

**INTRODUCTION TO THE
TEACHING OF LIVING
LANGUAGES WITHOUT
GRAMMAR OR DICTIONARY**

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Introduction to the Teaching of Living Languages Without Grammar or Dictionary by L. Sauveur

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BY
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PREFACE.

THIS pamphlet is designed to accompany the book entitled, "Causeries avec mes élèves." Here is the preface of the work.

"The book that I am to-day publishing has been often solicited of me by my pupils. It is dedicated to them as a *souvenir* of our pleasant intercourse. They were before my eyes while I was writing, and I have heard them answering and questioning me. Nor is it exactly a book: in that is its character and its value. It is nothing but a simple conversation vividly put upon paper, and which has almost retained its gestures. My pupils will see me in reading it, as I have seen them in composing it. I converse there only with this little company, charming and select, curious to know every thing in the world of ideas, of things, and of literature. The persons who will employ it for the study of French, will learn there

a rich and varied language; at the same time they will cultivate their minds and elevate their thoughts.

“If I am not under a delusion, my work answers a real need, and will one day become the manual of all the schools. Foreigners who are studying French wish to speak. This book, and no other, leads to this result. The professors of Harvard, and those of Yale, have appreciated the system which it reproduces, and have acknowledged it superior to every other. This was already the judgment of Montaigne three centuries ago.

“The book is new and original: like my lessons, it teaches the language without grammar or dictionary; like them also, it speaks French from the first hour, and does not pronounce one word of English.

“It is intended for my pupils and for all those who teach and study my language; it is addressed none the less to persons eager for knowledge; they will find there a whole world of things and ideas. The analytical table with which it closes, presents a striking *tableau* of it.

“In spite of appearances, there is in the book a perfect order and a never-broken chain. I also beg my readers to commence at the first page; I am confident that they will stop only at the end.

"As the book is new, I accompany it with a pamphlet translated into English under my supervision. It explains how it is to be employed in classes.

"If this double work contribute to elevate the teaching of the languages, to free it from its deplorable routine, I shall be sufficiently rewarded for my efforts, and happy in having accomplished a useful work."¹

This preface is sufficient, nor was even this perhaps necessary, to teach how the book is to be used, as far as regards the nine or ten American ladies who have attended my classes, and who are teaching French as I do myself. But for the sake of those persons unacquainted with the system of the School of Modern Languages of Boston, it seems useful to give a few explanations. Another reason which leads me to write this pamphlet is, that it furnishes me with the means of addressing myself to the public in English. In my book, English could have no place, since it has none in my lessons. And yet I wished to speak to the Committees of schools, as also to the persons who are ignorant of the language and who desire to study it. I hope above all, by this pamphlet, to

¹ Professor Heness's book, "The Teaching of German without Grammar or Dictionary," will be published before Oct. 1.

aid my brother teachers in applying with success a method which will insure to them as much pleasure as the old routine has inspired them with distaste.

It would be easy for me to write a large book on the methods, and to make it a work of erudition. I refrain from it, to consider only my readers' interests. My pages will be both simple and practical.

INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING WITHOUT GRAMMAR OR DICTIONARY.

I.

THE FIRST LESSON.

THE most beautiful lesson that I can imagine of any kind, and assuredly the most interesting that there can be, is the first lesson given to a class learning a language without grammar. There is no orator, were it even Demosthenes, who can hold a public more attentive, more eagerly expectant of every word, than the professor who is giving this first lesson. Not one of his movements is lost. His word, his eye, his gesture, his whole person speaks; and he is in possession of the undivided mind of those who are before him. During two or three hours, neither they nor he have had a single distraction, even for a second. I have never seen, either at the foot of the pulpit of Père Lacordaire or of the tribune of M. Thiers, listeners as attentive and absorbed as mine have been every time that I have commenced a course.

Is it astonishing, think you? and is there a work more interesting than this, or a greater? Learned professors have sometimes done me the honor to say, "How is it possible that a man of letters can find pleasure in teaching