

A BOOK OF THE FRENCH VERBS

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A. BOLMAR

**A BOOK OF THE
FRENCH VERBS**

A
BOOK
OF THE
FRENCH VERBS,
WHICH
THE MODEL VERBS,
AND
SEVERAL OF THE MOST DIFFICULT
ARE
CONJUGATED AFFIRMATIVELY, NEGATIVELY, INTERROGATIVELY, AND
NEGATIVELY AND INTERROGATIVELY.
CONTAINING ALSO,
NUMEROUS NOTES AND DIRECTIONS
ON THE DIFFERENT CONJUGATIONS, NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY OTHER
BOOK PUBLISHED FOR THE USE OF ENGLISH SCHOLARS
TO WHICH IS ADDED,
A COMPLETE LIST OF ALL THE IRREGULAR VERBS
BY A. BOLMAR.

A NEW EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA:
BLANCHARD AND LEA:
1853.

OF VERBS.

Of Verbs.

1 A verb is a word which expresses what is affirmed of persons, animals, things, etc.

2. Or, as it is more commonly defined, a verb is a word, or that part of speech which signifies to do, to be, or to suffer.

3. When we say *John is polite*, we affirm that the quality *polite*, belongs to *John*. When we say *John is not polite*, we also affirm that the quality *polite*, does not belong to *John*—in both sentences, the word *is*, which expresses that affirmation, is a verb.

Of the different sorts of French Verbs.

4. There are in French seven sorts of verbs:—the auxiliary verb—the active verb—the neuter verb—the passive verb—the reflected verb—the reciprocal verb—and the unipersonal, or impersonal verb.

Of Auxiliary Verbs.

5. A verb is *auxiliary* when it serves to conjugate some of the tenses of other verbs.

6. In French there are but two auxiliary verbs, *Avoir* to have, and *Etre* to be.

7. *Avoir*, is sometimes an auxiliary verb, and sometimes an irregular active verb of the third conjugation.

8. *Avoir* to have, is an auxiliary verb whenever it is used to conjugate the compound tenses of another verb, as: *vous avez parlé* you have spoken, &c. When auxiliary, it is always followed by the participle past of some other verb.

9. *Avoir* to have, is an active verb, whenever it is used to indicate the possession of any thing—as, *vous avez une pomme* you have an apple, &c.

10. *Avoir* to have, is used as an auxiliary verb—1st, to all the active verbs, and 2d, to upward of six hundred neuter verbs.

11. *Etre* to be, is sometimes an auxiliary verb and sometimes an irregular neuter verb of the fourth conjugation. It is also called substantive verb.

12. *Etre* to be, is an auxiliary verb, whenever it is used to conjugate the compound tenses of another verb—as, *je suis frappé* I am struck, &c. When auxiliary it is always followed by the participle past of some other verb.

13. *Etre* to be, is a neuter verb whenever it is used to indicate the state of any person or thing—as, *je suis ici* I am here—*cette table est ronde* this table is round, &c.

14. *Etre* to be, is used as an auxiliary verb—1st, To a few neuter verbs, the list of which may be found in page 160.—2d, To all the passive verbs—and 3d, To all the reflected and reciprocal verbs, although these two last kinds of verbs are conjugated with *se* have in English.

Of Active Verbs.

15. A verb is *active* in French when it expresses that an agent called nominative, or subject, performs an action on an object, or regimen, without the help of a preposition—as, *Jean frappe Joseph* John strikes Joseph, &c.

Of Neuter Verbs.

16. A verb is *neuter* in French—1st, When it expresses that an agent called nominative, or subject, performs an action, that either is, or can be directed towards an object or regimen, with the help of a preposition—as, *Jean parle à Joseph* John speaks to Joseph. 2d, When it expresses the state, situation, or manner of being, or existing, of the nominative or subject—as, *je dors* I sleep—*Jean est ici* John is here, &c.

17. NOTE—The words *active* and *neuter*, applied to verbs, do not mean that an active verb expresses action, and that a neuter verb expresses inaction. For *chanter* to sing, which is an active verb, does not express so much action as *courir* to run, which is a neuter verb. It means that the verbs called active, are those after which *une personne* a person—or *une chose* a thing; can be put as an object or regimen, without a preposition—as, *frapper une personne* to strike a person—*frapper une chose* to strike a thing; whereas the verbs called neuter, are those after which *une personne* a person—or *une chose* a thing; cannot be put as an object or regimen without a preposition, being either expressed or understood—as, *courir à une personne* to run to a person; in English the preposition is often understood—as, *to run an hour* meaning *to run during an hour*. Some neuter verbs, those that express the state of the nominative, or subject, admit of no object or regimen, either with or without a preposition—as, *je dors* I sleep—*je suis* I am. The best division of verbs, I think, is that of Mr. Noah Webster, in his Dictionary, who divides them into transitive and intransitive; but I could not for the French adopt this division, which would confuse the pupil, whose French Dictionary would not be on that plan.

Of Passive Verbs.

18. A verb is *passive* in French, when it indicates that the nominative, or subject, bears the effect of another's action—as, *Jean fut frappé par Joseph* John was struck by Joseph—*Jean fut tué par une balle* John was killed by a ball.

19. The passive verbs in French, as in English, are formed with the help of the different tenses and persons of the auxiliary verb, *Etre* to be; to which is joined the participle past, of the verb to be conjugated—as, *je suis frappé* I am struck—*il sera vendu* it will be sold, &c.

20. All the French active verbs may be employed in the passive voice, except *avoir* to have.

21. In French the passive voice of verbs is but very seldom used, we generally make use of the active voice; for instance, instead of saying *Jean fut frappé par Joseph* John was struck by Joseph—we would more readily say, *Joseph frappa Jean* Joseph struck John, &c.

22. Properly speaking, there are no passive verbs in French; for *être frappé* to be struck—*je suis frappé* I am struck; is no more a passive verb than *être malade* to be sick—*je suis malade* I am sick, &c.

Of Reflected Verbs.

23. A verb is *reflected* when it expresses an action which falls on the nominative, or subject—as, *je me flatte* I flatter myself, &c.

Of Reciprocal Verbs.

24. A verb is *reciprocal* when it expresses that two or more nominatives, or subjects act upon each other—as, *Jean et Joseph s'aiment* John and Joseph love one another—*Jean, Joseph, et Paul s'aiment* John, Joseph, and Paul love each other, &c.

Of Unipersonal or Impersonal Verbs.

25. A verb is *unipersonal* or *impersonal* when it expresses what happens—as, *il pleut* it rains—*il arriva* it happened, &c.

26. They are called by some *unipersonal*, because they are only used in one person; the third person singular.

27. They are called by others *impersonal*, because the acts indicated by them, are attributed to no person.

Division of the Verbs.

28. The above seven different sorts of verbs, are divided into regular, and irregular, perfect, and defective verbs.

Of Regular Verbs.

29. *Regular Verbs* are those whose tenses are conjugated in a uniform manner, according to some general standard.

Of Irregular Verbs.

30. *Irregular Verbs* are those which deviate, in the conjugation of their tenses, from the general standard, given for the conjugation of regular verbs.

Of Perfect Verbs.

31. *Perfect Verbs* have all their moods, tenses, and persons

Of Defective Verbs.

32. *Defective Verbs* are those which want some of their moods, tenses, or persons.

Conjugation of Verbs

33. To *conjugate a verb*, is to write or rehearse it, with all its different inflections, through every *mood, tense, number, and person*.

Of Moods.

34. *Mood*, signifies manner. We call moods the different manners of using a verb, in order to express the different ways in which an action is performed, or suffered.

35. A *verb* may be used in French in five different manners, namely, in an *indefinite, positive, conditional, imperative, and subordinate* manner; which constitute five moods in verbs, called the *infinitive mood*, the *indicative mood*, the *conditional mood*, the *imperative mood*, and the *subjunctive mood*.

36. The *Infinitive mood*, is so called, because it expresses an action in an *indefinite* manner, without any reference to number or person—as, *chanter* to sing—*punir* to punish.

37. The *Indicative mood*, affirms in a direct, positive, and absolute manner, that a thing is or is not, without depending on any other word, whatever may be the time to which the affirmative relates—as, *je connais ces dames* I know these ladies—*j'ai vu ces dames* I have seen these ladies—*je ne porterai pas ce livre* I will not carry this book, &c.

38. The *Conditional mood*, denotes that a thing or an action would take place, or would have taken place, depending on a condition—as, *je vous rendrais service si je le pouvais* I would render you service if I could—*je vous aurais rendu service si je l'avais pu* I would have rendered you service if I had been able, &c.

39. The *Imperative mood*, is used for either commanding, exhorting, entreating, or permitting—as, *venez ici* come here—*faites cela* do that—*permettez-moi de sortir* allow me to go out, &c.

40. The *Subjunctive mood*, represents a person or a thing, under a condition, motive, wish, or supposition, and is dependent on a conjunction—as, *je souhaite qu'il vienne* I wish (*that*) he may come, &c. In English the conjunction is often understood.

Of Tenses.

41. *Tenses* indicate whether an action, is doing, has been done, or will be done: hence three tenses, the *present*, the

past, and the *future*. These tenses have been subdivided, to mark their difference with accuracy.

42. The tenses of verbs are divided into simple and compound.

43. *Simple tenses* are those which are conjugated without the help of either the auxiliary, *Avoir* to have, or *Etre* to be.

44. *Compound tenses*, (which have also other names, which indicate more clearly their use,) are those which are formed with the help of either the auxiliary, *Avoir* to have, or *Etre* to be; to which the past participle of the verb to be conjugated, is joined.

Names and Number of Tenses in each Mood.

45. The *Infinitive mood* has five tenses;
 The present, (*which is the root of the verb*),
 The past or perfect, (*or compound of the present*),
 The participle present or active,
 The compound of the participle present, and
 The participle past or passive.

46. The *Indicative mood* has eight tenses;
 The present,
 The perfect or preterit indefinite, (*or compound of the present*),
 The imperfect,
 The pluperfect, (*or compound of the imperfect*),
 The preterit definite,
 The preterit anterior, (*or compound of the preterit definite*),
 The future absolute, and
 The future anterior, (*or compound of the future absolute*).

47. The *Conditional mood* has two tenses;
 The present, and
 The past, (*or compound of the present*).

48. The *Imperative mood* has but one tense, which is at once *present* and *future*. *Present* with respect to the action of commanding, and *future* with respect to the thing enjoined.

49. The *Subjunctive mood* has four tenses;
 The present or future,
 The preterit or past, (*or compound of the present*),
 The imperfect, and
 The pluperfect, (*or compound of the imperfect*).

Of Numbers.

50. Number, is the form which verbs assume, to denote their agreement with their nominatives.

51. There are *two numbers* in every tense: the *singular*, which is employed when only one thing, or one person is mentioned—as, *la maison tombe* the house is falling—*Joseph parle* Joseph speaks. And the *plural*, which is employed when more than one thing, or more than one person are mentioned—as, *les maisons tombent* the houses are falling—*Joseph et Jean parlent* Joseph and John speak.

Of Persons.

52. Each number has three persons.

First Person.

53. The first person is the *person who speaks*, or the *persons who speak*; it is designated by *je* I, in the singular—as, *je pense* I think—and by *nous* we, in the plural—as, *nous pensons* we think.

Second Person.

54. The second person is the *person spoken to*, or the *persons spoken to*; it is expressed by *tu* thou, for the singular—as, *tu penses* thou thinkest; and by *vous* you, for the plural—as, *vous pensez* you think.

55. When in speaking to *one* person, we wish to be polite and respectful; custom has established in modern languages that the second person plural be used instead of the second person singular: thus, for instance, a person speaking to Mr. A., instead of saying *tu es ici* thou art here—will say *vous êtes ici* you are here; as he would if he was speaking to several persons.

56. When one person only is spoken to, if an adjective comes after the verb, that adjective is put in the singular, although, through politeness and custom, the verb be in the plural: thus in speaking to Mr. A., I shall say *vous êtes fort* you are strong—whereas in speaking to several persons, the adjective will be in the plural; speaking to Messrs A. and B., I shall say *vous êtes forts* you are strong.

57. When in addressing ourselves to a person, politeness or respect induces us to use a dignifying expression, instead of a personal pronoun of the second person, the verb as well as what relates to that expression, is put in the third person: for instance, instead of saying *Monsieur eux-vous en la bonté de penser à ce que vous m'avez promis*, we say *Monsieur a-t-il en la bonté de penser à ce qu'il m'a promis*? Have you been so kind, Sir, as to think of what you promised me? The literal translation of the French is: Sir has he had the goodness to think to what he has promised me.