

laid on re-translation into Latin. The pupil was to begin the model book as soon as he knew his declensions and conjugations; he was to learn everything from the master, who translated the book to him, parsed every word, and so forth. The perfect grammar was to be constantly referred to, and taught by the master as occasion offered, in connection with the text of the model book. Each piece of the model book was to be studied again and again, with various objects, so that the pupil, before he advanced beyond it, would have read it "a dozen times at the least."

I should very much like to have the experience of masters who have tried Ascham's method. My own notion about it is, that re-translation with beginners is only another name for learning by heart; and though thoroughness is of immense value where it can be attained, it is not always attainable. Moreover, in striving after it, the teacher may sicken the learner at the very outset.

Ascham is well known in England. Ratke—or, as he Latinized his name, Ratichius—is well known on the Continent. He, too, began with a model book, and that without any preparatory drill in conjugations and declensions. But Ascham's pupils were to advance very slowly; Ratichius's were to forge ahead at once. A play of Terence's was the model book, and the learners were to go through the translation of the whole play three times before they saw the Latin. The pupils, says some objector fond of epigram, are tired of the play before they begin it. When they did begin, the master construed it to them, repeating each half-hours construing. After going through the play in this way, they began again, and the boys were put on during the second half hour in what the master had construed. Then came a course of exercises, applied grammar, &c., all connected with the play. I think the plan of making the learner thoroughly acquainted with the translation first contains a hint that might be turned to good account. But to a meeting of teachers like this, I need not point out that the notion of leaving boys *auditores tantum* for the whole of the first reading, is simply absurd.

The system of Ratichius is remarkable for its use of a model book to be read in large quantities, so that more is thought of the frequency of the impression made in the learner's mind than of the distinctness of the impressions. Perhaps it may be well here to leave chronological order, and to mention Hamilton the modern champion of the plan which plunges the beginner into large quantities of the model book. In most cases the chronological order is best, because each innovator is influenced by the thoughts of his predecessors; but this does not apply to Hamilton, who had as little knowledge as Topsy of his spiritual ancestry.

"About every language," says Hamilton, "there are two great divisions of knowledge: first, knowledge of words and usages; second, knowledge of principles. Which should come first? Principles, says the school master, and he therefore teaches synthetically. Knowledge of words and usages, say I—and I therefore teach analytically. Let the pupils be taught some of the language itself, and let them make their own observations on it. All they want is to have the language made intelligible to them, and to have their power of observation directed. Rules about the language must be given when the learner feels his need of them, not earlier." Hamilton, though he talked a good deal about the natural method, rejected Montaigne's plan of teaching by talking the foreign language. "Instruction not connected with a book is apt," said he, (and here, perhaps, we shall all agree with him,) "to be desultory, and in the air. It wants the book to fix it. So let the model book be kept to." This book was to be read and re-read by means of

an interlinear Hamiltonian translation. A Hamiltonian translation, I must explain, is neither a translation proper, nor a vocabulary, but a *tertium quid*, in which each word is rendered according to its person, tense, or case, as if it belonged to the context, and yet has none but its root meaning assigned to it, although this may make the passage unintelligible. After repeated readings, grammar is to be taught in connection with the model book; and, after a great deal of reading, reproduction or imitation is to be attempted in speaking and writing. Thus Hamilton agrees with Ratichius, and differs from Ascham, in insisting on large quantities; and in making at first no use of the pen. The system seems to me little better than revived Ratichianism, and yet it caused great excitement as a new discovery; and Hamilton, shortly before his death, which took place in 1831, had as many as 600 pupils, and was very celebrated, both in the Old World and the New.

All the methodizers I have mentioned go on the plan of taking some book written in the language, and drilling their pupils in that. Before I come to those who would make their own book, it will be convenient to take Jacotot's plan. As I have already said, one very broad distinction between the methodizers is, that some hurry the beginner along through the model book; others require him to work at each lesson till he has thoroughly mastered it. The most uncompromising champions of the latter method are Jacotot, and, in our own day, Prendergast. For both of these I have a very high respect, though want of time will prevent me on the present occasion from doing anything like justice to their merits. Jacotot required the pupil to learn *Télémaque*, the whole of *Télémaque*, and nothing but *Télémaque* and what could be deduced from it. For a long time the pupil was always to begin each lesson from the beginning of the book, advancing a little further every time. Thus the earlier chapters would be gone over not only twelve times at the least, as Ascham says, but twelve times twelve at the least. From the book the pupil was to make out for himself the grammar of the language; the teacher had only to guide, test, and stimulate, and on no account was he to tell anything that the learner could possibly get at for himself. I take it that Jacotot has taught more emphatically than any one three great pedagogic truths—first, that good teaching exercises the active rather than the receptive faculties of the learner's mind; second, that all fresh knowledge should be connected with what the learner knew before; and third, that a *thorough* knowledge of anything is an almost inexhaustible source of power. However, if his principles were right, there must have been some grave defects in his application of them; or his system, which at first met with immense success, would not have so speedily lost its ground.

We now come to the methodizers who teach from a model book of their own preparing. The book thus prepared, which has had the longest-lived celebrity, is the "*Orbis Pictus*" of Comenius. The object of Comenius was twofold—first, to supply a vast amount of information about *things*; second, to give a large vocabulary. He therefore tries to squeeze both the visible world and the Latif language between the covers of his book, and he proclaims it as a merit that no vocable in the book, except the little words like *and* and *but*, occurs a second time. To quote the words of an excellent writer on the subject of language-learning. Dr. James Clyde, "It is of great moment to see clearly what part of the vocabulary that is in which the vital organs of the language are placed." (1) But Comenius treats the body linguistic, as if its

(1) In the *Museum*.