

**SELECTIONS FOR  
FRENCH  
COMPOSITION**

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Selections for French Composition by C. H. Grandgent

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**C. H. GRANDGENT**

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FRENCH  
COMPOSITION**



Heath's Modern Language Series.

SELECTIONS  
FOR  
FRENCH COMPOSITION.

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## PREFACE.

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THIS book was written in response to a general demand for an easy but comprehensive manual that could be used both in colleges and in schools. Its leading characteristic, as compared with similar works, is the nature of the English texts, which—though I have tried to make them sufficiently idiomatic—are all so constructed that, when translated, they will be real French, and not English written with French words. Parts I. and II. follow the imitative method; the others are taken from French sources.

Another feature of this work is the great variety of styles exemplified. Beginning with the familiar, colloquial speech of Part I., it proceeds through the elegantly conversational language of Part II. to the simple and the more complicated narrative of Parts III. and IV. Part V. shows many different types of epistolary French; here it has been my aim to represent, not the polished and voluminous correspondence of literary men, but the short, commonplace letters that ordinary people have to write. Part VI. is descriptive, and furnishes samples of picturesque, of oratorical, and of poetic prose. Part VII., the last and most difficult, provides examples of several kinds of literary criticism, arranged in historical order.

I have endeavored to repeat the more important words, constructions, and idioms often enough to impress them on the student's mind. Instructors are strongly advised to have every composition lesson thoroughly reviewed after it has been corrected; otherwise the mistakes are more likely to be remembered than the proper forms. At the beginning, with young pupils, the teacher should devote several lessons to showing the scholars how to go to work; and throughout the whole first year, even, it might be well to have the composition prepared under competent super-

vision. In using Parts I. and II., students should read the French text aloud several times before writing the corresponding exercise. Further suggestions are given at the heads of the various parts. The copious footnotes and the two vocabularies will, I hope, furnish all necessary assistance.

The whole volume will provide material enough—without counting reviews—for 140 or 150 lessons in schools; in colleges it will make about half as many. For colleges, the work can be divided in this way: first year, Parts I., II.; second year, Parts III., IV., and half of V.; third year, Parts VI., VII., and the other half of V. In schools where a great deal of composition is done, Part I. can be used in the first year, Parts II. and III. in the second, Parts IV. and V. in the third, and Parts VI. and VII. in the fourth. Of course many other arrangements are possible.

If it is thought desirable, in schools, to change the work from year to year, these *Selections* may be combined with Miss Kimball's *Exercises in French Composition* and my *Materials for French Composition*. Both of these works are constructed on the imitative plan, and both are published by D. C. Heath & Co. The former uses as a model Daudet's *Belle-Nivernaise*; the latter consists of five parts—I., II., III., IV., V.—bound in separate pamphlets, and based respectively on the *Abbé Constantin*, *Peppino*, the *Siège de Berlin*, the *Dernière classe*, and the *Pièce de Jean Bart*. The exercises at the back of Joynes' *French Fairy Tales* (D. C. Heath & Co.) might be used also. Some such scheme as the following would provide four entirely different four-year courses, and would leave time enough for reviews; the classes are counted from the top:—

	Class 4.	Class 3.	Class 2.	Class 1.
1896-1897:	<i>Sel. I.</i>	<i>Mat. III.</i>	‡ <i>Ex.</i>	<i>Sel. V.</i>
1897-1898:	<i>Mat. IV.</i>	<i>Sel. III.</i>	<i>Sel. IV.</i>	<i>Sel. VI.</i>
1898-1899:	<i>Mat. V.</i>	<i>Sel. II.</i>	‡ <i>Mat. I.</i>	<i>Sel. VII.</i>
1899-1900:	<i>Fr. F. T.</i>	‡ <i>Mat. II.</i>	{ ‡ <i>Mat. II.</i>	{ ‡ <i>Mat. I.</i>
			{ ‡ <i>Mat. I.</i>	{ ‡ <i>Ex.</i>

CAMBRIDGE, July, 1895.



## INTRODUCTION.

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It is important that pupils, before trying to write much French, have some idea of the principal differences between French and English spelling and punctuation. Some information on this subject is to be found at the beginning of most French grammars; in my *Short French Grammar* the orthography is briefly discussed in §§ 12, 13, 14. The following supplementary remarks, however, may not be superfluous.

1. Small initial letters should be employed in French, not only in proper adjectives, in the names of days and months, and in the pronoun *je*, but also in these cases:—

*a.* In a title immediately followed by a proper name: le roi Humbert, le comte Kostia, monsieur Jourdain, madame Angot. But in the abbreviations *M.* for *monsieur*, *Mme.* for *madame*, and *Mlle.* for *mademoiselle* capitals are used, and these words, even when unabbreviated, are sometimes written with capitals.

*b.* In a common noun denoting some part of a town or some geographical feature, and followed by a proper name: la rue de Rivoli, la place de la Concorde, la porte Saint-Martin, l'île Saint-Louis, la mer de Provence.

*c.* In the title of a literary, musical, or artistic work, except at the beginning of the first word or the first important word: *Souvenirs de la maison des morts*; *la Guerre et la paix*; j'ai lu le *Nez d'un notaire*; avez-vous lu les *Lettres de mon moulin*?

*d.* In *de* forming part of a family name: Alfred de Musset; H. de Balzac.

2. The use of quotation marks in French is very irregular and far less common than in English. The following statements are

intended to describe the more ordinary (but by no means universal) practice: —

*a.* If a quotation extends through several paragraphs, the marks are used at the beginning of every paragraph, and at the end of the last.

*b.* If a quotation coincides with a paragraph, no quotation marks are employed, but the paragraph usually begins with a dash. French writers generally try to put each short quotation into a separate paragraph. In giving the text of a letter, the marks are used.

*c.* If a quotation occurs in the interior of a paragraph, the marks are used, as in English.

*d.* When a verb of saying (or some similar expression) follows a part of the thing said, this verb, with its subject and modifiers, is not separated by quotation marks from the surrounding quotation: Il vint s'asseoir sur le banc, à côté d'elle. "C'est moi, lui dit-il, après quelques minutes, ne me reconnaissez-vous pas?"

*e.* Single quotation marks are not used at all.

3. French punctuation, in general, is more subject than English to the caprice of the individual writer. The following points, however, deserve mention: —

*a.* In a series of three or more words, phrases, or clauses, the last two of which are connected by a conjunction, while the absence of this conjunction between the others is indicated by a comma, English writers generally use a comma just before the conjunction, but French writers do not: men, women, and children = les hommes, les femmes et les enfants.

*b.* To denote incompleteness or interruption, the French use three dots [. . .] oftener than a dash.

*c.* No period is put after the Roman numerals used with names of sovereigns or with divisions of a book. The abbreviations 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, etc., are, in French, generally I<sup>e</sup>, II<sup>e</sup>, III<sup>e</sup>, IV<sup>e</sup>, etc.

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