

PREFACE.

This work is an attempt to bring the subject of language home to children at the age when knowledge is acquired in an objective way, by practice and habit, rather than by the study of rules and definitions. "The analytic form," says Whately, "is, generally speaking, better suited for *introducing* any science in the plainest and most interesting manner; while the synthetical is the more regular and compendious form for technical study." In the *Language Lessons*, the analytic method is employed, as being better suited to an introductory work.

In pursuance of this plan, the traditional presentation of grammar in a bristling array of classifications, nomenclatures, and paradigms has been discarded. The pupil is brought into contact with the living language itself; he is made to deal with speech, to turn it over in a variety of ways, to handle sentences; so that he is not kept back from the exercise—so profitable and interesting—of *using* language till he has mastered the anatomy of the grammarian. Whatever of technical grammar is here given is *evolved* from work previously performed by the pupil.

This plan may not suit the blind adherents of the old grammatical formalism, but it will meet the views of earnest and progressive teachers; for such teachers, in their class-room instruction, are beginning to use the kind of exercises that form the body of this manual. To these we would say, that the method pursued has been, to collect from large numbers of school papers the difficulties that children actually encounter in speaking and writing English, and then to meet these difficulties by practice and precept.