

**A PRACTICAL METHOD  
IN THE MODERN  
GREEK LANGUAGE**

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A Practical Method in the Modern Greek Language by Eugene Rizo-Rangabé

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IN THE MODERN GREEK LANGUAGE

BY

EUGENE RIZO-RANGABÉ

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## PREFACE.

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THE Greek language has existed, without very serious alteration, nearly three thousand years. In its present form it differs less from that of Xenophon than the language of Xenophon differs from that of Homer.

If my intention had been to limit myself to the language now used by the educated classes in Greece in literature, in the daily press, in the pulpit, and elsewhere, I should have had little else to do than to copy the rules of ancient Greek grammar with some additions and modifications. Some forms of the ancient language, such as the dual number, the pluperfect, the optative, etc., have become obsolete, and the general spirit of the modern idiom is more analytical than the classical form; the latter, however, is still considered as a general treasury from which everybody may borrow, and a model to be constantly imitated as closely as possible by all men of letters.

But this more perfect language is not sufficient for foreigners travelling in Greece and coming in contact with the people, whose language is strongly influenced by local idioms, as it was even in ancient times. In the following lessons, therefore, I have been careful to indicate, by the



abbreviation vlg. (vulgar), placed after the correct forms used by educated people the forms of the popular language which it is necessary to know, although one should avoid using them, at least in writing.

The pronunciation of the Modern Greek language is certainly not that of the ancient; but that used in the schools of Europe and America is also open to grave objection. It would at least be of great practical advantage if the one now used in Greece were universally adopted, as its adoption would greatly facilitate to scholars the learning of the modern language, which is so widely used in the East.

This *Method* is divided into thirty lessons, each containing rules of grammar, examples illustrating these rules, and exercises. The verb is introduced in the second lesson, and its forms are then developed alternately with those of the other parts of speech. All the principles of Greek grammar are thus presented, care being taken to distinguish everywhere the forms of the literary or polite language from those of the vulgar idiom. The lessons are followed by reading-matter which has been so selected as to represent the language now used in Greece by all educated people both in speaking and in writing. The use of more classical forms and constructions in speaking would appear to a modern Greek pretentious and affected, while the introduction of words and forms of the vulgar idiom, although tolerated in familiar conversation, would certainly be considered a mark of gross ignorance in writing or in polite speech.

The vocabularies which complete the book contain almost all the Greek words that a beginner is likely to require in Greece. The English-Greek vocabulary will thus take the place of a handy dictionary of the Modern Greek language; in it the English-speaking student will be able to find any Greek word that he may require, either in preparing the exercises of this *Method*, or for general use. The Greek-English vocabularies have been arranged according to the sequence of grammatical rules and parts of speech, each special vocabulary giving all the most common examples; every Greek word that occurs in the lessons will also be found in its respective vocabulary with the English meaning. Each of these vocabularies should be committed to memory at the time when the lesson to which it belongs is prepared.

I am greatly indebted to Professor John Williams White, of Harvard University, for most valuable suggestions and assistance rendered in the preparation of this book.

EUGENE RIZO-RANGABÉ.

ATHENS, GREECE.

