THE ITALIAN PRINCIPIA – PART I. A FIRST ITALIAN COURSE, CONTAINING A GRAMMAR, DELECTUS, AND EXERCISE BOOK WITH VOCABULARIES. ON THE PLAN OF DR. WILLIAM SMITH'S "PRINCIPIA LATINA"

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LUIGI RICCI

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A

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ON THE PLAN OF

DR. WILLIAM SMITH'S "PRINCIPIA LATINA"

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PREFACE.

THE following Work has been drawn up by Signor Ricci, Professor of Italian in the City of London College, on the same plan as the Principia Latina and the French and German Principia.

The main object of the book is to enable a beginner to acquire an accurate knowledge of the chief grammatical forms, to learn their usage by constructing simple sentences as soon as he commences the study of the language, and to accumulate gradually a stock of words useful in conversation as well as in reading. The grammatical forms are printed in conspicuous type and at full length, as no sound knowledge of the language can be acquired unless the pupil becomes thoroughly familiar with these forms. But at the same time it is important that the learner should be exercised from the first in the construction of Sentences, so as to test by practical application the grammatical forms. The present Work thus contains Grammar, Delectus, and Exercise-book, with Vocabularies, and consequently presents in one book all that the beginner will require for some time in his study of the language.

The Grammar has been made as complete as possible, so far as the forms are concerned, in order to obviate the necessity of the use of any other Grammar. Great pains have been taken to simplify the Rules, which often consist

of only a few words, when the same subjects occupy several pages in other Italian Grammars. Special care has been taken in the arrangement and classification of the Irregular Verbs. Many of the so-called Irregular Verbs, which show the same slight irregularities, are given in the chapters on Peculiarities of Verbs.

As most persons have learnt some Latin before beginning Italian, it has been thought advisable to point out the affinities between the two languages. In the Vocabularies the etymology of *all* Italian words is given, not only of those derived from the Latin, but also of those which come from the Teutonic and other languages. In the case of Teutonic derivations the modern German forms, where they exist, are generally given, as more practically useful than the older forms, from which the Italian words actually come. In drawing up these lists the authorities of Diez, Littré, and Brachet have been chiefly followed.

The writer has consulted most of the books used in teaching Italian both in this country and abroad, and desires to express his obligations to the Grammars of Volpe and Sauer, as well as to the ordinary Grammars used in Italian Schools.

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A FIRST

ITALIAN COURSE.

I.—The Alphabet. Parts of Speech.

1. *Alphabet.*—The Italian alphabet consists of 22 letters:

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, L, M, N, O, P,
a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, l, m, n, o, p,
Q, R, S, T, U, V, Z.
q, r, s, t, u, v, z.

The English letters K, W, X, Y are only used in foreign words.

The names of the Italian letters are given on page 3. Of these letters, *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u* are Vowels (*vocáli*), the remaining letters being consonants (*consonánti*).

2. *Accents.*—There is only one written accent (`) in Italian, and it is used

(a) To mark a contraction; as, verità, *truth*; carità, *charity*; written instead of caritáte, veritáte, showing thus the suppression of a syllable, and preserving the accent of the word in its original place.

(b) To give a different signification to the same word, as la, *the*, là, *there*; da, *from*, dà, *gives*; e, *and*, è, *is*.

(c) On the third person singular of the Past Definite and on the first and third persons singular of the Future: as, egli amò, *he loved*; io amerò, *I shall love*; egli amerà, *he will love*.

Note 1.—The acute accent (´) is never written in Italian, but in this work it is put for the sake of beginners upon every Italian word, except in the Exercises, in order to indicate the pronunciation; as, un ángelo, *an angel*; un amíco, *a friend*.

2.—Some writers use the circumflex accent (^) to mark the contraction of two i's: as *principî* for *principii*, etc.

3. *Apostrophe.*—The Apostrophe shows that a vowel has been dropped, as l' amíco, *the friend*, instead of lo amíco; l' ánima, *the soul*, instead of la ánima.

4. *Genders.*—There are two Genders: Masculine (*masculíno*) and Feminine (*femminino*).

5. *Numbers.*—There are two Numbers: Singular (*singoláre*) and Plural (*plurále*).

6. *Parts of Speech.*—There are Nine Parts of Speech in the Italian language:

1. Article,	*articolo.*	5. Verb,	*vérbo.*
2. Substantive, or Noun,	*sostantívo, or nóme.*	6. Adverb,	*avvérbio.*
		7. Preposition,	*preposizióne.*
3. Adjective,	*aggettivo.*	8. Conjunction,	*congiunzióne.*
4. Pronoun,	*pronóme.*	9. Interjection,	*interiezióne.*

II.—PRONUNCIATION.

Every letter must be pronounced in Italian, as there are neither diphthongs nor mutes.

VOWELS.

a is pronounced like *a* in *father*: as, pádre, *father*.

e	(close)	„	*a* in *made*:	méno, *less*.
	(open)	„	*a* in *and*:	érba, *grass*.
i		„	*e* in *to be*:	díre, *to say*.
o	(close)	„	*o* in *society*:	sótto, *under*.
	(open)	„	*o* in *loss*:	dótto, *learned*.
u		„	*oo* in *booty*:	múto, *dumb*.

CONSONANTS.

The Consonants not given below have the same sound as in English.

c has the sound of { *k* before *a*, *o*, *u*, *h*: as cáro, *dear*; che, *what*. / *ch* in *cherry* before *e*, *i*: as céra, *wax*; città, *town*.

g has the sound of { *g* in *garden* before *a*, *o*, *u*, *h*; as góla, *throat*; ghiánda, *acorn*. / *g* in *general* before *e*, *i*: as geláre, *to freeze*; giórno, *day*.

gl when before *i* sounds like *ll* in *billiards*: as égli, *he*; except in negligere (*to neglect*) and its derivatives; when it sounds like *gl* in *negligent*. In all other cases *gl* has the English sound.

gn sounds like *ni* in *union*: as bágno, *bath*; rágno, *spider*.

h is never pronounced in Italian, and is used

(a) to harden the sound of the letters c and g when these precede the vowel *e* or *i*.

(b) to give different meanings to the same word: as anno, *year*; hanno (*they*) *have*.

j sounds like *y* in *to yield* and is used only to form the plural of a few words in *io*: as esémpio, *example*, esémpj or esémpi.

sc has the sound of { *sc* in *scatter* before *a*, *o*, *u*, *h*: as, scácco, *chess*. / *sh* in *shame* before *e*, *i*: as, scimmia, *monkey*.