

FRENCH PROSE COMPOSITION

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French Prose Composition by Edouard P. Baillot & Alice G. Twight-Brugnot

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EDOUARD P. BAILLOT & ALICE G. TWIGHT-BRUGNOT

FRENCH PROSE COMPOSITION

The Lake French Series

FRENCH
PROSE COMPOSITION

BY

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PREFACE

In many respects, the needs of classes in learning the French language, have been satisfied by the existing grammars and editions of French texts; but teachers have often found difficulty in making the transition from the somewhat mechanical sentences of grammars or beginners' books to the more difficult narrative French. It is here that the authors of this book have seen an opportunity for a new text in French composition, which they hope may aid teachers in a very difficult part of their work. In two particulars they have aimed to improve on the present books: first, in making the selections for translation of about average difficulty and of real practical interest; and, second, in giving definite, grammatical drill by the arrangement of material for translation.

It must be remembered that a modern language is studied not only for the practical value it may have, but also for the discipline the study gives and the general knowledge which it may impart. This last point has been constantly kept in view in the selections for translation, and they will be found to contain much information on the history, customs, and men and women of France. The book does not profess to be a grammar, but purely a composition book. No rules are given, the aim being to require the student to remember those

he has already learned and to help him to apply them in his translations. For this reason it is not advisable to begin the book until the student has completed the first part of his grammar and has obtained a working knowledge of irregular verbs.

While a considerable number of the selections are original, the authors have made use of extracts from French writers, changing the original text so as better to illustrate grammatical rules. For this reason and for others which will suggest themselves to teachers, it has been thought inadvisable to give the names of the authors from whom the selections are taken.

TO TEACHERS

Realizing that no plan for the use of a book can possibly be devised that will be equally good for all teachers or for all classes of students, the authors make the following remarks merely as suggestions. The teacher will readily discover that, to fit certain conditions, the plan offered below may be modified—for instance, by emphasizing the oral or the written part.

The translation of the section assigned for study should, on recitation day, be written on the blackboard directly from the book by several students, each one taking a different part of the lesson. While this is being done, the teacher may have the remainder of the class translate orally the assigned lesson and also the preceding one. The translation placed on the board should be read and corrected by the students, the teacher paying special attention to pronunciation and calling upon different members of the class to state reasons for the corrections. This will give a short review of the grammatical questions illustrated by the translation. The corrected lesson may be copied and handed to the teacher on the following class day.

The preceding remarks apply also to the exercises in original composition based upon the selections. The questions or the answers and the individual rendering of each selection should be written and then used as the

basis for the oral part of the lesson. The teacher need not, however, limit himself to the sentences in this book; the regular text that is being translated and its biographical and geographical notes will supply material for a large number of questions which may increase in difficulty as the pupil progresses. The teacher must use his own judgment as to the length of each lesson, but the experience of the authors has taught them that a short lesson thoroughly mastered is of much more value than a long one imperfectly understood.

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