

cises 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 has. Has anyone my good letters? No one has your good letters. Has the tailor's son my good knives or my good thimbles? He has neither your good knives nor your good thimbles, but the ugly coats of the stranger's big boys."

How can we account for anyone supposing that trash of this kind would ever acquaint one with a language? The answer is simple enough. Ollendorff and his slavish imitators, like the numerous writers on Latin and Greek grammar, laboured under the mistaken idea that to know the principles of a language—*i. e.*, its grammar—was to know the language itself, and as the meaningless sentences above noticed illustrate principles of grammar just as well as though they had been the utterances of divine wisdom, it is not difficult to understand why they should have been invented by Ollendorff, and later copied by authors who can do nothing original—not even improve on such a sentence, as "Have you your ugly iron button?"*

But even should we change every one of Ollendorff's sentences, and introduce in their place sensible matter (and this has been done), we would still fail to learn a language by such a method, without spending at least half a life-time at the work.

French is a language which is taught in most of the English schools of America. In the English colleges of this country certainly a great deal of time is spent on the language. Yet how many of that large number who graduate yearly from these

*The following passage is from Mr. Du Maurier's famous "Trilby."—"It was Lambert, a youth with a singularly facetious face, who first woke the stillness with the following uncalled-for remarks in English, very badly pronounced :

" 'Av you seen my fahzere's ole shoes? ' "

" 'I av not seen your fahzere's ole shoes! ' "

"Then, after a pause,

" 'Av you seen my fahzere's ole 'at! ' "

" 'I have not seen your fahzere's ole 'at.' "

The meaning and humour of this passage will not be lost to those who have studied even a page of Ollendorff or his imitators.