

**THE STANDARD BOOK FOR FRENCH
CONVERSATION: OR, A SERIES OF
QUESTIONS UPON SCIENTIFIC,
ARTISTIC, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND
DAILY-LIFE SUBJECTS**

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The Standard Book for French Conversation: Or, A Series of Questions upon Scientific, Artistic, Philosophical, and Daily-Life Subjects by J. D. Gaillard

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J. D. GAILLARD

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AND DAILY-LIFE SUBJECTS.

THE ANSWERS TO BE FRAMED BY THE STUDENT FROM THE
SENTENCES GIVEN IN THE "ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS."

BY
J. D. GAILLARD,

ASSISTED BY
CH. BÉNÉZIT.

SECOND EDITION.



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PREFACE.

MANY books have been produced for the purpose of teaching French Conversation.

They consist of dialogues, in which both questions and answers are furnished to the student, in the hope, it is to be supposed, of stereotyping the exact phrase and idiom upon his memory.

Could even a few among the number of students be found capable of retaining the thousands of phrases contained in these books, the result would still be almost nil, for they would find very few opportunities in life when the set form could be employed literally. The learner, therefore, can have no assurance that he has attained intelligibility, much less freedom or elegance of expression. Moreover, by this method, the great object of instruction, viz., to think in the language and to form original phrases, is not even aimed at.

This work proceeds upon an entirely different system. The questions alone, or the one portion of a dialogue, are supplied to the pupil, who is to frame appropriate answers, sufficient outlines for which will be found in the series of words corresponding to each set of questions.*

The mental initiative is given to the pupil, as he frames his own answers in his own way, the question itself giving him the idea of the general construction of phrases and idiom, which he will expand by the aid of his own imagination and ingenuity.

Thus, from the first he uses the words for himself instead of merely observing how they are used by others.

Knowledge acquired in this way will not easily lose its hold upon the mind; and the pupil who shall faithfully go through the entire series, will already have an experience and facility in French conversation not often attained without residence abroad.

We may point out that the tedium and weariness of learning by rote will be found replaced by that interest and healthful excitement which the exercise of the imagination and the desire to excel, so common among intelligent youths, will call forth.

It will be perceived how great an assistance such a course of study must give to the cultivation of the rational faculties.

* The portion of this work entitled "Association of Ideas," consists of several series of words in natural connexion, to be learnt by heart by the student, and to be used afterwards in framing his answers.

It is well known that the great difficulty, even for the advanced student of a modern language, consists in mastering its idioms. Infinite pains have been taken in the formation of the questions from this point of view, and I venture to say that they will be found in themselves a valuable mine of French idiomatic phrases; and experience has proved to me that the learner will appropriate these idioms to himself in the composition of his answers, and will soon be quite at home with the genius and way of thinking of the French.

This, I hope, will be found the best and shortest way of teaching the construction of phrases, and will replace advantageously the endless translations from English into French, which require so much time and such a multitude of arbitrary and needless rules.

I have found that our numerous classes at the Free Library, the Royal Institution, etc., have been made most interesting by this new way of tuition, that the habit of study has been fostered in the mind of the least proficient, while the intelligent learner has had full scope for the exercise of his creative powers.

Remembering that trivial ideas do not make a lasting impression upon the mind, I have given here, in the popular and pleasant way of narratives, not only a quantity of useful information as to the manners and customs of the French, and the words and phrases necessary to be used in the ordinary intercourse of life; but also a number of subjects interesting to all thinkers, which cannot fail to please our young friends and elevate their minds; such as the existence of an all-wise and beneficent Father, whose moral and physical laws have been established for the good of his children: the dreadful consequences that follow any infringement of these sacred laws: the wonderful formation of the human body: the great principles of charity, peace and concord: the beauty and harmony of nature: the products of human industry, etc., etc.

That this work may tend to excite noble and generous feelings in the heart of the student, and to cultivate his intellect, while he acquires a new and graceful form of expression, as well as lighten the task of our fellow labourers, is the earnest desire of

J. D. GAILLARD.

GALLIA HOUSE, UPPER PARLIAMENT ST.,
LIVERPOOL, Feb. 25th, 1875.

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1^{re} LEÇON.—CRÉATION.

Les cieux proclament la gloire et la bonté de Dieu.

Beauté et harmonie du corps humain.

1. Pourquoi les cloches de l'église St. Pierre de Genève carillonnaient-elles joyeusement le matin du dimanche de Pâques de l'année 1874?

2. Où les fidèles, l'air grave et recueilli, se dirigeaient-ils à leur entrée dans la cathédrale?

3. Après avoir adressé une courte et fervente prière au Seigneur, comment le ministre continua-t-il le service divin?

4. Qu'est-ce qui suivit le cantique que la congrégation chanta à la gloire du Très-Haut?

5. Contre quoi le véhément sermon que fit ensuite le prédicateur était-il dirigé?

6. Où avait-il pris le texte de son sermon?

7. Quelle hypothèse donnée par la science moderne le prédicateur adopta-t-il pour expliquer le commencement de la création?

8. Qu'est-ce que tous les hommes, quelle que soit leur nationalité ou leur croyance, admettent comme base de leur religion?