE PARTS OF SPEECH.

SECTION I, A
NOUNS, ADJECTIVES AND ARTICLES.



P. NOORDHOFF. — 1914 — GRONINGEN.

PREFACE.

The second part of this Grammar dealing with the Parts of Speech in detail, falls into two sections, the first treating of nouns, pronouns and adnominal words, the second of verbs and particles. Owing to its inordinate bulk, the first section could not conveniently be brought out in one volume and has, therefore, been cut up into two portions of about equal size.

In preparing this part of my work, I have, in the main, proceeded on the same principles as those which guided me in the preparation of its predecessor. The only difference of any importance between this and the earlier part of my work is, that I have now been at greater pains to arrange my quotations chronologically. I have not, indeed, concerned myself much about minor details of chronology, as, for example, the order in which the novels of DICKENS or THACKERAY successively appeared; or the question whether *Vanity Fair* preceded or followed *David Copperfield*; but the great landmarks in the history of English Literature have been constantly kept in view. A few additional remarks may not be out of place.

The quotations used to support my statements, have, of course, been taken unaltered from the sources where I found them, but glaring inconsistencies in the use of capitals, hyphens, stops and similar typographical niceties have been removed. The quotations from SHAKESPEARE and the Authorized Version have been produced in modernized spelling, which will, perhaps, be considered improper in a work like the present. The editions used are respectively the well-known Globe Edition edited by WILLIAM G. CLARK and WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT and The Oxford Bible for Teachers.

In discussing such an elusive subject as the Syntax of Modern English Grammar, one is confronted by a formidable array of difficulties. It is often said, on what grounds I know not, that English is not bound by any strict rules of syntax. But anybody who has ever given the subject continued thought, must soon have become persuaded, that this is not in accordance with fact. The least change of comparatively insignificant words, the least tampering with the order of words in a sentence or phrase, and the slightest modification of stress and pitch, almost invariably produce changes of meaning which the most obtuse observer could not fail to notice at once. The prevailing freedom never degenerates into licence. Then

there is the important influence of rhythm and metre, overlooked or slighted by many grammarians, to which the recent publications of Dr. P. FIJN VAN DRAAT have especially drawn attention.

To make one's conclusions reliable a large number of quotations is needed. I have, indeed, collected a fair number to support my views: thousands upon thousands are scattered through the pages of my book, and yet in not a few cases the evidence at my disposal was inadequate, and could not be procured in the scanty leisure accorded to me. There are few things so wearisome and so disappointing as going in search of a particular idiom. The expressions one wants have a trick of not turning up when needed, while others, useful enough, but not particularly required for the subject in hand, constantly obtrude themselves on one's notice. The lack of sufficient material accounts for the diffidence with which I had to express myself in many cases, and the profuse use of saving terms.

It is often necessary to make nice distinctions, some of which may, at first sight, seem needless or even puerile, but which, on closer view, will appear to serve a useful purpose. It is then that the great difficulty of precise discrimination, and of neat and concise wording makes itself felt. Many observations have required casting and recasting over and over again, before their final form could be established. Nor will it be wondered at that, as the work was progressing, I have frequently been obliged to revise the disposition of the different headings under which I have discussed my subjects. This, of course, entailed a repeated rehandling of the references to preceding and subsequent paragraphs and observations. Some of them, too many I fear, are, therefore, incorrect. For obvious reasons this applies chiefly to the forward references; the backward references could be properly verified as the sheets were passing through the press. The necessity of ample and proper illustration and nice discrimination is chiefly responsible for the great bulk into which the book has swelled. As the sheets that had left the press, accumulated, I have often seriously considered the advisability of cutting down some branches of, apparently, too luxuriant growth, but the reflection that by a vigorous use of the pruning-knife I might materially injure the usefulness of my book, has stayed my hand.

Some important subjects, which in the books and treatises consulted have been touched upon only in the merest outline, or not at all, have found ample treatment. I may here call attention to the paragraphs dealing with the Adnominal Use of Nouns in the Common Case Form and the Conversion of Adjectives into Nouns. I flatter myself that in this field of English Grammar I have done some useful spadework.

I have, of course, diligently compared my results with those contained in the publications bearing on the subject, which at the moment of writing were at my disposal. Throughout the text I have constantly referred to these to assist the student in forming an opinion for himself. Full details

about the books and treatises consulted cannot, conveniently, be given until the book is completed. Also the preparation of the detailed Index of the present part in which so many subjects have to be discussed from more than one point of view, must be deferred until the whole is nearing completion.

I have again had the uninterrupted assistance of my brother, Dr. ALB^S. POUTSMA, who through all the weary pages of this bulky volume has brought all the penetration of his discriminating mind to bear upon a subject, comparatively alien from his own studies, and to whom many important improvements in the way of arrangement and wording are due. I have great pleasure in saying that by his invaluable services he has cemented the feeling of brotherly affection by a sense of sincere gratitude. It is also a pleasant duty for me to acknowledge my indebtedness to the publisher for his generous co-operation in giving the book an attractive appearance, and, last but not least, to the compositor for the unremitting attention he has bestowed on the work entrusted to his care.

In conclusion I must tender my apologies to the reader for the inaccuracies, omissions and other imperfections, which cannot fail to strike him, if he goes carefully through the book. He may rest assured that any communication he should like to make to me regarding any portion of it, will meet a willing ear. In submitting my work to the scrutiny of students of English Grammar, I firmly believe that a few years more of constant study would enable me to ameliorate it in many ways. If then it should be urged that I have been rash in going to press, I can only plead the scantiness of my leisure and the uncertainty of life and vigour. There is a painful truth in the old song which I found quoted in SPENCER, Education, Ch. I:

Could a man be secure
That his days would endure
As of old, for a thousand long years,
What things might he know!
What deeds might he do!
And all without hurry or care.

H. POUTSMA.

AMSTERDAM, Christmas 1913.

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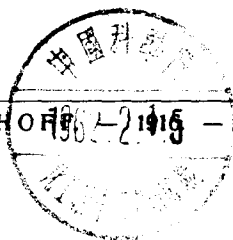
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PART II
THE PARTS OF SPEECH.

SECTION I, B
PRONOUNS AND NUMERALS.

P. NOORDHOF 1915 - GRONINGEN.



PREFACE.

It is with mixed feelings of gratification and regret that I have put the last touches to this portion of my work. It is, of course, highly gratifying to have arrived at another stage of my destined course and to have brought some problems a little nearer to solution or, at least, to have pointed out the way in which solution may be found, but then, considering the many weary years of unremitting labour I have spent over my work, I cannot help a feeling of regret that my achievements have fallen so far short of my wishes. What Prof. HUXLEY wrote to his friend HOOKER in a letter dated August 2, 1860, 'It constantly becomes more and more difficult to me to *finish* things satisfactorily' would most probably be the confession of most writers in whatever field of science or literature. It certainly represents my own thoughts now that I am going 'to my account with all my imperfections on my head'. Imperfect as I know my book to be, I would, however, humbly request the courteous student constantly to bear in mind the advice given by BUNYAN in the Conclusion appended to the Pilgrim's Progress,

What of my Dross thou findest there, be bold
To throw away, but yet preserve the Gold,
What if my Gold be wrapped up in Ore?

As to my methods I have nothing to add to what I wrote in the Prefaces of the volumes preceding the present. I have only a few words to say about the Index, the omission of which in a voluminous text-book like this would almost be a penal offence. Like the one placed at the end of one of the preceding volumes, this index is more or less descriptive in character, i. e. the different words have mostly been furnished with short notes giving the occasion of their inclusion and enabling the student to find what he wants without needless loss of time. It stands to reason that I have often been obliged to sacrifice accuracy and fulness of detail to brevity.

Phrases mostly appear under all their principal component parts, so that a search will, I trust, seldom be in vain. These features have caused the columns devoted to it to swell to a large number, but it is my candid opinion that in a thing of this description it is far better to err in giving too much than in giving too little. The index does not, as a rule, repeat the headings of the different sections into which the chapters have been divided, and which have already been tabulated in the Table of Contents. The latter may, therefore, in a manner be considered as a kind of supplement to the former, but it is chiefly destined to serve the useful purpose of supplying the student with a plan according to which the study of a given chapter may be approached.

My obligations in the present volume, as in its predecessors, are very numerous and will be duly acknowledged when the whole work is completed. I cannot, however, forbear from making special mention, already in this place, of the second volume of Prof. JESPERSEN'S *Modern English Grammar*, which appeared a few months before these pages went to press, and which enabled me to remove some deficiencies and inaccuracies and improve my book generally. I have great pleasure in paying a grateful and respectful tribute to the admirable shrewdness and vast learning displayed in this the latest work of the great Danish scholar.

Save for the first dozen or so pages I have had no assistance in correcting the proof-sheets, so that I sorely need the lenience of the student as regards the annoying clerical and typographical errors which seem to be unavoidable in books printed in Holland so long as proof-readers have not become an 'institution' in that country. I have duly recorded all those which have come to my notice, and I would advise the student to make the necessary corrections before he starts reading the book. By so doing he will save himself much vexation. Part of the finished proofs have been read by some friends of mine, and at my request they have told me what they thought wrong or wanting fuller treatment. They will find that in the Corrections and Additions some of their hints have been turned to useful account.

In conclusion I have only to say that any criticisms offered in a kindly spirit are urgently solicited and will be gratefully accepted.

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