

to adjectives.' I presume that "to relate one noun to another" is meant to express the same idea as "to show the relation of the one noun to the other." If not, the second definition contradicts the first. But look, I pray you, at that intervening expository paragraph. It contains three different and absolutely inconsistent accounts of the functions of the preposition. First, the preposition shows the relation of one substantive to another, *i.e.*, of a word to a word. This is the old story—the word *bird* inside the word *cage*. Next, the preposition shows the relation of a person or thing to an action,—no longer of one word to another. Here the writer has accidentally deviated into sense, but it is only for a moment. In the next sentence he goes more ingeniously wrong than ever; for now he mixes the two contradictory notions together, and speaks of the preposition showing the relation of a substantive, not to an adjective—as we might expect, and as he actually says in the sentence that follows,—but to a quality. So in *good for food*, 'for' expresses the relation of the word *food* to the quality of goodness that exists in the thing 'bread.' Is it to be wondered at that learners whose heads have been muddled with this sort of thing, when they come to parse a sentence make the wildest confusion with their prepositions? You have seen it called a preposition. Repeatedly, I have seen *cannot* called a preposition, *suddenly* a preposition, *full* a preposition, *many* a preposition, *that* a preposition, as a preposition, and so forth.

I am greatly mistaken if by this time I have not succeeded in showing that a very large amount of the grammar teaching that is current in our schools is radically vitiated by the neglect of a distinction so simple and obvious that to mention it is to secure assent for it. The primary definitions, upon which everything in the shape of syntax or the explanation of constructions must be based, are in consequence confused, illogical, and misleading,—absolutely worthless for any purpose, whether practical or scientific.

Matters are improving, however. Not so very long ago there was not a single English grammar for schools which did not contain all, or nearly all, the mistakes I have just been pointing out, along with a good many more. Now there are several which are nearly, or altogether, free from them. Even the Potential Mood is dying out, though, like other creatures of low vital power, it takes a good deal of killing. Is it not marvellous that teachers who, in their Latin classes, never dream of telling their pupils that *possum scribere* is the potential mood of *scribo*; and when they give a German lesson, never insist that *ich kann schreiben* is a potential mood of *schreiben* or the Greek, that *γράφω δύναμαι* is a potential mood of *γράφω*; or in French, that, *je puis écrire* is a potential mood of *écrire*,—still hanker after that blessed potential mood in English? Be consistent. Have it in all the above languages, or have it in none. Besides, if *I can sing* makes a potential mood, surely *I may sing* makes a permissive mood, *I will sing* makes a volitional mood, *I must sing* makes a necessitarian mood, *I ought to sing* makes a morally obligatory mood. What right has *can* to this pre-eminence of modality? If you take one, you must take all. We used to be told that of a man was a genitive case, to a man a dative case, by a man an ablative case, and so on. Horne Tooke long ago pointed out that, if you went to work in that way, you must have as many cases as there are prepositions. I think it will be hard to show that it is not just the same with the moods.

I now ask your patient attention to a few remarks in which I shall endeavour to remove some very prevalent and mischievous misconceptions as to some other moods—a task the more necessary and the more difficult, because some very eminent names have lent weight to the views that I have to combat. In doing so, I shall have to appeal to other languages, such as German and Latin.

I insist on the right to do so, because, whatever may be the differences in details between, say, Latin and English, there is an identity in the cardinal grammatical ideas on which each language is based. Number, person, case, voice, mood, tense, are based upon the same fundamental conceptions in both languages. If you look at the pronoun, for example, you will see that we have come to assign to one case—the dative—the functions that were originally, even in English, distributed amongst three—the dative, the accusative, and the instrumental. Here is an important piece of difference in detail,—we have not so many cases as the Latins had. For all that, it still remains true that the fundamental functions of case-endings are common to both Latin and English. In like manner, though there are differences of usage, a subjunctive mood is fundamentally the same thing in English, German, and Latin, and no definition of it is valid for English which will not apply to the other languages.

First let us emancipate ourselves from the tyranny of names. Our common grammatical terms are very insufficient, and often quite misleading. They have come down to us from times when grammar was most imperfectly understood, through Latin writers, who added blunders of their own to the imperfections that they found. Witness their translating *πρός γενική* by 'casus genitivus,' (from *genitus*, instead of *genus*). Nothing of value is to be got out of the mere etymological meaning of a grammatical term. "Accusative" is a very stupid name for the case of the direct object; and *ablative* is still worse for that which denotes an instrument or an attendant circumstance. So you will never get to know what a subjunctive mood is by merely translating the word *subjunctive*. But unfortunately the name has led many to suppose that there is some essential and invariable connection between *subjunctive* and *subjoined*; and, more and worse than this, to confound a *subjoined clause* with a *verb in the subjunctive mood*. You may have a verb in the subjunctive mood in a principal clause, (as in "If 'twere done, when 'tis done, then it were well it were done quickly,") and you may have an indicative in a subjoined clause, as after *ubi* or *when*, or any relative in Latin or English.

Now the first point that I insist upon is this,—that a verb in the subjunctive mood is not simply a verb employed in a subjoined clause, but a particular kind of verbal form, such as *sim*, *sis*, *sit*, in Latin; *sey* or *wäre*, in German; *I were*, *he were*, in English; and that the forms *sun*, *bin*, *am*, *est*, *ist*, *is*, are indicative wherever they are found. You may find Latin sentences by the score in which *est* follows *si*: but *si est* is not a subjunctive mood; the conjunction is not part of the mood. *Est* is indicative wherever you find it. Yet I have seen a school grammar in which *if I am* is deliberately set down as the subjunctive of *to be*; and matters are not much mended when such combinations are termed (as by Dr. Abbott) *indicative-subjunctive* forms. A 'horse-marine' is nothing in comparison with this wonderful compound, for a marine might bestride a horse; but by no possibility can an indicative ever be any kind of subjunctive. You might as well talk of a genitive-accusative!

I next proceed to consider how far there is any essential connection between the idea of conditionality and the subjunctive mood. Let me ask your attention to the following quotation from Professor Bain. He says:—"Some circumstances in the manner of an action have also been embodied in the changes made in the root verb. For example, when an action is stated not absolutely, but conditionally, the verb is differently modified, and a series of tenses is formed, for present, past, future, complete, and incomplete, of the conditional verb. This is the *Subjunctive Mood* which exists in full force in the old languages, but is a mere remnant in ours. The machinery is too great for the occasion; We find that