

**NEW METHOD OF FRENCH
CONVERSATION. A SIMPLE, CLEAR, AND
MOST RAPID SYSTEM OF ACQUIRING THE
LANGUAGE IN TWO MONTHS BY
SENTENCES PRINTED AS THEY ARE SPOKEN
AND EXPLAINED BY REMARKS AND RULES**

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New Method of French Conversation. A Simple, Clear, and Most Rapid System of Acquiring the Language in Two Months by Sentences Printed as They Are Spoken and Explained by Remarks and Rules by Charles M. Marchand

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CHAPTER I.

§ I. — FRENCH ALPHABET.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
ah	bay	say	day	a	eff	zjay
H	I	J	K	L	M	N
ash	ee	zjee	kah	ell	emm	onn
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
o	pay	kü	air	ess	tay	ü ⁽¹⁾
V	W	X	Y	Z		
vay	vay-doooble	eeks	ee greck	zedd		

§ II. — SIMPLE VOWELS.

A	E	I	O	U	Y
ah	ay	ee	o	ü ⁽¹⁾	ee

§ III. — COMPOUND VOWELS.

AU or EAU ,	EU or ŒU ,	OU ,	AI or AY ,	EI or EY
o	ur	oo	ay	ay

§ IV. — NASAL SOUNDS.

AM	AN	EAN	EM	EN	UN	UM
sound : AUNG ⁽²⁾					sound : UNG ⁽²⁾	
IN	IM	AIN	EIN	YN	ON	OM
sound : ANG ⁽²⁾					sound : ONG ⁽²⁾	

§ V. — DIPHTHONGS.

IA	IE	IO	IU	OI	IEU	IOU	IAN
yah	ya	yo	yü ⁽¹⁾	waw	ee-ur	ee-ou	ee-aung ⁽²⁾
IEN	OIN	UIN	OUEN				
ee-ang ⁽²⁾	o-ang ⁽²⁾	ü ⁽¹⁾ -ang ⁽²⁾	oo-aung ⁽²⁾				

(1) U sounds nearly like eu in pleurisy.

(2) Do not sound the final g.

§ VI. — FRENCH ACCENTS.

1. <i>L'accent grave.</i>	(è)	Grave accent.
2. <i>L'accent aigu.</i>	(é)	Acute accent.
3. <i>L'acc. circumflexe.</i>	(ê, â, ô, û)	Circumflex accent.
4. <i>Le tréma.</i>	(ë, î, ü)	Dieresis.
5. <i>La cédille.</i>	(ç)	Cedilla.
6. <i>Le trait d'union.</i>	(-)	Hyphen.
7. <i>L'apostrophe.</i>	(l'm's't'd')	Apostrophe.

1. The grave accent is used : 1^o To distinguish one part of speech from another (the spelling being the same) as : *la*, the; *là*, there; *ou*, or; *où*, where; *a*, has; *à*, at or to. 2^o To give the letter *e* the sound of *ea* in *pleasure* as : *frère*, brother.

2. The acute accent placed only upon *e* gives it the sound of *ay* in *day* : *été*, summer. All past participles of the 1st conjugation end in *é*, as : *aimé*, liked; *vénéré*, venerated. All English nouns ending in *ty*, in French end in *té* : *charité*, charity.

3. The circumflex accent is placed over the vowels in many words in which one letter has been suppressed : *tête*, head, spelt formerly *teste*; *âge*, age, formerly *aage*; also in the 1st and 2^d person plural of the definite past and in the 3^d person singular of the Imperfect of the Subjunctive : *Nous_êames*, *vous_eâtes*, *qu'il_eût*. This accent lengthens the sound.

4. The tréma is placed over the vowels which are to be pronounced separately : *haïr*, to hate (pronounce *aheer*); without the tréma, it would be a compound vowel pronounced *air*.

5. The cedilla is placed under the *c* before *a*, *o*, *u* when it should be sounded like *s*. Without a cedilla, *c* is pronounced like *k* before the above vowels.

6. The hyphen is employed to join together 1st The parts of a compound noun : *porte-plume*, penholder; *arc-en-ciel*, rainbow. 2^d The word *très-*, very, and the following word : *très-bien*, very well. 3^d Verbs followed by pronouns placed after them, when they belong to them : *donnez-moi*, give me; *dites-le-lui*, tell it to him. 4th The interrogative verb 3^d person singular takes an euphonic *t* between two hyphens before *il*, he; *elle*, she, if that verb does not end in *t* : *A-t-il?* has he?; *parle-t-elle?* does she speak? 5th The

numbers, from 17 to 100: *vingt-neuf*, 29; *quatre-vingt-dix-sept*, 97.

7. The apostrophe takes the place of the suppressed *a*, *e* of the article *le*, *la*, or pronoun *me*, *me*; *te*, thee; *se*, himself; also in *s'il*, if he, and in *de*, of, before a vowel: *L'arbre*, the tree, for *le arbre*; *l'envie*, the envy, instead of *la envie*.

§ VII. — PUNCTUATION.

<i>Point.</i>	(.)	Period, full stop.
<i>Deux points.</i>	(:)	Colon.
<i>Point et Virgule.</i>	(;)	Semicolon.
<i>Virgule.</i>	(,)	Comma.
<i>Point interrogatif.</i>	(?)	Interrogation point.
<i>Point d'exclamation.</i>	(!)	Exclamation point.
<i>Guillemets.</i>	(« »)	Quotation marks.
<i>Parenthèses.</i>	()	Parenthesis.
<i>Astérisque.</i>	(*)	Asterisk.
<i>Points de suspension.</i>	(...)	Suspension.
<i>Tiret.</i>	(—)	Dash.

§ VIII. — MOST IMPORTANT RULES FOR PRONUNCIATION.

I have seen by experience that the pronunciation is acquired more rapidly by immediately studying the lessons, than by learning rules first. I advise the use of the following ones for reference only, when the learner does not understand how to pronounce a word.

C is hard like *k* before *a*, *o*, *u* as in *café*, coffee; *copie*, copy; *curé*, vicar. It is soft like *s* before the above vowels when a cedilla is placed under it, and also before *e*, *i*, *forçat*, convict; *nous traçons*, we trace; *déçu*, deceived; *ceci* this.

Final *c* is sounded like *k*: *avec*, with; *choc*, shock; *arc*, bow; *bec*, beak, etc.. Except: *blanc*, white; *clerc*, clerk; *estomac*, stomach; *tabac*, tobacco; *tronc*, trunk of a tree; *banc*, bench; *franc*, franc.

B, D. Final *b* and *d* are not sounded except in proper nouns: *Jacob*, *David*, and in the words *sud*, south; *club*, club.

F. Final *F* is sounded: *chef*, chief; *veuf*, widower; *bref*, brief; *naïf*, artless. It is silent in *nerf*, nerve;

bœufs (¹), oxen; *œufs* (¹), eggs; *chef-d'œuvre*, master-piece; *clef*, key.

G is hard before *a, o, u*: *galerie*, gallery; *gorge*, throat; *guitare*, guitar. It is soft before *e* and *i*: *geler*, to freeze; *gilet*, vest. **GN** is liquid and must be learned from a French native teacher: *agneau*, lamb.

H is never sounded in French. When called aspirated, it only prevents the connexion with the last letter of the preceding word, and also the elision of *e* or *a* before it: *le hameau*, the hamlet; *la hauteur*, height; *les halles*, market; *en haut*, up stairs. **CH** is pronounced like *sh*: *archevêque*, archbishop; *chercher*, to look for.

L preceded by *i* in a word, and final *l* preceded by *i* and another vowel are not sounded as in the alphabet, but their pronunciation must be heard from a French teacher. These *l*'s are called liquid and their sound is somewhat like *yr*. *Versailles*, Versailles; *Marseille*, Marseilles; *grenouille*, frog; *fille*, daughter; *feuille*, leaf; *orgueil*, pride; Except *ville*, city; *village*, village; *mille*, thousand; *tranquille*, quiet; *distiller*, to distil; *imbécillité*, imbecility.

M is not sounded in *automne*, autumn; *condamner*, to condemn; nor in nasal sounds; but it is always sounded when it is doubled.

P is not pronounced in *compter*, to count; *sept*, seven; *baptême*, baptism; *dompter*, to subdue; *exempter*, to exempt; *sculpter*, to sculpter; *temps*, weather; *prompt*, prompt and their derivatives.

Q. Final *q* is pronounced: *coq*, cock; *cinq*, five.

R. Final *R* is pronounced: *cuir*, leather; *or*, gold; *peur*, fear; *voir*, to see; *jour*, day. Except in words ending in *er*: *dernier*, last; *aimer*, to like; but in *cuiller*, spoon; *fer*, iron; *hiver*, winter; *cher*, dear; *hier*, yesterday; *amer*, bitter; *mer*, sea; *ver*, worm; *fier*, proud; *cancer*, cancer; *ether*, ether; the *R* is sounded.

S between two vowels is pronounced like *z*: *raison*,

(¹) *f* is sounded in the singular: *bœuf*, ox; *œuf*, egg.

reason; *voisin*, neighbour; except in *désuétude*, disuse; *entresol*, entresol; *préséance*, precedence; *soubresaut*, start; *vraisemblable*, likely.

T is sounded like *s* in words ending in *tial*, *tion*, *lieux*, *tier* (in verbs): *initial*, initial; *ambition*, ambition; *prétentieux*, pretentious; *initier*, to initiate and in *ineptie*, folly; *minutie*, trifle; *prophétie*, prophecy; *démocratie*, democracy; *aristocratie*, aristocracy.

TH is pronounced like *t* alone, *h* being never sounded.

U following *q* is not sounded, but forms with it the sound of *h*: *quand*, when; *qui*, who.

X. When a word begins with *ex*, *x* is pronounced like *g*: before a vowel; *examen*, *exemple*; in other cases it is sounded like *ks*: *Saxe*, Saxony.

Y. It has the sound of two *i*'s: *royal* sounds as *roi-ial*.

Z. Final *z* is mute: *nez*, nose; *allez*, go; except in *gaz*, gas.

§ IX. — HOW TO READ FRENCH.

1. General rule. *Every word is accented in speaking and reading on the last sounded vowel.*

This rule is very important because it gives the proper French accent. The foreigners who constantly use it will not be mistaken, though in several cases French people give the stress of the voice in a different way, then it is for emphasis.

2. Generally the last consonant of words is not pronounced (see above, C. R.) except when the following word begins with a vowel. Joining the last consonant of a word to the following vowel is called *liaison*. I express it by this sign to help and accustom the pupil to notice it, which is very important for the pure French pronunciation.

3. Final *S* is sounded, in the *liaison*, like *z*: *les_ arbres*, the trees; *vos_ enfants*, your children.

4. Do not sound *e*, *es* at the end of polysyllables, nor *ent* in the third person plural of verbs.

5. When monosyllables end with an *e* mute, it often happens that the consonant alone is sounded and joined to the preceding word. Those abbreviations are made in rapid conversation, and cause foreign