

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is a want felt, on the part of those who desire to cultivate an acquaintance with the French Idiom, for a shorter, less complicated, and more comprehensive Method for learning French than has hitherto been available.

Although it will be universally conceded that much material help is afforded both the Teacher and the Student by the numerous Text-Books now in use; and while acknowledging that I have myself, in former years, derived much assistance from the Works of my Fellow-Linguists, yet, I confess that I have oftentimes felt the want, while engaged in Teaching, of a Short, Plain, Lucid, and in the meantime, Systematic Method for teaching French, not to Frenchmen, but to Englishmen, and that from an English Stand-point;—a Method that would be devoid of those Intricacies, unnecessary Rules, and lengthy Dissertations that are common to all Languages, and that render the Study of a Foreign Language tiresome in the extreme, especially to the Uninitiated. In fact I wanted a System for Teaching *French* by the Shortest and most Simple Method, and in as little a time as possible.

There exist, it is true, many able Treatises on Languages, by Eminent Scholars: every new work claiming to be an Improvement upon all others. Thus, we have an endless variety of Text-Books by different Authors, whose claims to a perfect Knowledge of the several Languages they undertake to expound, no one will deny. But while admitting that such Works have their intrinsic value, more or less, and may, to a certain extent, afford excellent advantages to a certain class of Learners, yet, as the French Language is One and Indivisible, and its principles are now fixed, I consider that every new Work contains nothing new. It is only a repetition of *The Same Story* in a different style, and simply presented in a different form. What is wanted at the present time is not a new Text-Book in Quarto, of some seven hundred or eight hundred pages (indeed we have enough of them), but a Plain, Easy and Concise Method, adapted to beginners; a Method Short, Simple, and to the Point, on L'Homond's and Lennie's Plan; one that will at once unfold the mysteries of the Language; bring the Pronunciation within Settled Rules; remove difficulties out of the way of the timid Learner; present a Rule in plain language, and enable thereby the Pupil to acquire the Language by the shortest and easiest way. That task devolves upon the Teacher who, if he has at his command the art of imparting Knowledge, should be able to accomplish it in a few Lessons, *Provided* the Pupil has the requisite aptitude, is willing to help himself, and yield implicit Faith and Confidence in the Teacher's Instructions.

I consider that, in a Modern Language, the Pronunciation and the Principles of that Language is all a Teacher should be expected to impart. Further than that the Teacher, if he has to deal with a Pupil, supposed to be already well versed in his own Language and Grammar, cannot be of any great help to the Learner. And surely it does not require years of labour and study to accomplish the task of securing a Knowledge of the Pronunciation and Fundamental Principles of a Language? All that is required is a few well