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I. — *On the Prepositions in the Homeric Poems.*

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THE parts of speech, as they are called by grammarians, are a classification, founded in the nature of language, but at the same time inevitably more or less artificial and imperfect, of the different kinds of words in their relations to each other and to the sentence. No one has ever been able to give a perfect definition of any one of these parts such as would bear the questionings of a Socrates, or such as to include every thing that belongs to it and exclude every thing else. The *number* of classes or parts of speech which grammarians have made has varied widely at different times, and has not yet been settled beyond dispute. Two different classifications have come down to us bearing the name and clothed with the authority of the great Greek philosopher who was the founder of the science of classification — both marked by his fondness for simplicity and excessive generalization — one of which makes but three parts of speech (grammatically), viz.: verbs, nouns, and connectives, and the other makes four, viz.: verbs, nouns, articles, and connectives (*ῥήματα, ὀνόματα, ἄρθρα, σύνδεσμα*). Both these are natural classifications founded in the nature of the sentence, and answering to the logical

distinctions of the subject, the predicate, and modifiers, of which distinctions there will, of course, be either three or four according as we include *all* modifiers in one class, or distinguish modifiers of the verb from modifiers of the noun.

But these classifications are too general to satisfy the demands of most grammarians; and they easily admit of further division and subdivision. Hence the number of parts of speech was gradually increased by the Greek philosophers, particularly the Stoics, who were especially given to grammatical studies, till nine became with them, as it has usually been with modern grammarians, the accepted number.

Some Roman grammarians in the time of Quintilian, as we learn from that judicious scholar, went on still further dividing and subdividing till they made ten, eleven, or twelve parts of speech in the Latin language, without the article which is wanting in that tongue. Quintilian himself disapproved of these later and subtle distinctions, leaving undecided however the question whether all *names* should be classed together, or whether they should be distinguished into substantive and adjective nouns.

Whatever may be the classification adopted, and however many or few the classes may be, there will always be words which cannot be referred absolutely or exclusively to any one class; either because they do not answer exactly to the definition of any one, or because they perform the office now of one part of speech, and now of another, and now they subserve the uses of more than one at one and the same time. Thus words which are usually parsed as adverbs, in all languages, often perform the office of conjunctions also, since they not only modify the verb of the clause in which they stand, but also connect the clause with some other part of the sentence.

The process by which the same words, or even whole classes of words, so change their use and office in course of time as to become different parts of speech from what they once were, is one of the familiar and one of the most interesting and instructive phenomena in the history of language. Thus substantives easily become adjectives and

adverbs by a mere change of relation to the principal words of the sentence, while verbs, sometimes a source of supply for adverbs and prepositions, are recognized among the principal fountains from which conjunctions are derived. In other words, and as a matter of course, nouns become adjectives or adverbs whenever, ceasing to be themselves the principal subject or object of a proposition, they attach themselves as mere modifiers to other principal words; and verbs become adverbs, prepositions, or conjunctions, whenever, ceasing to be themselves the predicate of a proposition, they only modify or connect it. So that this process of transformation resolves itself into little more than a change of emphasis — at any rate it involves a change of emphasis, not less than a change of relation. Again, that is a most curious process, by which, simply by growing less and less emphatic, the demonstratives of so many languages have become first relatives and then articles or conjunctions; as, for instance, the English *that* (and so the Greek ὅτι and the Latin *quod*) was first a demonstrative, e. g.: "I knew THAT (*viz.* which) he said"; then, by a little falling off of the emphasis, a compound or simple relative: "I knew *that* he said"; and then, by losing all emphasis, a conjunction merely connecting the two clauses: "I *knew* that he said." By a similar process the definite article in English, as also in Greek, in German, in Italian, in French, and in the modern languages generally, was made from the demonstrative growing gradually less emphatic; and then, to supply its place in each of the languages, a lengthened and strengthened form was taken up for the demonstrative, in which the demonstrative element (*t* or *d*) was repeated at the end as well as the beginning of the root (compare the English *the* with *that*, the Greek ὁ, ὅς, or τός with οὗτος, the German *der* with *dieser*, etc.).

Of all the parts of speech, the preposition has been the most unfortunate in its nomenclature, being the only part of speech whose name expresses nothing of its nature or office, but merely its position with reference to the verb of which it is a prefix or the noun which it precedes; and that position, usual indeed, but by no means universal, still less essential

or founded in the nature of things. If it must be named from an accidental circumstance instead of an essential characteristic, its position is indeed so generally a *pre*-position as perhaps to justify the name on the principle of logicians: *a potiori nomen fit.* And usage has so sanctioned the name that it cannot now be easily changed; for not only did the Greeks originate the name πρόθεσις, and the Romans translate it into *praepositio*, and the English into *preposition*, but even the Germans, whose grammatical nomenclature is usually so significant and so just, call this part of speech *die Präposition* and *das Vorwort*, although they sometimes also call it *das Verhältnisswort*, and thereby express its most essential characteristic.

The proper prepositions are not numerous in any language, scarcely a score in Greek, about the same in Sanskrit, and but little more than that number in Latin and the modern European languages. They are primitive words with monosyllabic roots, which reappear, with only accidental and euphonic variations, in all the branches of the Indo-European family. In Greek, however, the majority of them have been made dissyllabic by the addition of a vowel, which vowel receives the accent except when the preposition becomes a post-positive, in which case it suffers anastrophe. This annexation of a vowel illustrates the musical superiority of the Greek over other languages, as for instance the Latin, the vowels being the musical and the consonants the significant elements in language; and the fact that the accent regularly rests on this comparatively unsignificant syllable of the preposition, a syllable which disappears in the Latin and English equivalents, is itself sufficient to show that the Greek accent was not mere stress, but rather tone or inflection. For the most part the prepositions seem originally to have expressed such essential and fundamental relations of place and of motion as *up* and *down*, *over* and *under*, *to* and *from*, *in* and *out*, *on* and *off*, *before* and *after*, *at* or *near*, *through* or *amid*, *about* or *around*. From these space-relations they were easily transferred by analogy to express the relations of time, and then, by metaphor or other figure of

speech founded on some nearer or more remote resemblance, they came gradually to denote all the varied relations of human action and thought. Of course no class of words can be more interesting, none more instructive to the philologist or the metaphysician, shedding so much light as they do and must, not only on the origin and progress of language, but on the fundamental laws of thought, and illustrating our intuitive conceptions even of the material universe.

It has been the almost unanimous opinion of philologists that the class of words which are commonly called prepositions were originally and properly adverbs. A class of words which originally signified *action* and *motion* would naturally be followed or accompanied by a class of words denoting the *direction* of motion and the *relations* of actions; in other words, verbs would not long exist without adverbs. But inasmuch as motion naturally ends in some place, and action terminates on some object, or tends to some result, when thought came to be more fully expressed, the same words which denoted the direction of motion and the tendency of action would naturally, not to say necessarily, denote also the *relations* between such motions or actions and the places, persons, or things affected by them — in other words, verbs and nouns could not be used to any great extent without adverbs being gradually converted more or less into prepositions to show the relations between them.

It becomes then an interesting question whether this theory of the normal rise and growth of prepositions is confirmed by facts. Are there traces of the process still remaining in the early literature of nations, or does it go back to a period antecedent to all extant literature — a period of which we have no other record but language itself? Do the earliest extant productions of Greek literature — for example, the Homeric Poems — exhibit to us the class of words of which we speak as fully adverbs, or fully prepositions, or in a transition state between adverbs and prepositions? All the authorities on Greek grammar, American, English, and German, agree in recognizing a marked peculiarity in Homer touching the use of this class of words, and differ only as to

the extent in which they acknowledge it and the interpretation which they put upon it. Some regard them as already in reality and in the main prepositions, although used as adverbs more frequently by Homer than by later authors; and they treat what is called *tmesis* as a real separation of the preposition from the verb. Such was the view generally taught in the grammars of the last generation and still accepted by some grammarians of the old schools. The more recent authors on Greek grammar, however, generally recognize this class of words in Homer as partly adverbs and partly prepositions, partaking more or less of the properties of both, and, as some distinctly affirm, in the stage of transition from the one to the other; and generally, although not unanimously, they explain what is called *tmesis*, not as an actual separation of the preposition from the verb in a proper compound, but rather as an antecedent and more primitive stage of the language, in which the preposition was an adverb, although on its way towards composition with the verb.

In order to come at a more accurate knowledge of the facts in the *usus loquendi* of this class of words, I recently struck a trench through several successive strata of Greek literature somewhat as Dr. Schliemann has cut through the successive strata on the site of ancient Ilium, although my researches have not been as thorough as his, nor did I find or expect to find any such magnificent results. But I submit a brief report of my observations, or excavations if any choose to call them so. I went through first with the third book of the Iliad — a book which I am accustomed to read with almost every class, because it is a favorite book with me and generally proves equally interesting to my pupils — taking up each of the proper prepositions and noting its various uses, as a preposition preceding the substantive, as a prefix to the verb, as a post-position following the substantive, and as a separate word not connected with either the substantive or the verb. I noted also the comparative frequency of the occurrence of the simple verb and the verb compounded with a preposition. I then went through the seventh book of the Odyssey in the same way, examining and recording the same particulars. I

then proceeded to examine in the same way a specimen portion successively of Sophocles, Herodotus, and Xenophon. I had thus gathered up statistics of the remains, so to speak, of successive strata of Greek literature, which I could compare numerically with each other. I shall not trouble the Society with all the details of these statistics. But I may say in brief, that they showed clearly enough a general and constant *diminution* of the separate and unprepositional use of this class of words from the earliest extant specimens of the language in the Homeric poems to the perfection of the Attic form and style in Xenophon's Anabasis, and a corresponding relative *increase* of their use both as prefixes to verbs and as prepositions governing substantives. Of the 251 instances in all in which words of the class called prepositions occur in the third book of the Iliad, 10 per cent. occur separate from either substantives or verbs, and 9 per cent. more come after their substantives, thus making 19 per cent. that are not strictly prepositions; while 81 per cent. occur in the normal state of prepositions, 47 per cent. before substantives and 34 per cent. in composition with verbs. In the seventh book of the Odyssey, there is the same percentage (10) of separate occurrence, and the only change (and that *perhaps* accidental) is that there are only 6 per cent. of post-positives, while there are 84 per cent. of normal prepositions, of which, however, a larger proportion, namely, 53 per cent., precede substantives and 31 per cent. are prefixed to verbs. In Sophocles, there are only 3 per cent. of separate words of this class (and these more manifestly cases of *tmesis*) and 3 per cent. also of post-positives, making only 6 per cent. in all of unprepositional use, while 94 per cent. are prepositionally used. A much larger proportion, however, 59 per cent., have now entered into composition with the verb, leaving 35 per cent. standing before substantives. In Herodotus, the unprepositional use has disappeared,* while 53 per cent. are in composition with the verb and 47 per cent. stand before substantives. In

* That is, in the passage of several pages which I used as a specimen. There are not wanting sporadic instances of *tmesis* and adverbial use, e. g.: ἀπὸ δ' ἔθαπε, vi. 114; μετὰ δέ, vi. 120.

Xenophon, the only change from the usage of Herodotus is that a still larger — a *considerably* larger — proportion of this class of words have entered into composition with the verb, namely, 59 per cent., while the remaining 41 per cent. stand before substantives.

A comparison of the compound with the simple verbs in this series of writers shows a corresponding change keeping regular pace with the progress of the language. In the Iliad and Odyssey only 14 per cent. of all the verbs are compounded with prepositions; in Sophocles, 26 per cent.; in Herodotus, 32 per cent.; and in Xenophon, 36 per cent. An examination of the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles showed a still greater proportion of compound verbs, namely, 40 per cent.* Moreover, there is in Luke a marked increase of the disposition to *repeat* the *same* preposition, using it *both* before the substantive and also in composition with the verb, which usage is not unfrequent in Xenophon,† but is rare in Herodotus, while there is scarcely a trace of it in Homer or Sophocles.

It should also be observed that in Homer, where the preposition *does* enter into composition with the verb, it seems to retain more of its original adverbial force, whereas in the later Greek it perhaps gradually changes the meaning of the word, or perhaps loses its force so that the compound differs less and less from the simple verb: hence the naturalness, not to say the necessity, of sometimes reinforcing it by the *repetition* before the substantive of the same preposition which appears in composition with the verb. A good illustration of this peculiarity of Homeric usage in the verb compounded with a preposition may be seen in the 12th verse of the third book:

Τόσσον τίς τ' ἐπιλεύσσει ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ λᾶαν ἵησιν:

"And one sees on (sees over, sees ahead) only as far as on (over, ahead) he throws a stone;"

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* A subsequent examination of specimen passages in Plutarch and in Tricoupes, the modern Greek historian, discovered a farther increase, namely, 41 per cent. of compound verbs in the former and 43 per cent. in the latter.

† In such constructions as εἰσ-(or ἐμ-)βάλλειν (or βαίνειν) εἰς, ἐκβάλλειν ἐκ, συστρατοπεδεύεσθαι σίν, etc., etc.

where ἐπιλεύσσει does not mean "to oversee," "to overlook," or "to live to see," as such compounds do in later Greek, but "to see over," and the ἐπί in composition has just the same adverbial force which the same preposition has in the last clause of the verse, where it stands by itself, being separated, as some would say, from the verb ἴησιν by *tmesis*, but, to speak more properly, and as grammarians would now generally say, used as an adverb.

We have a similar use of the same preposition in the 277th verse of the same book:

Ἥλιος Θ', ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷς, καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις:
"And thou, O Sun, who seest over all and hearest over all;"

where the ἐπί has essentially or very nearly the force of an adverb of place, whereas in later Greek it gives to the same composite verbs the modified meaning "to oversee," and "to overhear" or "to listen to." The difference is analogous to that between *dúrchreisen* and *durchreísen* in German, of which the former means "to travel *through*" literally and emphatically, while the latter means only "to travel *over*" or "to traverse"; and in the former of which the preposition is separable from the verb, while in the latter it is inseparable. This is another illustration of the power of emphasis or accent to modify the meaning and use of words.

As a counterpart to the Homeric preference of the simple over the composite verb, Homer uses also the *noun* without a preposition — without any governing word — more frequently than it is used in later Greek, and that (as we might expect) the genitive or dative to denote primarily place, or secondarily some other relation which can easily be conceived as analogous to the space-relation. And in many instances where the preposition does precede the substantive or stands between it and the verb, it seems to hover between the office of a preposition and that of an adverb.

Facts then seem to justify the theory which is accepted by most modern writers on Greek Grammar, and to show not only that prepositions were originally adverbs, but that in the Homeric poems we see them in a transition state corresponding with the transition state of the pronouns and the generally

flexible and formative condition which characterized the language at that early and formative period of Greek history. Homer is peculiarly worthy of the study of the philologist not less than the general scholar, as a faithful voucher and true witness, not merely of the state of society, government, morals, and manners of the heroic age (whence Frederic Schlegel fancies he received the name of Ὅμηρος, a pledge or voucher), but also for his unconscious testimony to, or representation of, the phenomena of language in that primitive period, when it was still flexible in its form and changeful in its features, but surpassingly rich in material and expression, and as far from being barbarous or savage, as were those elegant works of art which Dr. Schliemann found in the lowest strata of his excavations. The stone age in the language and literature, as in the art and civilization, of Greece was not before the golden age, but long after; it was not before, but long after, the poems of Homer.

II. — *On the Formation of the Tenses for Completed Action in the Latin Finite Verb.*

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In investigating the system of verbal inflections, as found in the Indo-European family of languages, the science of Comparative Philology has encountered few problems which have hitherto proved more difficult of solution than that presented in the origin and formation of the Latin perfect. Most of the prominent leaders in the new school of Philology — Bopp, Curtius, Schleicher, Corssen, and, more recently, Westphal and Merguet — have given it careful thought, but the problem still remains unsolved. Many valuable facts have indeed been collected by these eminent scholars, and much light has been thrown upon many obscure points; but no explanation has yet been proposed which can be said to account fully for all the facts in the case; no theory devised which has met with general recognition among the scholars