

satisfactory, for it leaves out most of what it should include, and fails to mark a distinct difference. Many other parts of speech can stand instead of nouns properly so called. In a limited sense the definition is true. You can, without any other change in or addition to a sentence, substitute a noun for a pronoun—sometimes when the latter is a demonstrative, and always when it is a personal pronoun of the third person (which historically in English is a demonstrative). But you cannot do this in the case of personal pronouns of the first and second persons, or in that of a relative, interrogative, or indefinite pronoun. If you discard pronouns altogether and use nouns only, you must express your thought in a different manner, if indeed you can express it at all.

Pronouns are much harder worked than nouns, and are so few and so constantly in evidence that they have retained far more of their peculiarities of form than nouns have. The distinguishing characteristic of a pronoun is that, instead of *naming*, as a noun does, it *indicates by means of reference* what we are speaking about—a very useful plan.

THE TREATMENT OF INFLEXION.

My next stage in the teaching of English, then, would be—both for the requirements of English itself, and also for the future requirements of Latin or French—the treatment of inflexions. But what is there new in this? some one may remark. We all deal with inflexions. Yes, but the question before us is not the *fact* of treatment but the *method* of treatment. If they are dealt with dogmatically and dictatorially—as usually happens—then my boys will not gain the help I want them to gain. My plea is that we should treat the inflexions *inductively*; that we should closely observe words with their various inflexions in actual sentences, and so

learn the general functions of inflexion in the expression of thought. Having got our general idea, we may then pass on to consider the parts of speech one by one, and so learn more about the particular uses of inflexions in particular cases.* We shall not cover anything like the ground in English which we shall have to cover later on in Latin; but we shall make a beginning, and that an intelligent one. When speaking of turning phrases into single words, and single words into phrases, I stated that the exercises would give us some help when we came to the uses of inflexions and auxiliaries. Here I must give you a caution. In many cases you cannot substitute auxiliaries for inflexions and *vice versa*—not, at least, without somewhat changing the meaning, or using an un-English form of expression. For instance, English people do not say “the cat of the cousin of my aunt,” as the writers of French exercise-books seem to imagine, but “my aunt’s cousin’s cat” nor do we usually say “the building’s top” but “the top of the building”—the common practice being to reserve the inflexion for the names of things having life or which are personified. But a little care will enable you to avoid all serious difficulties—especially if you are careful to point out that a form of expression may be possible and intelligible, and yet not be the accepted one. And just one other caution. Do not invent things which do not exist in English simply because they do exist in Latin or French. Do not speak of adjectives agreeing with nouns, or of nouns in the objective or accusative case. The objective relation of a noun is not marked by an inflexion in English, but by the position of the word and the general sense of the statement. Even in Latin as often as not the accusative has no distinguishing mark of inflexion.†

This, then, is the method of dealing