

**THE ART OF  
QUESTIONING AND  
ANSWERING IN FRENCH**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649063376

The Art of Questioning and Answering in French by A. C. G. Jobert

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**A. C. G. JOBERT**

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IN  
FRENCH.

BY A. C. G. JOBERT,

AUTHOR OF THE "RECHERCHES SUR LES OSSEMENTS FOSSILES DU PUY DE RÔME,"  
Late Editor of the "*Journal de Géologie*" of Paris, &c.

LONDON:  
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.,  
STATIONERS' HALL COURT.

MDCCLXIII.

[Price, Four Shillings Bound.]

Whatever system of tuition may be adopted, this Book must be looked upon as an addition to the Exercises, and it does not require the system to be changed.

Full directions are given for the Teacher and Pupils, in different parts of the Book; and the former is particularly requested to read the **PROLEGOMENA**.

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TO MY BEST FRIEND,

MY BELOVED WIFE,

ANNE JULIA.

IN inscribing to you this little Book, I am only fulfilling a duty. How happy I am, after eight years of a fortunate union, to thank you in the language I was unable to articulate before I loved you, and which I have learnt through your sweet lessons; and how proud I feel now in subscribing myself,

Your grateful Pupil

And faithful Husband,

THE AUTHOR.





## PREFACE.

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I ALMOST flatter myself that, in writing this Book, I have added a new chapter to the French Grammar; for, although all Grammars teach how to conjugate verbs interrogatively, and although many Manuals, Dialogues, and Phrase-books have been published for the study of the French Language, I do not know of any, where the attempt has been made to reduce to a regular system, the forms of answering questions, which custom has established, and to show that these forms are governed by fixed Rules. However, I leave to grammarians of future days to decide if there is any thing new and worth noticing in the Work; this imports little to its object, which is simply to offer to the English student a most effectual method of learning *how to speak* the French Language; in this I am in hopes I have succeeded; for, during eight years of close application to the teaching of my native tongue, I have had the good fortune to impart it to a great number of pupils, who speak it fluently, and whose testimony I can call in support of my assumption.

The idea of writing Exercises and Rules, for questioning and answering in French, did not occur to my mind, at once, in an abstract form, or as a preconceived system; it came to me by dint of teaching. At first I engaged my pupils to write questions and answers in English, which I translated into French: in the intervals of two lessons they studied my translation, and, when we next met, I read to them the questions in *French*, and they returned to me the answers in *French*. In following this method, I remarked, after a time, that the answers were comprehended in a small number of forms, which reproduced themselves constantly with the

same characters ; this was not to be mistaken, and it led me to perceive that questioning and answering in French, was an art governed by a small number of Rules, which could be easily fixed, and had no more anomalies than any other part of the Syntax. Hence, instead of translating fragments of conversation written by my pupils in English, I took a Dictionary, and in each lesson I selected a few verbs of general use, and dictated interrogative sentences, introducing these verbs and illustrating their different acceptations ; thus I went through the whole Dictionary, omitting the verbs rarely used ; and these *Questions* are the basis of the present Book.

The six fundamental Rules on which the whole system rests, are founded on this peculiarity of the French Language—that, as it has no auxiliary verbs, like *I do, I did, I should, I would, &c.*, when we answer a question emphatically, we generally repeat the verb employed in the question ; and when it has a regimen, direct or indirect, it is represented in the answer by a pronoun, which varies according to the nature of the regimen. The system is natural ; but even had it been artificial, it would be effective for the object of learning the language.

There must necessarily be some mistakes and omissions in this first edition ; and I should feel greatly indebted to those teachers who would be kind enough to send me their remarks and criticisms, in order that I may improve the book in a subsequent edition, if it should be acceptable to the English public.

LEEDS, JULY 15, 1848.