

**FRENCH
ACCIDENCE AND
MINOR SYNTAX**

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French accidence and minor syntax by Léon Delbos

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LÉON DELBOS

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MINOR SYNTAX**

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AND

MINOR SYNTAX.

BY

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PREFACE.

Most French Grammars at present in use in the schools of England are—with the exception of Eugène's Comparative French Grammar—books of Exercises which do not afford the pupil any systematic knowledge of the grammatical rules of the language.

This book, which can be used with any French course, aims at giving a clear outline of the Accidence and Syntax of the French language, and contains, in a small compass, all that it is necessary to know to acquire the theoretical knowledge which must always precede the practical one.

That this work may prove useful is the most earnest wish of the author.

LONDON 1878.

L. D.

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INTRODUCTION.

FRENCH ALPHABET.

1. — The French alphabet is composed of twenty five letters.

A,	B,	C,	D,	E,	F,	G,	H,	I,
ah	bay	say	day	a	eff	*	ash	e
J,	K,	L,	M,	N,	O,	P,	Q,	R,
*	kah	ell	em	en	o	pay	*	air
S,	T,	U,	V,	X,	Y,	Z.		
ess	tay	*	vay	eeks	eegrek	zed.		

- * It is impossible to give the true pronunciation of these letters. G is pronounced somewhat like zhay and J, like zhee. Q and U have no equivalent in English. The French U is like the German ü.

ACCENTS.

2. — Three accents are used in French viz: the **grave**, the **acute** and the **circumflex**.
3. — The **acute** accent (´) is placed over e and generally gives to that letter a close sound.
4. — The **grave** accent, (`) is placed over the vowels a, e, u. When placed over a or u it does not modify the sound of these letters, and when placed over e it gives to that letter an open sound.
5. — The **circumflex** accent (^) is placed over a, e, i, o, u and gives to those letters a long sound.
6. — The **cedilla** (¸) is a little sign placed under the c; it gives to that letter the sound of s.
7. — The **diaeresis** (¨) is placed over a vowel and shows that it must not be joined, in the pronunciation, with the preceding vowel.

8. — The hyphen (-) joins two words together and shows that they must be pronounced as if they were one.
9. — The apostrophe (') is put in the place of a vowel, which has been cut off for the sake of euphony.

GENDERS AND NUMBERS.

10. — There are in French **two genders** viz: the **masculine**, and the **feminine**. Consequently inanimate objects are either masculine or feminine.
11. — There are also **two numbers**, the **singular** and the **plural**.

THE ARTICLE.

12. — There are three articles: the **DEFINITE**, the **INDEFINITE** and the **PARTITIVE**.

DEFINITE ARTICLE.

SINGULAR.

	<i>Masculine.</i>	<i>Feminine.</i>	
N.	Le or l'	La or l'	<i>The.</i>
G.	Du or de l'	De la or de l'	<i>of the.</i>
D.	Au or à l'	A la or à l'	<i>to the</i>
A.	Le or l'	La or l'	<i>the.</i>

PLURAL.

Masculine & Feminine.

N.	Les	} <i>the.</i>		
G.	Des		} <i>of the.</i>	
D.	Aux			} <i>to the.</i>
A.	Les			

l', de l', à l', and l', are used before nouns of both genders, beginning with a silent h or a vowel.

INDEFINITE ARTICLE:

	<i>Masculine.</i>	<i>Feminine.</i>	
N.	Un	Une	a or an.
G.	D'un	D'une	of a or of an.
D.	A un	A une	to a or to an.
A.	Un	Une	a or an.

PARTITIVE ARTICLE.

Singular.

<i>Mas.</i>	Du	some or any	De l'	before a vowel or
<i>Fem.</i>	De la	some or any	h	mute.

Plural.

Mas. and *Fem.* Des some or any.

THE SUBSTANTIVE.

FORMATION OF THE PLURAL.

13. — The plural of French nouns is generally formed by adding an *s* to the singular.
14. — Nouns ending in the singular in *s*, *x* or *z* do not change.
15. — Nouns ending in *au*, *eu* take *x* in the plural.
16. — Nouns in *ou* take *s* in the plural, except.
- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| bijou — <i>jewel</i> | genou — <i>knee</i> | joujou — <i>plaything</i> |
| caillou — <i>pebble</i> | hibou — <i>owl</i> | pou — <i>louse</i> |
| chou — <i>cabbage</i> | | |

which take *x* instead of *s*.

17. — Nouns ending in *al* change *al* into *aux* except:

bal — <i>a ball</i>	nopal — <i>a nopal.</i>
carnaval — <i>carnival</i>	chacal — <i>a jackal</i>
régal — <i>a treat.</i>	serval — <i>a tiger-cat.</i>

which take *s* in the plural.

18. — Nouns ending in *ail* form their plural in *s* except:

bail — <i>a lease</i>	émail — <i>enamel</i>	travail — <i>work.</i>
corail — <i>coral</i>	soupirail — <i>air-hole</i>	

which change *ail* into *aux*.

36. — The feminine of blanc is blanche
 that of franc is franche
 that of grec is grecque
 that of public is publique
 that of Turc is turque
 and that of sec is sèche
- white
frank
greek
public
turk
dry.
37. — The following adjectives have two forms for the masculine, and form their feminine as follows.

Masculine	Fem.
<i>Before a consonant.</i>	<i>Before a vowel or h mute.</i>
Beau	Bel
Fou	fol
Mou	mol
Nouveau	nouvel
Vieux	vieil
	Belle folle molle nouvelle vieille
	fine foolish soft new old.

38. — Adjectives formed from present participles, and ending in eur change eur into euse.
39. — Adjectives ending in teur change teur into trice.
40. — Adjectives ending in érieur follow the general rule.

PLURAL OF ADJECTIVES.

41. — The plural of adjectives is generally formed, like that of nouns, by adding an s to the singular. This rule is without exception for the feminine.
42. — Adjectives ending in s or x do not change in the plural.
43. — Adjectives ending in eau take an x in the plural masculine.
44. — Adjectives ending in al change al into aux for the plural masculine.
45. — If an adjective qualifies several nouns of the masculine gender, or of different genders, it is