

**PROGRESSIVE GERMAN READER. I. - FIRST  
YEAR CONTAINING AN INTRODUCTION  
TO THE GERMAN ORDER OF WORDS WITH  
COPIOUS EXAMPLES EXTRACTS FROM  
GERMAN AUTHORS IN PROSE AND  
POETRY NOTES AND VOCABULARIES**

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Progressive German Reader. I. - First Year Containing an Introduction to the German Order of Words with Copious Examples Extracts from German Authors in Prose and Poetry Notes and Vocabularies by G. Eugène Fasnacht

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**MACMILLAN'S**  
**PROGRESSIVE GERMAN READER**  
**FIRST YEAR.**

# PROGRESSIVE GERMAN READER

I.—FIRST YEAR

CONTAINING

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GERMAN ORDER OF WORDS  
WITH COPIOUS EXAMPLES  
EXTRACTS FROM GERMAN AUTHORS IN PROSE AND POETRY  
NOTES AND VOCABULARIES

BY

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MACMILLAN AND CO.  
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## PREFACE.

IN compiling this ELEMENTARY GERMAN READER, it has been my aim to lead the beginner on by gradual advances to a mastery of the chief structural features of the language.

Used side by side with an elementary Class-book of Accidence, these readings will, it is hoped, enable the young student to steer a safe middle course between the two extremes of method—grammar before the language, and the language before grammar.<sup>1</sup>

The safest method, after all, is the one which enables the learner at a comparatively early stage to pursue his studies unassisted; and the gratifying consciousness of this independence he will not enjoy in the study of a language until he has obtained a clear insight into the syntactical system peculiar to it.

For a beginner in *German* the difficulty of entering at once on a regular course of reading lies not so much in the inflectional system as in the perplexing order of the words. The ever-shifting *chassés-croisés* between subject, verb, object, and complement, and, worse still, the wheel-within-wheel mechanism of a fully developed German period, are so many stumbling-blocks which, be the style of the extract ever so simple, beset his path from the very first step.<sup>2</sup>

This difficulty, which cannot be shirked with impunity, but must be dealt with—the earlier the better—I have endeavoured to meet in the Introduction (pp. i. to xxiv.), by taking my starting point from the simple sentence in its simplest form; and

<sup>1</sup> "Il faut apprendre la *grammaire* par la *langue*, et non la *langue* par la *grammaire*" is all very well in the nursery or Kindergarten; but in unpractised hands it reduces itself quite as often as not to the following *absurdum*—"We must reach the means through the end, and not the end through the means."

<sup>2</sup> Hüte dich daß du das erste Wort nicht verwechselst daß, wenn du beim letzten angekommen bist.—BISHOP TEGNER.

when once this smooth threshold is safely crossed, the student is led on from stepping-stone to stepping-stone, each presenting a new salient feature of German construction. This arrangement will serve to map the fundamental outlines of German construction clearly and lastingly in his mind; so that, by the time he has reached the last page of the Introduction, he may safely be trusted to move with a firm intellectual step through the most intricate periods; and his ultimate success becomes a mere matter of time and practice. This the general plan.

As regards the filling in of this framework, I found at the outset, even where my plan admitted only of simple and detached sentences, that the rich mine of German proverbial lore relieved me of the dire necessity of using meaningless made-up phrases.

It goes almost without saying that *Poetry*, without which no selection can be considered complete, is introduced at a very early stage; not only is it, as a rule, much simpler in construction than prose, but it also offers the inestimable advantage of being more easily committed to memory; and thus, doing duty in the education of the ear, it becomes an essential factor in the mastery of a language.

I make no apology for laying under contribution not a few extracts which have done good service in other selections; to exclude recognised masterpieces of German literature on this plea alone seemed to me altogether unjustifiable. But in fairness to those schools in which my selections from Uhland's *Ballads* and from Grimm's *Household Tales* have been introduced, I have given fewer extracts from these authors than would otherwise have been the case.

That Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Heine, and others, can be but sparingly represented in an essentially *elementary* Reader, need hardly be said. In the Second Course, which is in active preparation, more advanced students will be afforded ample opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the *Classics*.

The Vocabulary, which, I trust, will be found copious enough to meet every reasonable want of those for whom the book is intended, is founded on Whitney's excellent German Dictionary.



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## INTRODUCTION.

*N.B.*—A German-English Vocabulary of all the words (in the order of the text) contained in the *Introduction* will be found, pp. 83-108.

### THE ORDER OF WORDS.<sup>1</sup>

#### I.—SIMPLE SENTENCES.

##### A.—THE VERB IN A SIMPLE TENSE.

###### 1. Direct Order of Words.

a.	(1) SUBJECT.	(2) VERB.	
	Der Mensch	denkt ;	
	Man	proposes ;	
	Gott	lenkt.	
	God	disposes.	

Friede ernährt ; Unfriede verzehrt.—Der Schein trügt.  
Der Gerechte besteht ; der Gottlose vergeht.

b.	(1) SUBJECT.	(2) VERB.	(3) COMPLEMENT: ADJECTIVE.
	Stille Wasser	find	tief.
	Still waters	are (run)	deep.

Aller Anfang ist schwer.—Der gerade Weg ist der beste.  
Eintracht macht stark.—Zren ist menschlich.  
Der Geist ist willig ; das Fleisch ist schwach.

<sup>1</sup> In this short *résumé* only the broad features of the order of words are dealt with. All exceptional cases have purposely been eliminated, so as not to bewilder the beginner at the very first steps through the maze of German construction.