

P R E F A C E.

THE study of Grammar has been so constantly pursued in a manner almost purely mechanical, that both teachers and pupils seem to have generally forgotten that any theory or philosophical basis can exist on which its great general principles are founded. It is true that the usage of each particular language will always guide and govern the practice of that language ; but besides this, the facts that words represent ideas, and that the connexions between ideas in the mind must be indicated by corresponding connexions in the words, afford a common basis for the great general rules which are identical in all languages.

The following treatise is an attempt to explain and illustrate these general principles—to show how they originate in the operations of the mind, and to what extent they are necessarily identical in all languages. It is not intended to introduce these considerations to the exclusion of the practical rules which operate in immediate connexion with the usage of any language, but rather to explain, so far as possible, the origin of these rules, and thereby afford a more accurate and precise means of examining the analysis of sentences, the nature of words, and their syntactical arrangement.