

**AN EASY FIRST FRENCH
READER: WITH EXERCISES
BASED ON THE TEXT**

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An Easy First French Reader: With Exercises Based on the Text by L. C. Syms

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BY

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FIRST FRENCH READER

W. P. 1

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PREFACE

THOUGH there is no lack of tales and short stories written purposely for French children, yet very few of them would suit the young pupils of our schools who begin the study of the French language. At the age of fourteen or thereabouts, boys and girls are no longer interested in fairy-tales, and can already find pleasure in the reading of texts of greater literary value. These, however, in their original form, are so replete with idiomatic phrases, peculiar structural forms, delicate shades of thought and expression, and irregular verbs, that they would surely prove too difficult for beginners of average talent.

To obviate this difficulty, great care has been taken, first, in selecting the subject-matter of this little volume, and, secondly, in adapting it to the capacity of those for whom it is intended. While preserving all the characteristic charm of the original narratives by Octave Feuillet, É. Laboulaye, Hégésippe Moreau, Félix Gras and others, the editor has not scrupled to take the liberty of cutting out condensing, and altering such parts and to such an extent as his purpose required.

Thus the text will be found easy and progressive, proceeding from the very simple to the more difficult by a regular gradation. Idiomatic phrases and peculiar constructions, translated and explained in footnotes, will be met with only in such limited numbers, and at such

intervals as will enable the pupils to grasp them without too great an effort.

To every page, or page and a half, of the text (the average length of one lesson) corresponds a short English exercise to be translated into French. Its object is not only to serve as a test of the pupils' knowledge, and as a drill in the practical use of all difficult phrases, constructions, and verbs, but also to insure the preparation by the pupils of their reading lesson at home. Easy enough for whoever will carefully prepare the corresponding French text, this exercise would prove, on the contrary, to be a stumbling-block for the idle and the negligent.

In conformity with the decree of February 1901, hyphens have been omitted between verbs and subject pronouns, as well as in numerals and compound personal pronouns. Some other changes sanctioned by present usage have been indicated in the notes.

Pupils will find every possible help in the footnotes, the vocabularies, and the tables of regular and irregular verbs. Let them bear in mind that the translation of a language, even into their own, is a difficult task; that, besides securing accuracy and correctness, they should always be attentive to the beauties of language and composition, and endeavor to vie with the text in elegance. Then only will the reading of even such an elementary book as this be attended with the many benefits that can be expected from it.

L. C. S.

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AN EASY FIRST FRENCH READER

MUSTAPHA, LE CHIEN DE BERGER

IL y avait une fois un chien de berger qu'on appelait Mustapha.

Mustapha n'était pas beau; mais les bons chiens de berger n'ont pas besoin d'être beaux.

5 Mustapha n'a pas toujours été bon; mais vraiment ce n'était pas sa faute. Quand il commença à garder les brebis, le berger de la ferme était un méchant homme. Ce berger, qui n'avait jamais caressé Mustapha, était souvent ivre, et alors il battait sans pitié le pauvre
10 animal.

Un jour que ce mauvais berger avait oublié de donner à manger à Mustapha, le chien quitta le troupeau et retourna à la ferme. Le soir, une brebis avait disparu. Grande fut la colère du fermier.

15 « C'est la faute de ce méchant chien, dit le berger; le fainéant a refusé de travailler. »

Le fermier remarqua que le berger était encore ivre, et dit :

20 « Je pense que c'est le berger qui est mauvais, et pas le chien. Cherchez de l'ouvrage ailleurs; je n'ai plus besoin de vous. »

1 qu'on appelait *M.*, that was called *M.* The indefinite pronoun *on* may often be omitted in translation; in this case, the active clause is rendered by a passive one. — 19 et pas le chien, an elliptical clause which stands for *et que ce n'est pas le chien.*