

INTRODUCTION.

IS it not strange that in the last hundred years—which has witnessed such tremendous strides in nearly all the arts and sciences—so little has been done towards facilitating the acquirement of languages? It is strange, especially when we consider the many attempts that have been made in that direction. Books by the score have been written on the subject. Latin, Greek, French and German grammars have been published, until now there are almost as many different text-books on teaching languages—new methods so-called—as there are students of language. Nearly every college can boast of a professor who is the author of a Greek or Latin grammar. And yet what is the excuse for all these works? They are one and all servile copies of the first grammar written two thousand years ago by a Greek named Dionysius Thrax. One author will present the Latin verb first; another the *noun* first and the *verb* last. A third having found by experiment that if a noun and adjective are placed together, they may be more easily mastered than by taking each separately, imagines he has made a discovery which calls for a new work on Latin grammar. A look through the long rows of Greek and Latin grammars, which are to be found at any large second-hand book-store, will be sufficient to convince one that the most important differences in all these works are to be found on their covers.

And what I have just said in regard to the works on Latin and Greek applies, with some modification, to the works which have been coming from the press for the last 50 or 60 years on French, German, Spanish, etc. Since Ollendorff first published his "NEW METHOD OF LEARNING TO READ, WRITE AND SPEAK A LANGUAGE IN SIX MONTHS," books upon books have been published on exactly the same plan, which might all be labelled *Ollendorff*. Some authors have even gone so far as to steal his sentences; and we wonder greatly at this, for Ollendorff's exercises contain the most nonsensical sentences that were ever constructed or imagined by the human mind. Thus, page after page, does he treat us to composition like the following:

"Have you my ass's hay or yours? I have that which my brother