
ENGLISH GRAMMAR

OPENING ADDRESS BY ELDER ORSON HYDE, DELIVERED BEFORE HIS CLASS AT THE
SOCIAL HALL, G. S. L. CITY, ON TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 14, 1858

Reported by Unknown

Brethren and Sisters—Allow me to congratulate you upon this occasion of assembling yourselves together for the laudable and praiseworthy object of engaging in a course of studies in the science of the English language. I cannot withhold an expression of my feelings of gratitude to our Father in heaven that we are blest with peace, tranquility, and health, and also with the staple necessities and comforts of life, I humbly hope that we are all exercised with that gratitude to our Supreme Ruler which his manifold favors extended to us so richly and fully demand.

In consequence of the troubles which you and your parents have undergone in years that are past, some, and perhaps I may say, many of you, have not met with an earlier convenient opportunity to acquire the kind of knowledge you now seek. Late, however, as the hour is, there yet remains sufficient time, if well improved, to remove the embarrassments under which you may have labored, and to embellish your minds with jewels that will render you distinguished, whether destined to move in the humble or more elevated walks of life.

A thorough knowledge of our own mother tongue is an important key to that wide field of usefulness which in this day more especially invites the energies and enterprise of the rising generation than at any former period in the history of the world. By some,

the inspiration of God is considered to supersede the necessity of this and every other science. On this erroneous principle some of you may act, and require me to impart to you a knowledge of our language without any mental labor on your part. This I would not do, if I could; for I do not want this class dishonored with one drone in the hive. I intend to do my duty, and shall expect you to do yours. Although I thus speak, I do not believe that anyone of you entertains any such opinion. Persons of this faith will not come here for the object that has called you out. It is true that God generally calls upon the illiterate or unlearned to bear his name and testimony to the world. In this, the policy of our Heavenly Father differs materially from that of the world. Under his policy, none can say that the important truths which the servant of God is required to declare are the result of his great or superior learning. But the question with me is, Must the servant of God always remain an unpolished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty? I answer, No. The Spirit of God directs improvement in everything that is good and useful. If any doubt this, consider what our leading men were when called, and then consider what they now are! The inspiration of God sometimes furnishes the words, but more generally the thoughts only. Then a flow of correct language is highly useful to convey those thoughts