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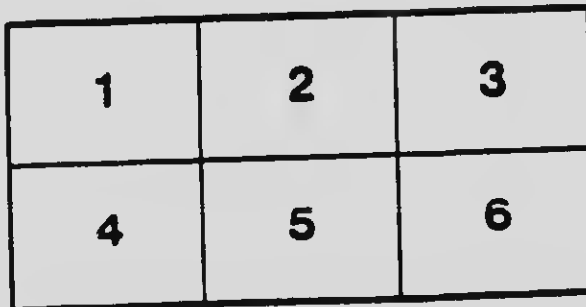
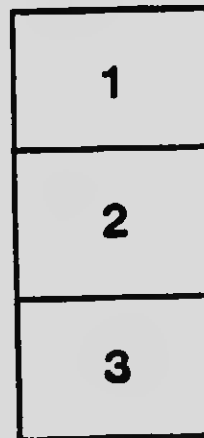
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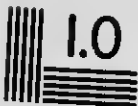
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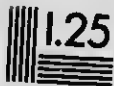
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## THE ROYAL ROAD TO FRENCH.

IS it not strange that in the last hundred years—which has witnessed such tremendous strides in nearly all the arts and sciences—so little has been done towards facilitating the acquirement of languages? It is strange, especially when we consider the many attempts that have been made in that direction. Books by the score have been written on the subject. Latin, Greek, French and German grammars have been published, until now there are almost as many different text-books on teaching languages—new methods so called—as there are students of language. Nearly every college can boast of a professor who is the author of a Greek or Latin grammar. And yet what is the excuse for all these works? They are one and all servile copies of the first grammar written two thousand years ago by a Greek named Dionysius Thrax. One author will present the Latin verb first; another the *noun* first and the *verb* last. A third, having found by experiment that if a *noun* and *adjective* are placed together, they may be more easily mastered than by taking each separately, imagines he has made a discovery which calls for a new work on Latin grammar. Through the long rows of Greek and Latin grammars, which are to be found at any large second-hand book store, will be sufficient to convince one that the most important differences in all these works are to be found on their covers.

And what I have just said in regard to the works on Latin



and Greek applies, with some modification, to the works which have been coming from the press for the last fifty or sixty years on French, German, Spanish, etc. Since Ollendorff first published his "NEW METHOD OF LEARNING TO READ, WRITE AND SPEAK A LANGUAGE IN SIX MONTHS," books upon books have been published on exactly the same plan, which might all be labelled *Ollendorff*. Some authors have even gone so far as to steal his sentences; and we wonder greatly at this, for Ollendorff's exercises 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 my 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, labored 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 were 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?" \*

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\* The following passage is from Mr. DuMaurier's famous "Trilby."  
—"It was Lambert, a youth with a singularly facetious face, who

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 institutions of learning have even a fair grasp of French? If we except those students who have lived for some time among French people, and thus learned to speak the language, the number is indeed small.

But it is not necessary to press further this matter. Many writers within the last ten years have demonstrated the absurdity of attempting to learn a language from precepts. Nay, more, they have not only torn to pieces the absurd system noticed above, but have introduced new methods so called, now generally known as "The Natural Method," "The Object Method," "The Conversational Method," or by the names of the authors who claim to have invented them. These new

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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 av not seen your fahzere's ole 'at ! ' "

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

methods, though differing in minor details, are one and the same system of teaching a language, and the correct name for that system—if indeed it can be called a system—is “The Natural Method.”

But what is this “Natural Method?”

The reader has probably heard of it at least, if he has not studied it; for of late it has been much advertised, not only by its many authors (for many claim it as their own discovery), but by a host of illiterate men and women who, finding themselves unable to make a living at anything else, have suddenly developed into “professors of languages.”

All that is required to be a successful teacher of French by the “Natural Method” is to be able to speak the language fluently, and the less one knows about English, the more capable and wonderful a teacher is he considered to be. Here is one profession in which ignorance counts for much, and in which learning is at a discount. The ambitious student never seems at all puzzled to understand why a method, which is to acquaint him so easily with French, should have failed to acquaint his *teacher* with English.

But let us glance for a moment at the method itself. The professor points to a chair and says, “*C'est la chaise* ;” to the door, and says, “*C'est la porte*.” He then puts the question, “*Qu'est-ce que c'est ?*” and the pupil replies, if he can, “*C'est la chaise*,” or “*C'est la porte*.” The professor opens the door and says, “*J'ouvre la porte*.” Then to the question, “*Qu'est-ce que je fais ?*” the pupil replies, “*Vous ouvrez la porte*,” and so on in this way, using no English at all, the meanings of words are conveyed to the student through *objects* and *actions*. We see, then, why the method has been called the “Object Method.” It is certainly more or less in this way that a child

learns its mother tongue, and that, indeed, is the boast that is made for the method by its authors and teachers.

But how does a child learn its mother tongue ?

Did the reader ever ask himself how long it took him to learn his mother tongue ? He did not learn it in six months. In six years he learned it very imperfectly ; and, perhaps even now he may not know it any too well. And yet he followed faithfully all along the "Natural Method." He devoted, not *two* hours a week for six months to the method, but *ten* hours every day of his life for years. Look at the child in your own home. From early morning till late at night he hears nothing but English spoken around him. Such sounds as "Don't do that," "Come here, dear," "I'll whip you now," he perhaps hears fifty times a day. It is not to be wondered at that at last he becomes able, not only to understand these sounds, but to utter them himself. He hears also many other phrases of a different kind, such as "a strange notion," "a terrible accident," "it's only human nature," etc., but these sounds fall without effect upon his little ears, for though he may repeat many of them, he does so after the manner of a parrot—without the least conception of what the phrases mean. These words represent *abstract ideas*. They are not the names of *objects* which the child sees and hears about him ; they do not indicate the relation of these objects to one another ; they are not the language of the child, but of the matured mind.

What is the language of the child ? The names of common objects (*man, room, door, etc.*), the names of some of the patent qualities of these objects (*big, small, red*), and the names of the common *actions* of these objects (*cries, falls, swings*). No one thinks of saying to a child, "What is your idea of justice ?" or "Is consistency a virtue ?" although many such

phrases as these children sometimes hear and learn, but which they cannot understand.

Language is then of two kinds—(1) the language which the child learns and speaks, and which even horses, dogs, etc., learn more or less to understand, and (2) the abstract language used by adults, whether educated or not, and, of course, still more by literary men and women.

If then we are asked by what method does a child learn his mother tongue, we reply that a child *as a child*, learns but one portion of his mother tongue, and that portion is drilled and drummed into him from morning till night for weeks and months and years. Were a child allowed to hear the human voice but two or three hours a week, it is probable he would know little of his mother tongue at the age of seven or eight.

Does it not seem strange, therefore, that an imperfect imitation of this *natural method*—which, like all of nature's methods, is slow and steady, accomplishing its work only in time—should be thought so efficacious a means of teaching a foreign tongue to the adult man or woman already in possession of one or more languages. It is useless to argue that it is the *natural method*. Limit Nature to *time* and she can accomplish nothing. All the inventions of the age are nothing, if they are not evidences of man's impatience with Nature, and of his unwillingness to follow her slow footsteps.

A child can only learn by the "Object Method." We have not only to teach him a language, we have to teach him to think. He might hear the word "high" a hundred times and attach no meaning to this sound until you have shown him that the picture on the wall which he asks for is *too high* for you to reach. Perhaps even this might fail to convey to him the meaning of the word, and some other meaning for

weeks would be given to it—until some day the true meaning of the word would come to him.

But, because a child has no other way of learning the meaning of sounds, is this any reason why a teacher, in order to illustrate the meaning of the word *haut*, should run about jumping up on chairs and tables, leaving his pupils in doubt as to whether *haut* means "big," "high" or "crazy"? But if the *object method* is a bungling way of teaching an adult the meaning of words like *haut*, *long*, etc., it altogether fails when it comes to deal with abstract terms. A professor might jump about all day, making signs and faces, and yet fail to convey to his class the meaning of words like *amitié*, *grossier*, *bonté*, and all those abstract terms which, though excluded from the language of the child, are used by the educated and uneducated alike, in almost every sentence.

It need hardly be said that the "Object Method" (or "Natural Method") does not acquaint one with the scientific principles of a language. Grammar is something which the exponents of that method have a great contempt for. They refer us to the child again, and say, "A child knows nothing of grammar, and yet he speaks without hesitation."

It is a mistake to suppose a French child knows nothing of grammar. He may not know any grammatical rules, but he knows when to use *un*, and when to use *une*, when *le*, and when *la*, and many other points of grammar, which no student is able to learn by simply hearing French spoken a few hours a week by his teacher. And, in regard to pronunciation, the *natural method*, pure and simple, does not do for the adult what it does for the child. Ten years' study of French by the *natural method* will leave the student pronouncing the French *t*, *d*, *n*, etc., exactly as he pronounces these letters in

English. And why? Simply because instead of using means to combat *nature*, he has allowed her to have her way. In five minutes he might have been shown the position of the tongue in the articulation of these consonants, and with a little practice, he could have pronounced them perfectly.

If it were possible to acquaint a child with more of the principles of a language, while he is learning to speak that language, does any one suppose his progress would not be much more rapid than it is? If it were possible for his young mind to grasp those principles which have to be taught to him later on at school, would not an immense amount of time be saved? And yet we are told that to the adult, who can grasp and understand these principles, we must not teach grammar until he has first learned the language *naturally* like the child—that is, imperfectly, without method and without guide.

There is nothing in grammar to impede one's progress with a language, but everything (when properly taught) to help one in understanding a language. To attempt to learn a language without being guided by any of its principles, is like attempting to build a house without a plan.

Indeed, the Roman language-teachers—the men who taught Greek to the Roman youth—were not long in discovering this fact. In the days of Cæsar, Greek was spoken and studied in Rome far more than French is spoken and studied in London to-day; and it was to facilitate the study of the Greek language that the first grammar was written. Dionysius Thrax was not a philosopher, but a language-teacher. The grammar which he wrote was found to be a wonderful help to the Roman youths, and all who pursued the study of Greek; so much so, that similar works soon followed on Latin grammar—and these grammars have been little improved on to the present day.

Is it not strange, then, that any set of men should now be found advocating a return to a method which the Roman youths and teachers found imperfect and inefficacious, and should despise the very helps which the Romans hailed with delight? It is strange, and yet the fact is easily explained.

When Dionysius wrote his work on Greek grammar, he never intended that Greek was to be studied through it alone. It was meant to contain simply the guiding principles to aid the student in the study of the Greek *language*. And the same may be said of the grammars which followed his. Modern teachers seem to have mistaken the meaning and intention of the ancient grammarians, and instead of following up the teaching of a language by a reference to its principles, they have confined themselves to the teaching of these *principles*, using only the language as a means of illustrating them. When a student is taken through long lists of sentences like, *Avez-vous vu le vieux chapeau de mon père? Non, je n'ai pas vu le vieux chapeau de votre père, etc.*, it is principles of French grammar he is studying, and not the French language.

It will be understood then how natural is the recent movement against the study of grammar, and how easy it is to imagine that grammar is a hindrance rather than a help to one in the study of a language. To study a language without its grammar is certainly a great deal better than to study grammar without the language to which it belongs; and so, while the "Object Method" cannot be regarded as suitable for any but Kindergarten classes, it must be acknowledged to be much superior to the absurd system which for so long a time has held a place in our schools. The books used in the schools of France for the study of English follow the old system, and students are made to decline English nouns, naming



their cases as in Latin. English persons may smile at such an absurdity provided they have not been guilty of similar folly in their attempts to master Latin and French.

The way in which my "Analytical Latin Method" has been received by students and teachers and the gratifying results which have invariably followed the study of Latin by this method is a proof, I think, that the principles of a language to be understood and appreciated must be *uncovered* and *seen* in the language itself. Since the publication of that work I have not found a single student following the method who did not express both appreciation of the beauty and logic of the Latin language, as well as surprise at the short time in which the language could be learned. I do not hesitate, therefore, to adopt this same Analytical Method in teaching the scientific principles of French.

A method for French, however, would not meet the needs of the present day, if it did not, above all else, enable one to speak the language.

And now, what constitutes the difference between *speaking* and *writing* a language? It is this: in writing we have time to think out and compose the constructions we use; when we speak we make use of constructions that are *ready-made*. When you say "Good morning! It's a nice day!" it must be evident that you do not weave this sentence out of the several ideas—*good, day, morning, nice, etc*. The construction was made for you long before you were born, and handed down to you by your parents, and you now use it as a *unified expression*, no more thinking of its component parts than you think of the letters M-A-N when you utter the word *man*.

Now speaking a language is little more than uttering these ready-made expressions. If we say it is the intellectual act of

connecting together two or more of these stereotyped expressions, we shall have given a fair definition of what ordinary conversation is.

Listen but for a few minutes to any English person and you will hear expressions like these: "*It's-just-a-question-whether,*" "*I'd-like-to-know-why,*" "*He's-here,*" "*He-did-it,*" etc. Now, the intellectual element in conversation consists not in uttering any one of these expressions, but in connecting two or more of them together. And hence it is that we never see a person pause and scratch his head in the middle of one of these ready-made constructions. Never do we hear—" *It's just—a question—whether—he—did it,*" though we might hear every day, "*It's-just-a-question-whether—ah—whether—ah—he-did-it.*" The mind is exercised in connecting together the two *ideas*, but not in forging together either of the constructions which express those ideas. The two constructions are ready-made, and the mind selects them with as little effort as though they were single words.

But where are these constructions stored? How are they preserved since they have so little in common with the intellect?

They are preserved in exactly the same way as any combinations of movements, such as the movements in walking, dancing, playing the piano, juggling, etc., are remembered. The motor nerves and the muscles of the body are capable of being impressed in such a manner that movements which they have once set up, they reproduce with greater ease a second time, and with each reproduction, the *habit* becomes more fixed and stable, until at last the movements are performed automatically (or with the slightest provocation) and unconsciously. It is for this reason that we often recite

verses without knowing what we are saying; it is for this reason that we can use long combinations of words grammatically constructed, without the slightest effort; in short, it is for this reason that we can speak a language; and fluency of speech varies in proportion as the motor nerves have or have not been firmly impressed with and accustomed to these combinations of movements.\*

N. w., there is but one way to train the motor nerves to these combinations of movements, and that is by practice—by frequent repetitions of the same combinations. Before the student may utter with fluency and ease such expressions as *Est-ce que vous avez froid aux pieds? Ça me fait de la peine*, etc., he will require to repeat them several times. But with such practice, fluency and ease will certainly result.†

Here, then, is the second principle which we must follow if we wish to master a language—repetition of its fixed constructions.

But there is a third principle, not less important than the two preceding. We have seen how the grammar of a language must be learned, and we have seen how we can speak a language, provided we have the vocabulary. And now, how can we acquire that vocabulary? How are we to remember all these new sounds for objects, actions and qualities? Can they too be handed over to the motor nerves? No; they must be grasped by the intellect.

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\* I have gone more fully into this subject in the introductory pamphlet on my "Analytical Latin Method." See chapter on "Motor Memory."

† It is probable that the lingual nerves are more easily impressed by fixed combinations of movements than the motor nerves of any other part of the body.

The acquiring of a vocabulary has always been a serious task for the student of languages. What student has not wished that there might be such a thing as sugar-coated language-pills, to be taken in doses of ten or twenty every night before retiring, and which would leave his mind enriched with as many new words in the morning? If we had but some such invention as that, this nation would soon be a nation of linguists.

As far as I know, words cannot be got into the mind by any such process as that just suggested. I have, however, another method to offer the student, which will prove little more of a tax on the memory, and which certainly will be less hard on the stomach.

What are words?

When a new invention is brought out, and the inventor desires to give it a name, does he make a leap in the air, give utterance to some strange sound unheard of before, and adopt this sound as the name of his invention? Of course not; because such a name would convey no meaning to anyone. If no appropriate name exists to describe the invention, a new name is manufactured by means of one or more words already existing, and we say a new word has been *coined*. Now this process of making words out of words, which we see going on to-day in English and French, has been going on since the very birth of these languages. French did not always possess the vocabulary it has to-day. And yet it has *created* no new words. New words have grown, have evolved naturally, or have been consciously manufactured out of old ones, but no new *elements* have been created. Such words as *brassard* (*armor for the arm*), *brassée* (*armful*), *brasse* (*fathom*), *embrasser* (*to embrace*), *embrassade* (*embracement*), etc., are all from the one word *bras*, and would not exist had the parent *bras* not first existed.

I remember some foolish young people, who, dissatisfied with both French and English, because too many persons could understand these languages, resolved to invent a language of their own. They created a few words, but did not get much further, for they soon found out they could not remember their own *creations*. And why was this? Because the sounds they adopted as the names of things, actions and qualities were barren lifeless sounds without meaning. Had nations attempted to make new languages on this principle, they would have failed just as certainly.

What is the meaning of the word *embrasser*? To infold in the *bras*. And what does *brasse* mean? The length of two *bras*—i.e., a fathom. And *brassard*? A piece of armor for the *bras*. So the word *branche* means the *bras* or arm of a tree; and from this word we make *branchu* ("branchy") *branchage*, and *brancard* (a barrow made of two branches).\*

What a beautiful thing is language! And yet how simple! Out of a single form what a family of words! How full of life and meaning are these words, and how easily remembered! But curiosity will lead the reader to another question. Where did these root-words like *bras* come from? Did French create them? No, they were transmitted to the Gauls by the Romans. French is simply a development of popular Latin. In fact, it is difficult to say at what period in the history of its development it should cease to be called *Latin* and termed *French*. Out of about 4,000 Latin words, the every-day vocabulary of the Roman soldiers and the common people of the Roman Empire, have grown and evolved, by the process

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\* Not only are the meanings of the words thus learned easily remembered, but so also are their pronunciation and orthography.

already described, nearly 8,000 French words. That is to say, 4,000 Latin words have grown to 12,000 in French.

But it is not necessary to know these 4,000 Latin words in order to appreciate fully the 12,000 words which form the basis of popular French. And now let us see why.

We must not forget that Latin, at the time of the decline of the Roman Empire, was a fully developed language, just as French is to-day, and that the process of forming new words from words had been going on for several centuries in Latin. Thus from the word *pedem* (*foot*), the Romans derived *pedica* (*foot-snare*), which gave in turn *impedire* (*to ensnare or fetter*); and these derivatives go to make up some of the 4,000 words before mentioned. But as we have little to learn from derivatives, we may pass them over, and instead of referring the French *piège* (*trap*) first to *pedica* (which is only its old form), we may refer it directly to *pedem*. And so if we thus treat French and Latin as one language—and there is no break but *time* between them—our 4,000 Latin roots will dwindle down to about five or six hundred. It may be important to the philologist to know that certain words are entirely of French growth, and that others existed before the birth of the French language, but for ordinary purposes it matters little whether such a word as *piège* is the direct offspring of *pied*, or whether the Latin *pedem* first yielded *pedica*; for *piège* is *pedica* mispronounced.\*

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\* We can go still further: a few Low-Latin roots are of German origin, and in many cases these German roots have allied forms in Latin; in such cases we can disregard the German altogether, and take the allied Latin form. Thus, *palle* (*root*), is probably of German origin, but the German root, *pat*, is the same word as the Sanscrit *pada*, the Greek *podon*, the Latin *pedem*, and French *pied*.

But these 500 or 600 roots which form the basis of Latin have given us more than the 4,000 French words, which have now grown to 12,000. For the savants of the 16th century, finding the French language too poor to express their ideas, rushed headlong into Latin, and taking from that language hundreds upon hundreds of words, used them as French, with scarcely any change in their form and meaning. And since the 16th century classical Latin words have been flowing into French more or less steadily, and at the present day the stream flows on with redoubled energy. Thus it is, then, that while *pedem* has given such forms as *piège*, *piéton*, *empêcher*, etc., it is equally the parent of such words as *pédale*, *bipède*, *expédition*, etc., pure Latin words taken into French, but whose meanings are not seen in the Latin originals (*pedalis*, *expeditio*), but in the root *pedem*, from which these originals grew. We see then that about 500 or 600 roots have given over 20,000 French words—or almost the whole French language.\*

Now, few students will care for such a vocabulary as this; and many of these words are seldom used. If we desired to know them all it would not be a very difficult matter to do so, but we will be satisfied with about a third of that number—and that is more than most writers use in all their works.

Shall we then follow any system in learning these words?

We know that the methods in use at the present day follow no system—and we also know the result. Who would think

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\* French, also, has a number of words of German origin, and some learned words of Greek origin. Many of the Latin words which have come into French since the sixteenth century are used in literature only, but journalism has done much to popularize a large number of these words, and they seem to be replacing many of the older words even in the conversation of the uneducated.

of trying to master Euclid's Geometry by selecting propositions here and there at random from his system? And yet, have we not seen that words are related to each other by a perfect system? This being so, they cannot be properly understood or even remembered to any great number when learned as isolated sounds.

On the other hand, if we take them in connected groups—in families, if you will—a dozen words can be learned with almost the same effort as one. And 500 families of 12 give a vocabulary of 6,000 words.

When a student is made to memorize *épicer* (*grocer*) before *épice* (*spice*), or *brasserie* (*brewery*), before *brasser* (*to stir*), or *panier* (*basket*), before *pain* (*bread*), he is surely being made to learn a language backwards—nay, he is being made to study a lot of meaningless sounds, void of all interest. On the other hand, to learn a language, not as a child is obliged to learn it, but as the nation made it and learned it, is not a labor, but an exercise, interesting, delightful, and above all beneficial.

No doubt the nursery can teach us many interesting facts about language and how it should be learned, but language is not made by children; and he is a narrow-minded philosopher indeed, who would shut himself up in a nursery, watch the persistent efforts of young children to speak, and from these observations alone found a system by which to teach the adult mind a foreign tongue. A whole generation cannot teach us what a language is, and the history of a nation leaves still much untold.

Much stress is laid by the exponents of the Natural Method on what they call *thinking in a foreign language*. I do not wish to deny that to a certain extent they enable a student



to discard his mother tongue. As far as a few familiar objects are concerned, one can hear the foreign words, and think of the objects they represent, without first thinking of their English names. And the same thing may be said of a small number of verbs and adjectives. But true thinking in a language is more than this.

How many English persons can feel the force and meaning of words like *amitié*, *effronterie*, *grossièreté*, *embellissement*, *agrandissement*, etc.? They may imagine they are thinking in French when they use these words for their conceptions of the English *friendship*, *effrontery*, *coarseness*, *embellishment*, *aggrandizement*, etc., but until they can from the idea *belle* lead themselves in thought to *embellissement*, from the idea *grand* to *agrandissement*, from *front* to *effronterie*, from *ami* to *amitié*, etc., they will have to lean on English for their abstract conceptions, and do their philosophizing in their own language.

It hardly needs be pointed out that the Analytical method will lead the student at once to think in French. *Brasse* is a word which when learned with *bras*, has far more force than the meaningless English sound *fathom*; and who is there who will not better appreciate the English *embrace* when he learns that it means to take in the *bras*?

What a dead thing is English compared with this language, whose words reveal so beautifully their living elements?

It would be an exaggeration to say that the student, after studying our lessons, would find himself thinking in French when attempting to speak English; but we can safely say at least, that he will, on completing his course, have a scientific knowledge of French, a grander conception of what language is, and a truer appreciation of his mother tongue.

SOME FEATURES  
OF THE  
De Brisay French Method.



THIS method has nothing in common with the many superficial conversational methods which have lately appeared, except that its exercises are conversational rather than literary in character, the study of French literature being reserved for the latter part of the course. The mode of expression in these exercises is simple and natural, instead of being in that strained and affected drawing-room style of French which goes to make up so much of the so-called "*natural*" systems, and which sounds so out of place when coming from foreigners. In a drawing-room it is permissible to indulge in semi-literary speech, but this mode of speech is entirely unsuitable for ordinary every-day life.

*Vocabulary.*—The course embraces a vocabulary of about 7,000 words, which are presented in such a manner that a dozen words are almost as readily learned as one. Words learned in this way are rarely forgotten, because they are learned, not as mere sounds, but as synthetic expressions whose elements are easily recognized. It would be very difficult to read a language if each word were recognized only by its form (i.e., length, shape, etc.), and for this reason the alphabet was invented. When a child *spells* a word he ana-

lyzes it and arrives at its proper sound, so that in the case of the Spanish language, whose orthography is almost phonetic, a child can learn to read in a few months. Similarly, etymology enables us to *spell* a word for its meaning, so that by this means we can learn a vocabulary of 7,000 French words in a few months. Moreover, when once we have learned how words are formed we can form new words for ourselves, which is perfectly legitimate, provided the words are formed in accordance with established laws.

*The Vocabulary Learned in Sentences.*—In spite of the fact that our course comprises so many words, the student is not called upon to memorize a single list. All the words are learned in sentences, which is the only true method of learning them. The sentences are so arranged as to form an interesting and connected discourse, so that the student never suspects that he is studying etymology.

*The Conjugation of Verbs.*—Our system, while paying great attention to the verbs—since the verb is the soul of speech, and without which it is impossible to say anything—does not tolerate rote-learning, partly because such work is tedious, but chiefly because it is of no practical advantage whatever to be able to conjugate a verb by rote. By the etymological method the learning of the verb is simplified tenfold. The student after learning the root-verb knows its derivatives also, which follow the same mode of conjugation as the root. Hence in the *oir* conj. there are scarcely a dozen verbs to be learned. Our table or scheme showing how the different tenses are formed is easily understood and serves as a key for the conjugation of any verb. When we consider that there

are in the active voice alone of a single French verb no less than 90 different forms, and that each of these forms, if learned at hap-hazard by the natural method, would have to be heard at least 10 times, we will readily see the absurdity of expecting a student to become acquainted with French by simply hearing it spoken a few hours a week, unassisted by any system. All students of the so-called natural methods are most deficient in their verbs.

*Grammar.*—Our system dispenses entirely with abstract rules, it being found that they are of little or no advantage in speaking or writing a language. We do not, however, neglect the grammar, which is taught analytically, i.e., from the language itself—the reasons historical and logical being given for the principles noted. In this way French grammar, instead of being a mass of arbitrary rules, is made logical, consistent, and full of interest. We use grammar as a means of teaching French: many systems use French as a means of teaching grammar.

*Grammar Simplified.*—Within the past few months many of the horrors of French grammar have been removed by reforms introduced by the Minister of Public Instruction in France, these reforms having been first suggested by a commission appointed by the Council of Superior Instruction. There need no longer be any difficulty in the use of the *past participles*, the *bête noire* of Frenchmen as well as of all foreign students of French. The plural of compound nouns may now be formed regularly, instead of according to an infinite number of rules as formerly. Many other important grammatical reforms have been recently introduced, and such are indicated

in the new edition of our French Method. There is little that is really difficult in French grammar as modified by these recent reforms. Students will save themselves an immense amount of needless work by avoiding out-of-date grammars filled with obsolete rules.

*Pronunciation.*—We have given much attention to the subject of pronunciation in our course. The final consonants when silent are written in italics. But what is of more importance the natural pronunciation of phrases—especially of those containing a number of small words—is given in full. The reason why English persons so often fail to understand spoken French is that they have never learned to pronounce its phrases properly. Thus *pas de mal* (*not of ill*) is pronounced *pád mal* (*not pá de mal*), *tout ce café* is pronounced *tous café* (*not tou ce café*), etc. To indicate the pronunciation we do not resort to new symbols—for to learn new symbols is like learning another language—but use the characters and marks that are already in use in French, that is, we use them consistently and phonetically. The values of these characters are carefully given and explained in our “Key to French Sounds,” a special work on French pronunciation which is included in the course.

*French Accent.*—There is but one way for an *adult* foreigner to acquire the French accent, and that is by learning how each letter is produced. Thus, for the French *t, d, l, n*, the tongue must come against the upper teeth, so that its tip can be seen between the two rows. For the English *t, d, n* or *l* the tongue strikes the palate. This subject is fully dealt with in our “Key to French Sounds.”

*The Phonograph.*—By means of the Phonograph, the student may become very familiar with all the conversational exercises in our course. It offers an excellent means of training the ear to the French sounds, and is especially valuable to students taking our courses by correspondence. See announcement on another page.

The above are some of the features of our French course, which comprises in reality: a course in French conversation, a course in French grammar, a course in French etymology, a course in French pronunciation, and a course in French literature. These courses are all combined in one for the simple reason that they are inseparable. Grammar cannot be learned apart from the language to which it belongs, nor can that language be properly learned without a study of its grammar. Etymology is a dry and useless study except when it is made the means of learning words. Nor can the literature of a language be appreciated by one who has not first learned its colloquial expressions.\*

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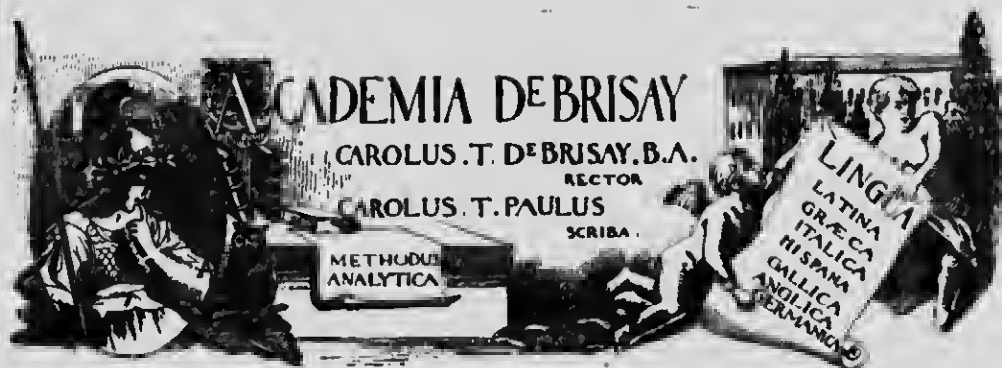
\* To enable every student to form his own opinion of the system, we sell the First Part for 25 cents. Part I. of our "Analytical Latin Method" may be obtained for the same price. The "KEY TO FRENCH SOUNDS," 35 cents.

## AN EXPLANATION.

WE are perfectly familiar with the old maxim: "There is no royal road to learning," and we also know how deeply most persons are impressed with the truth contained therein. There is scarcely a maxim, however, that contains the whole truth, for a maxim lives as much by the artistic form of its expression as by its intrinsic truth. Maxims are usually exaggerations, and the above is no exception to the rule. It is self-evident that we cannot grow wise reclining on a couch. Very little can be accomplished without some exertion; but it is equally true that method and system can help us in acquiring knowledge in the same degree that it can help us in the performance of other work. To learn even the first proposition of Euclid is a task beyond the power of most students, until they discover the proper method of dealing with the proposition, when its mastery becomes a mere matter of a few minutes. By the substitution of reason for pure memory, a mountain of labor is reduced to a pleasing and simple exercise. Is not this a "royal road"?

Similarly, it is a gigantic task to learn some thousands of new words, if these words must be memorized in the ordinary way; but with method and system, it becomes in many cases easier to learn five or ten words than to learn one. Here again is a "royal road." There is probably no royal road for the pioneer. The originator of a system or invention has a difficult road to travel and much effort is required on his part to overcome innumerable difficulties, but once the system or invention is perfected, the road is smooth and clear to those who wish to avail themselves of the fruits of the inventor's labor. It required ten years of hard work to produce the Analytical course, yet in ten weeks many students may acquire the knowledge which this course is intended to impart.

At all events, the difficulties of the French language have been so far simplified and the road to French made so easy and agreeable by the De Brisay Analytical Method, that even Emperors and Kings could hardly ask for an easier or more agreeable way, and if this is not "The Royal Road," it is a road fit for royalty.



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Usually the first few lessons in French are the most difficult and discouraging, and for this reason great pains have been taken in this little book to make the beginning as easy as possible, so that persons without the least ability for languages may be able to obtain a foundation in French. *A fool can learn French by the aid of this book.*

All students who propose taking our regular course should first devote a little time to this book, and thus lay a solid foundation for a more serious study of the language.

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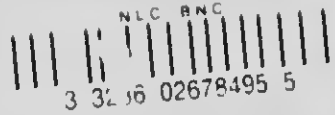
The game of "Hable" (pronounced *aA-dlaA*), or "conversation", is played with cards similar to those used in the well known game of "Authors", on which "Hable" is based. The game of "Authors" is intended to impart a certain knowledge of literary people incidentally, while affording amusement. It occurred to Prof. De Brisay, while watching this game, that a somewhat similar game would be an excellent and very practical means of facilitating the acquirement of an elementary knowledge of foreign languages and more particularly of Spanish, which is phonetically written and contains no difficult sounds to pronounce. He therefore devised the game of "Hable" which is a Spanish word meaning *speech or conversation*.

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