

## A BOY'S BOOKS, THEN AND NOW—1818, 1881.\*—III.

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*(Continued from page 201.)*

If r should chance a word to wind up,  
 'Tis short in general, make your mind up.  
 But far, lar, nar, and ver and fur,  
 Par, compar, impar, dispar, cur,  
 As long must needs be cited here,  
 With words from Greek that end in er;  
 Though 'mong the Latins from this fate are  
 These two exempted, pater, mater.  
 Short in the final er we state 'em,  
 Namely auctoritate vatim.

Some awkwardnesses might attend the introduction of such rules as these in our schools; and the disciples of Lily pure and simple, or Ruddiman pure and simple, would probably pronounce them not bracing enough for educational purposes. It would be feared too, perhaps, that the impressions left by them might be evanescent; that "lightly come, lightly go," might have to be written of them hereafter. They would, however, certainly have the effect of exciting an abnormal interest in Latin Grammar. And the reason, we know, why so little profit often accrued to lads from their Latin in former days was, that no genuine personal interest in the subject was ever roused and established in their minds.

In the celebrated Port Royal Latin Grammar of France the rules are given in French verse. I cannot give specimens, which would certainly be curious, as my copy of this work is in English, translated, by Dr. Nugent, who has not attempted to reproduce the French rhymes. The volume, which circulates as the Grammar of

the "Messieurs de Port Royal," was the production of Claude Lancelot, a member of that society of learned recluses. Lancelot was a strong advocate for communicating to the young the facts of Latin grammar in the vernacular tongue; and in regard to his having reduced the rules to French verse he thus speaks: "Therefore still abiding by that principle of common sense, that youth should be taught the rules of Latin in their maternal language, the only one they are acquainted with. . . I have been induced further to think that while I assisted their understandings by rendering things clear and intelligible, at the same time it was incumbent upon me to fix their memories by throwing these rules into verse, to the end they may not have it in their power any longer to alter the words, being tied down to a certain number of syllables of which those verses are composed, and to the jingle of rhyme, which renders them at the same time more easy and agreeable." Lancelot had found that his pupils, after acquiring the substance of Latin grammar, were apt "to take the liberty of changing the arrangement of words, mistaking a masculine for a feminine or one preterite for another; and thus satisfied with repeating nearly the sense of their rules, they imagined themselves masters thereof upon a single reading." Lancelot modestly says of his Grammar that it is merely a