

THE ROYAL ROAD TO LATIN

CHAP. I.

HOW LATIN IS TAUGHT IN SCHOOLS.

IT is often said that there is no easy method of learning a difficult thing. Authors of Latin Grammars are exceedingly fond of insisting upon this in the prefaces to their works, thinking, probably, that it serves as an excuse for the huge mass of bewildering material which they offer to the student. What the student requires to bear in mind, however, when entering upon any undertaking, such as learning a language, is not that *there is no easy method of learning a difficult thing*, but that *there are many difficult methods of learning an easy thing*.

Now, it may shock a few readers at first to hear that to learn Latin is an "easy thing;" nevertheless, after the "shock" shall have passed off, they may perhaps be prepared to listen to the reasons which I will bring forward as accountable for the many difficulties hitherto encountered in attempting to master the language of the Romans. After hearing these reasons, they will, I think, admit that, if learning Latin has in the past proved a difficult task, the fault lies not with the language itself, but with the awkward means employed in teaching it.

But first let us see what amount of time and labour is usually required in order to make one at all familiar with Latin.