

taught Lessons, by some easy, simple process within easy reach, and that done, any intelligent Student of the French Language, should be able to dispense with the services of a Teacher after, at the most—say Ten or Twelve Lessons, and be prepared to prosecute his Studies of the French Language *by Himself*.

I have of late years discarded all kinds of Text-Books in teaching, confining my instructions *Purely and Simply* to an Oral System, with an occasional use of Fénelon's *Télémaque* as a Reading Book and Book of Translation, for more advanced Pupils.

I believe the Oral System to be superior to all others in teaching a Foreign Language (particularly French), from the settled convictions which I have acquired, that the Pronunciation of an Unknown Tongue cannot be restricted to Sounds which are foreign to that Language. Therefore, every attempt to represent, by whatever combination of letters it may be, the French U, the Four Nasal Sounds, besides Nine other Sounds or Articulations essentially French—must prove futile and abortive. There are no such Sounds in the English Tongue. Hence every Author runs into error, and falls off the track when he undertakes to reduce to English Sounds *Articulations* which, apparently, have no existence in that Language.

Consequently, it is obvious that the Oral System will recommend itself over all others, in this alone—that the Pronunciation of the French Language cannot be obtained, with any approximative degree of exactness, but *from a Teacher himself*.

With due appreciation for Otto's, Fasquelle's, Pujol's, etc., etc., I would not be for placing their Text-Books indiscriminately in the hands of every one who desires to learn French. To place, for instance, Otto's or Pujol's in the hands of a beginner, in expectation that he will, unhesitatingly, follow the Author through the mysterious and oftentimes unintelligible windings and twistings of an Unknown Tongue, is simply to lead him into a labyrinth out of which, ten chances to one, he will never emerge. For one that will perseveringly grope his way through, nine will give up the attempt after a few Lessons. This is what I have, by experience, found to be invariably the case, up to late years, with my own pupils; and my experience, as a Teacher, extends over a period of many years. Hundreds of my own pupils have failed to realize both mine and their own expectations, and, in disappointing me, have likewise disappointed themselves. Where did the fault lay? . . . In following a Plan which required the Learner to tread his way blindly, at the outset, through a heap of Rules and Grammatical Difficulties of which, oftentimes, he can make neither Head nor Tail (if I may be allowed the expression); instead of carefully concealing the same from his view at first, till he had been made acquainted with what every one knows to be the Fundamental Basis of any Language; I mean the Pronunciation, and the Rudiments or Elementary Principles of that Language.

Although I have, of late years, entirely ceased to use Text-Books in Teaching, as I considered them to be at variance with my own views as to the only available method by which I believe French can be taught successfully to Englishmen, yet, it must not be inferred that I condemn their use altogether. They may do well enough with that class of Learners who can afford the necessary time to study them up, and who are willing to take their chance to obtain the Pronunciation by themselves. But, on the other hand, they will remain for a still larger Class what they have proved to be in hundreds of cases—Dead Letters.

The present series, which might more properly be called An Introduction to the

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