

PQ2216

M6

COPYRIGHT, 1894, 1903
BY FRANK W. FREEBORN.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

815.4



ACERVO DE LITERATURA

128090

The Athenæum Press
GINN AND COMPANY · PRO-
PRIETORS · BOSTON · U.S.A.

PREFACE.

This little book is the outgrowth of an experience in reading some of Daudet's sketches with a class of boys who had studied French from six to eight months. Of the two collections which they used, one contained no notes and included sketches of so gloomy and morbid a nature as to unfit it for school use; the other was very small, and neither of them gave any place to one of Daudet's master-creations, *Tartarin de Tarascon*, a character unique in French literature.

In preparing the notes I have been guided by the difficulties my pupils found in reading Daudet with Gasc's Pocket Dictionary. From this manual, excellent in most respects, are omitted most national appellatives and many words which are spelled nearly or quite like their English equivalents. While a bright scholar would guess the meaning of nearly all of these, it has seemed best to me to adhere to one rule in regard to all missing words, and either give the meaning or refer the pupil to the English Dictionary. I have meant to be equally thorough with reference to geographical, biographical, historical, and literary allusions, in which Daudet abounds. I have thought best also to translate many words and phrases which, though the dictionary in question may give their ordinary meaning, need more than the help of any dictionary to secure a reproduction of their spirit in English; for a translation which merely produces a literal rendering of an author's words often leaves out that which gives the words any value.

If the notes appear too frequent or too helpful, a somewhat lengthy experience in teaching language has convinced me that it is better to err in this direction than in the opposite, if a teacher wishes to interest his pupils in an author's literary work and style.

The sketch entitled "André Gill" was written especially for this volume, and illustrates a different mood of the Author from that which appears in the other selections.

Grateful acknowledgments are due to M. Daudet, Prof. A. N. van Daell, and Mr. Geo. W. Rollins, for valuable suggestions and help in reading proofs.

Alphonse Daudet was born May 13, 1840, at Nîmes, "une ville de Languedoc où l'on trouve, comme dans toutes les villes du Midi, beaucoup de soleil, pas mal de poussière, un couvent de Carmélites et deux ou trois monuments romains," and here he passed the first nine years of his life. At the end of that time his father, a silk manufacturer, was obliged by the decline of his business to change his residence to Lyons. The removal proved of little advantage to stay his falling fortunes, and in seven years more came the financial end. The family was broken up; the father vainly sought lucrative employment elsewhere, the mother returned to her native Languedoc, an older brother Ernest went to Paris to seek his fortune in its literary world, and Alphonse, who had just finished his course of study at the *Lycée* in Lyons but was too poor to take his degree, became usher at the college of Alais, where his great-uncle had once been principal. Timid, puny, near-sighted, a mere boy of sixteen years, he found his life here one long martyrdom at the hands of his cruel pupils, and he was glad after a few months service to join his brother Ernest in Paris, to share his poverty and toil, his hopes and trials. In *Le Petit Chose*, the first half of which is fairly autobiographical, he paints most vividly the scenes and impressions of his life up

to that time. Thenceforth he made Paris his home, though delicate health compelled him to spend three successive winters from 1861 to 1864 in the warmer climate of Algeria, Corsica, and Provence. He was not long in gaining recognition by his poems and still more by his short prose sketches published in various journals. He was fortunate enough to gain the favorable attention of the Duc de Morny, president of the *Corps Législatif*, and a lucrative appointment in his office enabled him to live in comfort until his literary work became remunerative.

His first book, a volume of poems, entitled *Les Amoureuses*, appeared in 1858. In a critique on this work Edouard Thierry says: "Alfred de Musset, en mourant, a laissé deux plumes au service de qui pourra les prendre: la plume de la prose et la plume des vers. Octave Feuillet avait hérité de l'une, Alphonse Daudet vient d'hériter de l'autre." During his absence in Algeria, in the winter of 1861-62, his first play was successfully brought out at the *Odéon*. He has since written other pieces for the stage, most of them dramatizations of his romances. His stories early found place in Parisian journals, but it was not until 1868 that he published any prose volume. *Le Petit Chose*, which then appeared, was followed in 1869 by *Lettres de mon Moulin*. The war, during which Daudet remained in Paris, interrupted the publication of his works. But from the close of the war until his death, December 16, 1897, his pen was always busy.

No modern writer of fiction can claim a wider popularity than Alphonse Daudet; and for consummate literary art, for the distinctness and picturesqueness of his characters, for grace and force of diction, and for delicacy of humor no one more fully deserves it. The extreme copiousness of his vocabulary makes it somewhat difficult at times for a beginner in French to appreciate at their full value his finer

shades of expression. For such a one to turn from his pages to those of some of his predecessors, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, or Dumas, is like walking along a plateau after climbing a steep mountain-side. But when one has read him carefully for a time, his perfect mastery of his language is an added charm that draws one again and again to his companionship. His analysis of character and motive is profound, but never tedious. His humor is most delicate and pervasive and always kindly, and this it is, more than anything else, that makes his *Tartarin* one of the most happy literary creations of any age or country.

His works reflect his life and surroundings at home and abroad. *Lettres de mon Moulin*, *Le Nabab*, *Numa Roumestan*, and, above all, the *Tartarin* trilogy, *Tartarin de Tarascon*, *Tartarin sur les Alpes*, and *Port-Tarascon*, give most vivid pictures of his native Midi. The second and third of these works, together with *Fromont jeune et Risler aîné*, *L'Évangéliste*, *Rose et Ninette*, *Jack*, *Les Rois en Exil*, and *Sapho*, portray the social life of Paris, both aristocratic and bourgeois. *Robert Helmont* and many short sketches from *Contes du Lundi* show us his personal experiences and impressions of the war. *L'Immortel* and *Femmes d'Artistes* deal chiefly with Parisian literary and artistic characters. In *Trente Ans de Paris* and *Souvenirs* he reviews his own experiences in the literary world of which he came to form so conspicuous a part.

The faithfulness of his scenes and characters to life is due to his method, of which his brother Ernest says in *Mon Frère et Moi*: "With his habit of describing nothing which he had not seen, of telling nothing which had not happened, of borrowing every detail from real life, characters, environment, conversations, every mental and moral characteristic which came to his notice seemed as a precious vein of metal which should sooner or later enlarge his intellectual store. I think it was especially during his stay in

Provence that he first appreciated the fruitful value of this method, and that he definitely set himself the rule which he has ever since rigidly observed."

While only a small proportion of his work appears in poetical form, the poetic feeling and expression are prominent in all his writings, and are so finely mingled with his realism that Émile Zola is led to say of him: "La nature bienveillante l'a mis à ce point exquis où la poésie finit et où la réalité commence."

NOTE TO REVISED EDITION.

The addition of a vocabulary makes some of the notes redundant, but it has been thought best to leave them in their original form. Words which occur only once in the text and are defined in the notes are generally omitted from the vocabulary.

The vocabulary does not give the feminine form of those adjectives that have the feminine like the masculine or that form it by merely adding *e* to the masculine.