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CLASSIC
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Kitty Anderson.

THE CLASSIC

Cincinnati

FRENCH READER

Ohio

70 of April 1858

FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS:

OR,

BEAUTIES OF THE FRENCH WRITERS,

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

By ALAIN DE FIVAS,

AUTHOR OF "AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FRENCH LANGUAGE."

WITH

A VOCABULARY,

French and English,

OF ALL THE WORDS AND IDIOMS CONTAINED IN THE WORK

By J. L. JEWETT,

EDITOR OF "OLLENDORFF'S NEW METHOD OF LEARNING FRENCH."

NEW-YORK:

D. APPLETON & COMPANY, 200 BROADWAY.

1853.

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PREFACE

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

"THE CLASSIC FRENCH READER" was compiled for the use of students who are sufficiently advanced to enable them to be made acquainted with the writings which constitute the standard literature of France. To adapt it to the wants of young persons of either sex, it has not been thought sufficient merely to exclude from it every thing of an exceptionable character; pains have also been taken to select pieces which, while they reward the efforts of the student, by imparting valuable instruction or innocent amusement, are at the same time intended to inculcate, in an agreeable manner, those moral lessons so indispensable for the formation of the youthful mind.

The broad field of classic French literature is rich in materials for such a work; and the peculiar clearness, vivacity, and gracefulness of its writers cannot fail to commend it to the particular attention of students. Each piece in the book presents a subject complete in itself. By selections from the writings of all the literary periods, the reader is enabled to form his judgment and taste by a comparison of the various styles of writing, and the work is thus rendered a

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faithful mirror of the best French literature, ancient as well as modern.

The unrivalled excellence of Molière's dramas, and the perfect models of familiar conversational language which they afford, have secured a place in this volume for some of the best scenes of his prose productions.

La Fontaine's fables are too well known to need commendation. Their uniform excellence has rendered the task of selecting from them a matter of no small difficulty to the compiler.

The names of Fénelon, Bossuet, Racine, Montesquieu, Florian, Marmontel, and of Chateaubriand, La Mennais, Thierry, Béranger, De Jouy, Scribe, and many others of scarcely inferior note, whose writings have contributed to form the present work, will be at once a justification of its claim to rank as a classical production, and a guarantee for the superior merit and excellency of its contents.

The particular arrangement of "The Classic French Reader," with a view to its adoption as a school-book, merits a passing notice.

The publication in this country of "Ollendorff's New Method of Learning French," very soon created a demand for a French reading-book differing in its arrangement from any one previously in use. A very marked feature of Ollendorff's Method — and one which has contributed not a little to commend it to public favor — is, that it wholly dispenses with the use of a dictionary, thereby shortening the process of instruction by a great economy of time, and freeing the student from what had generally proved the most discouraging part of his task. As a result of the adoption of this new method, it was soon obvious, not that

a language can be learned without effort, but that a very considerable portion of the effort hitherto bestowed for this object had been misapplied. It was therefore requisite that a reading-book to accompany Ollendorff's Grammar should, as far as the nature of the case would admit, preserve in its arrangement something of the adaptation to its object which had rendered the latter work so acceptable to students.

As an elementary Reading-book for beginners, the Publishers accordingly made choice of the "Introduction to the French Language," by M. de FIVAS, the compiler of the present work. The "Introduction," like the "New Method," is progressive in the order of its lessons; and not only is the necessity of resorting to a dictionary obviated, by a vocabulary of all the words and phrases contained in the work, but, in addition, every mood and tense of a verb the student will meet with is explained at length, thus affording him the means of perfecting his familiarity with an important feature of the grammar.

The utility of the "Introduction," and its adaptation to the wants of learners, have now been tested by experience. The principles which should govern in the compilation of a book for advanced students are therefore sufficiently demonstrated. In adapting the "CLASSIC FRENCH READER" to the stage of instruction it is intended to occupy, it is thought the student may profitably dispense with any aid above what is usually found in a copious dictionary. The "Vocabulary," therefore, while it embraces and defines every word used in the book, not only in its particular acceptation, but in its primary significance, contains only the infinitive mood and the participles of the verbs. Great pains have been taken to define

the idiomatic phrases, and every collocation of words that would be likely to perplex the learner. The occasional notes running through the work, designed to illustrate historical, geographical, and grammatical points, will be found of essential service in elucidating the text.

The short biographical sketches of the most distinguished French writers will be read with interest, and be found to contribute not a little to the interesting outline of the language and literature of France, which it is one of the objects of "The Classic French Reader" to supply.

The learner cannot be too earnestly urged to aim at a full and thorough mastery of all the pieces contained in this work, even at the cost of repeated reading and prolonged study. A little resolute application to attain familiarity with the great variety of style and diversity of expression it affords, will contribute more to an available knowledge of the French language than years spent in careless and desultory reading, and will leave few obstacles to be overcome by the student in his subsequent course.

As a convenient and compendious manual for students, combining, in some measure, the advantages of a reading-book, lexicon, and grammar, — and thus containing within itself the means for its own interpretation, — the work is kindly commended to the favor of all who are interested in the language and literature of France.

J. L. JEWETT.

NEW-YORK, June, 1849.

Pellegrin Anderson

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BEAUTÉS

DES

ÉCRIVAINS FRANÇAIS,

ANCIENS ET MODERNES.

DON QUICHOTTE.

Au Lecteur.

On raconte que Philippe III, roi d'Espagne, étant un jour à un balcon de son palais de Madrid, vit sur le bord du Mançanarès un étudiant qui, tenant un livre à la main, interrompait de temps en temps sa lecture pour se donner de grands coups sur le front avec des démonstrations extraordinaires de joie. *Ce jeune homme, dit le roi, a perdu la tête, ou il lit don Quichotte.* Le monarque avait deviné juste; c'était *don Quichotte* que lisait l'étudiant, et il n'était fou que de plaisir.*

Il n'est personne qui ait lu cette admirable production de Cervantes, à qui il ne soit arrivé de faire ainsi que l'étudiant; et comme tous ceux qui savent lire veulent connaître *don Quichotte*, afin de rire aussi avec lui, nous allons donner le portrait du fameux chevalier de la Manche, avec un abrégé de ses principales aventures.

* "De tous les livres que j'ai lus, don Quichotte est celui que j'aimerais mieux avoir fait."—*St.-Evremond*, lettre au maréchal de Créquy.