

manifest. Here let us call attention to the utter uselessness, for all practical purposes, of much of the grammar that is taught in many of our schools. Pupils analyze, and parse, and define, and conjugate, for years, and then cannot speak or write five consecutive sentences without several grammatical blunders. The teacher who wishes to make his pupil practically a proficient grammarian will not burden his mind with senseless rules and worse definitions, but he will give him constant and careful instruction in essay writing, and in the correction and explanation of grammatical errors made by himself and others in ordinary conversation or in the class exercises. In addition to this he will give him a full acquaintance with practical etymology, and he will require him to devote much time to the critical study and memorizing of the choicest extracts from our best authors.

Let us now examine the definition of a conjunction given by many grammarians. They affirm that conjunctions connect sentences. They further affirm that the statement, "John and Jane study grammar," is equivalent to the two statements, "John studies grammar and Jane studies grammar." Here our grammarians add two words and change one, they "expand" the sentence as they call it, or in other words, they destroy the sentence given them, and construct two others to suit their fancy, and then they affirm with a flourish of trumpets that conjunctions do join sentences. To shew that this is a mere dogmatic assertion in the face of established facts, it is only necessary to change the predicate in our illustration, thus, "John and Jane are a handsome couple." Now, by the laws of the church and of society, John and Jane in this case are to be considered as one, though it has always been a disputed point, which one. It cannot, however, be disputed that

John is not a handsome couple, neither is Jane. Mason asserts in Art. 287 of his Grammar that grammatical analysis has to deal with the expressions before us not with something else that we are told to substitute in their place. Yet in direct contradiction to this fundamental principle of grammar, we find him in Art. 537 declaring that before a contracted sentence is analysed the parts omitted must be expressed at full length, and accordingly he proceeds to express them in the manner indicated in our first illustration. Now it is evident that, in these cases at least, Mason has quite lost sight of the fact that the rules of grammar do not make our language, but that these are deduced from it, and that, too, as it is, and not as we may distort it, to agree with our falsely conceived theories. This trifling may be called Mason's Grammar, but we surely cannot dignify it with the title, English Grammar. No doubt it is the case, that, in the present state of the science of grammar, we are compelled in some sentences to resort to the miserable shift of changing or supplying words in order to give a so-called correct parsing of them. Unfortunately, this will continue to be the case until our grammarians learn to plan their text-books to conform to the language, and abandon the folly of attempting to make the language conform itself to their text-books.

The third great source of error in our grammars is found in the attempt to make distinctions where they no longer exist, and in the introduction of corresponding technical terms for which there is no place in modern English. Thus, we have the gerund, defined by Lilly to be a kind of verbal noun, used only in the oblique cases of the singular and governing cases like a verb. Then we have the gerundive which Gould Brown asserts is a participle governed