
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

<https://books.google.com>

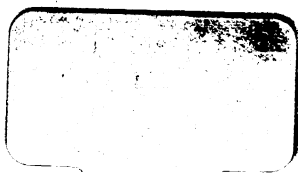


Educ
170
1.80

4977

Edue 170.1.80

7bd. 1873.



Recd. Sept. 7. 1831.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE
OF
JACOTOT'S
SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

A COMPENDIOUS EXPOSITION
 OF THE
Principles and Practice
 OF
PROFESSOR JACOTOT'S
 CELEBRATED
SYSTEM OF EDUCATION,

*Originally established at the University of Louvain, in the Kingdom of the
 Netherlands.*

BY JOSEPH PAYNE.

“Already are Schools, after the method of Jacotot, spread over France and the Netherlands,—already does almost every town and province in the north of these countries possess either an establishment upon the principle, or one or more instructors.”—*Foreign Quarterly Review*, February, 1830.

“M. Jacotot a rendu un service inappréciable à l'humanité. La méthode de M. Jacotot repose sur des principes aussi certains que féconds en heureux résultats.”—*De la Méthode Jacotot, par M. Rey de Grenoble.*

London :

PRINTED FOR R. STEPHENS, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, RUSSELL SQUARE.

1830.

[*Price Two Shillings.*]

Educ 170.1.80

Printed by J. Rider, Little Britain, London.

P R E F A C E.

A FEW particulars respecting the origin and progress of Jacotot's System of Education, may, perhaps, form an appropriate Introduction to this little Treatise. M. Jacotot, a native of Dijon, became, in the year 1818, Professor of the French Language at the University of Louvain, and there established the celebrated system, which, from its principle of unlimited applicability, he has denominated "Universal Instruction." He here, in the course of his professional duties, accidentally made the important discovery, for which he more especially claims the merit of originality,—that *it is not necessary to explain in order to teach*, or in other words, that *the pupil may be made to discover for himself every thing requisite to be known*. Called upon to teach the French language, while unacquainted with the native tongue of his pupils, he put into the hands of the latter, Fenelon's *Telemaque*, with a Dutch translation, directing them (through an interpreter) to commit to memory the French text, and to gather the meaning from the version which accompanied it. These pupils having thoroughly

learned half of the first book, were made to repeat incessantly what they knew, and to read over the remainder attentively, so as to be able to relate the substance of it. Their thorough acquaintance with both the subject and the phraseology was ascertained by rigid interrogation, and they were then directed to write compositions in French, deriving all the necessary materials from their model-book. Their success in this exercise surprised even the Professor himself; and on considering the circumstances, he was led to observe, that all the results had been attained without explanations on his part. He instantly resolved to ascertain to how great an extent this principle might be applied, and to *tell* his pupils nothing whatever. He found that, as they became more and more acquainted, by repetition, with the twenty-four books of Telemaque, they spontaneously observed, in their compositions, every rule both of orthography and grammar, until at length they shewed themselves capable of writing (with regard to style) as well as the best French authors, and consequently better (as Jacotot said) than himself and his professional colleagues. The complete success of this experiment led to the institution of others, in which the spirit of the principle was carefully preserved, and the entire process and ultimate results accurately scrutinized. The principle that explanations are unnecessary,)

was discovered to be not merely general but universal; and it was further observed, that the method founded upon this principle is actually the method by which we acquire every thing that we learn without the aid of an instructor. The perception of this identity, tended to confirm and harmonize the notions already springing up in the mind of Jacotot, and laid the foundation of the System.

An allusion to its progress is seen in the motto to this pamphlet, and in the present instance this must suffice. To trace its history through the many controversies of which it has been the subject, might be interesting, but is here impracticable. It may easily be imagined, that the Universal Instruction has some claims to attention, when it is stated, that "the sale of M. Jacotot's own publications is immense, and the number of explicatory pamphlets in the French language, published in France and other places, almost incredible."* It is at length beginning to excite an interest in England, and already many eminent private teachers have adopted the method with unquestionable success. A Guide to French, in conformity with its principles, has just been announced by M. Tarver, teacher of French at Eton College; and M. Henri,

* Foreign Quarterly Review, February, 1830. This Number contains a sensible exposition of the system, scarcely, however, doing justice to its characteristic merits.

one of the most zealous of Jacotot's disciples, now residing at Boulogne, is expected shortly to introduce the system, in a practical shape, to the British public.

In the meanwhile, the writer of the present Treatise has attempted to unfold the general principles and method in the following pages, to which he respectfully invites the attention of all who feel an interest in the important science of education. It is believed, that the system of Jacotot, alone deserves the name of a *System* of Education. If its individual principles are not novel, the united whole is at least a novelty;—the wonderful results which it has effected are novelties. It embraces the advantages, without the blemishes, of other systems; and presents, in harmonious combination, all those elements that have ever been deemed, by common consent, valuable and effective in practical tuition. It is, in short, a *κτῆμα ες αεί*,—a possession for ever; and the writer of the following pages feels that his humble name derives an unanticipated degree of honour, from its being that of the first Englishman who has publicly expressed his thorough conviction of the validity of the principles, and efficacy of the method of the Universal Instruction.

3, *Rodney Buildings,*
New Kent Road.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

OF THE

NEW SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

LEARN SOMETHING THOROUGHLY, AND REFER EVERY
THING ELSE TO IT.

THE above sentence comprises the entire method of the Universal Instruction. Whenever this precept is neglected, the constitutional character of the system is disregarded, and the success of the teacher's endeavours is no longer guaranteed by M. Jacotot. The spirit of it so completely pervades every part of the machinery of the method, that the one cannot, by any means, be separated from the other. As, however, the terms in which it is expressed may not intuitively convey the requisite notions to the mind of the reader, an attempt will be made to develop more fully their strict signification, as connected with the system of Jacotot. Their real import here is, that whatever department of education be in question, something,—some particular fact, or group of facts,—shall be thoroughly impressed on the memory and comprehended by the judgment; and that this individual fact, or group of facts, shall serve as a kind of rallying point, around which all other facts, subsequently acquired, shall be made to attach themselves, according to their resemblances and inherent relations. The habit thus formed, of referring, by reflection, every thing learned for the first time to something previously learned, tends, of course, to connect the entire mass together; and in this is seen the superiority, as well as the peculiarity, of Jacotot's System of Education. This system is indeed entirely conformable to the laws of nature, and the

generally received opinions of common sense. He only can be said to understand a subject thoroughly, who distinctly perceives the relation of every part of it to every other part, and who clearly traces the entire series of associated ideas which make up the whole, from the beginning to the end, or back from the end to the beginning. But who can do this? All, indubitably, who are instructed by the method of Jacotot; for this method leads uniformly and invariably to that end. Will not every one then agree, that the system which can accomplish so important a design is undeniably superior to all others that have hitherto been projected?—Without doubt, if it can be done.—But it has been done, and repeatedly, and the reader will presently judge for himself, whether the process followed is likely to effect its purpose.

It may not be amiss to consider, in the first instance, what is generally meant by the expression,—*learning a thing*. To learn any thing is evidently not the same as to forget it; yet we might almost imagine it were, by referring a moment to the common plan pursued in the old method. Will any one maintain that, speaking generally, at the end of his seven years or more of school instruction, he actually recollects one thousandth part of the facts that have been brought before him, or the observations that have been addressed to him, connected with the course of tuition? A considerable portion of all this combined mass of information has remained perfectly unintelligible to him, from the first moment that it was introduced to his notice, to the time at which he throws down his books and enters on the world. He perceived neither the end nor the design of it; and perhaps even the terms in which it was expressed were never thoroughly comprehended, although repeated incessantly in his hearing. In illustration of this it may be asked, Does one child in a hundred *understand* a single page of that book which is put into his hands as soon as he can read, and over which he pores, year after year, and, at length, by dint of constant repetition, has thoroughly impressed on his memory—the English Grammar? This may well be doubted. He learns, indeed, what is to him a jargon of unintelligible technicalities, like nothing that

he meets with in the conversation of his comrades and friends, or in the language of those juvenile volumes, which a nascent taste for reading may induce him to peruse : and after all, he is at a loss to conceive of what use it is for him then to know, that a verb is a word which signifies to be, to do, or to suffer ; or that there are two kinds of conjunctions, the copulative and the disjunctive. It would be absurd to ask him if he thoroughly understands these words, for it is quite impossible, even if the individual terms be explained to him ; if, for instance, he perceives tolerably well what is meant by the words conjunction, copulative, and disjunctive, how can any idea be received into his mind, of a something which separates while it joins ; and even supposing the present difficulty surmounted, does not the question incessantly recur to him, What is the use of all this ? You tell him he cannot speak properly unless he understands grammar ; but he does not, he cannot, perceive why it should be so ; and perhaps he wonders how it is that he contrives to utter a correct sentence without recollecting, at the moment of utterance, all the grammatical rules which have been so constantly urged upon his attention. He however infers, that he does very often speak correctly, because he uses the same expressions as everybody else ; and the point of mystery is, that he chances to do so without remembering the rules of grammar. The same remarks will apply, more or less, to many others of the generalities which, in the common course of instruction, a pupil is called upon to learn, but which he cannot, from a want of the information previously requisite, understand. Even, however, supposing that he does actually acquire a number of really useful facts, they form in his mind an *indigesta moles*, a shapeless mass, in which he perceives neither order nor connection. He has not been taught by the method of Jacotot, to refer every thing learned for the first time to something previously learned ; and he cannot, therefore, perceive the relation which the latter bears to the former. But there must necessarily exist a relation. Unless the parts of the book committed to memory had been connected with each other, in the mind of the author, he would of course have

produced a disorderly patchwork of incoherent facts. But this is not the case, at least in any approved work; and if this be not the case, if it was necessary for the author to see clearly the end and aim of all that he proposed to write in order to convey a connected idea of the subject to the reader, it must be equally necessary for the reader, if he wishes to understand the subject as well as the author, to gain possession of the entire series of facts, which compose the subject, as presented to his view. This, however, cannot be done, unless the pupil is taught to connect what he learns one day, with all that he has learned, relating to the same subject, on every previous day, from the time when it was first urged on his attention. But the facts forgotten cannot, of course, be connected with those remembered; though it is easily seen, that were these supplied, the whole subject would be before the mind. This leads again to the remark previously made, that scarcely a thousandth part of what is learned (using the word in its conventional sense) at school, is retained for use in the actual business of life; though this, most evidently, was the ostensible purpose throughout the entire course.

If the considerations here adduced be thought to have any weight, they must evince one of two things,—either the positive incapacity of pupils of the usual scholastic age to comprehend any subject in the manner referred to, or the defectiveness of the customary method of tuition. It would be impossible, in the face of countless instances in opposition, to maintain the former assertion. If a child can be made to commit to memory, and understand one sentence, for instance, there seems no physical obstacle to his doing the same with another, still retaining the first in his memory by constant repetition, and thus connecting the new fact with all that preceded it. This is the method of Jacotot, and he has proved 'incontestably both the possibility and the effectiveness of such a process. He indeed asserts, that *the youngest child can comprehend thoroughly the terms representing the most complex abstract notions*, that is, if he previously well understands all the simple subordinate notions contained in those that are com-

plex. Whether such attainments as these here referred to, be within the reach of any child, even the youngest, is only doubted by those who have never attempted to satisfy themselves by actual experiment. The probability of success, at least, will be presently shown. While a pupil, by any particular method, can be taught to acquire more than he would have done by another given method, it is absurd to tax the incapacity of the pupil for that which is decidedly the fault of the plan of tuition pursued. The general question, however, to which this remark would lead, as to the actual fitness of the particular systems of Education now in use, to the real purposes for which instruction is needful and valuable, will not here be investigated. Two or three facts, from which the inferences requisite to the view now intended, may be drawn, are sufficiently obvious to the personal experience of all. After sedulously going through all the manœuvres of instruction, for several years, we come from school to begin our education afresh, according to the particular objects which it may be desirable for us to attain in life. We are in possession, indeed, of a vast number of facts, but they lie for the most part unconnectedly and incoherently in the mind. Of a number of others we have a loose and vague notion, just sufficient to admit of consciousness that they exist, and have names attached to them, which names we know well, without knowing the things themselves. Still less, however, in these latter fragments of knowledge than in the former, do we perceive any sort of coherency or natural connection: and upon a review of the whole of our acquirements, during the long time that we have been employed in making them, the feeling which takes full possession of our mind is,—that nine-tenths of all that we learned has been forgotten;—that we are well acquainted with no one subject whatever;—and that in nearly every point which most concerns us, we are—

Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.

But by the system of Jacotot, the faculties of the mind are kept

in constant action, from the commencement to the end of the course of instruction; the first acquisitions, as well as all that succeed, are permanently retained, and accordingly, every thing learned once is learned for ever. This is a most essential point secured; for the time and labour spent upon the acquirement of that which is not retained, must be considered as utterly lost. He is not rich who has had a large fortune, but he who is still in possession of it, and who can avail himself, at his pleasure, of the advantages which it furnishes. Hence, says Jacotot, "*We are not learned, merely because we have been taught, we are learned, only when we have retained.*" A thorough *helluo librorum* may, like Magliabechi, devour six large rooms full of books and yet leave it on record, as he did, that the reader of a vast quantity knows but little of what he reads. One single book, thoroughly understood and impressed on the memory, is of more service to the mind than fifty hastily skimmed over, and forgotten even sooner than read. And in the application and modification of this principle consists the entire method of Jacotot. "But there is nothing new in this plan," some will remark, "it has often been acted on before."—This is not questioned for a moment.—It has often been acted on before, and, as our author remarks, no man ever became great without adopting and pursuing it. No one ever attained a complete and profound knowledge of any subject but by means of the principle now first proposed for adoption in the elementary stages of education. Whatever we wish to learn, whatever it becomes absolutely necessary for us to learn, we acquire by this method, and by no other. We cannot even understand what we read without it. How can we be entertained by the perusal of a simple tale or novel, unless we comprehend all the circumstances, as they rise before us, and refer those which appear for the first time to those which have already come under our view. He who retains in his memory the greater number of these circumstances, will, if the work be well executed, receive far greater pleasure from the perusal, than he who forgets most of them, as he turns over the pages in which they are contained. The one will perceive beauties,

which are to the other perfectly invisible; the former will comprehend the force of numerous allusions and acute witticisms, which are to the latter quite unintelligible. The proviso has been made, *if* the work be well executed; for it is evidently a supposable case, that the reader may examine more closely the several parts of the work, their fitness to each other, and harmonious combination in forming the whole, than did even the author himself during the composition of it. Many a work which has obtained a fair reputation could ill bear this scrutiny. Many an author is indebted to the careless memory of his readers for the facility with which his own faults escape undetected. A truly great work, however, can be submitted to this sort of examination. We here observe, that every word, sentence, and circumstance, has its own duty to perform, and is placed in that order of situation which shall most conduce to the perfection of each part, and the perfect harmony and unity of the whole. Now we cannot thoroughly enter into the spirit of an author, but by tracing his design throughout all that he presents to us;—from an investigation of the minute component particulars we obtain general notions, and by comparing these amongst themselves, we obtain others still more general, till at length, by this analytical process, we arrive at the very point from which his mind first started, and look back upon the whole in the same way, and with the same train of feelings, as those with which he prospectively surveyed it. Hence it is seen, that though the route which we traverse is in a precisely contrary direction to that along which the author passed,—the one being analytical, and the other synthetical; yet that in the course of it, we must necessarily pass through all the associated ideas, with the variety of feelings and sentiments excited by them, which linked and developed themselves in the mind of the writer who gave them expression. It follows from this, that if it be necessary for him to employ every word and phrase that he does employ, in order to convey to us the ideas or sentiments which he himself perceived and felt, it must be equally necessary for us to notice and comprehend each individual word and expression, that we may trace on the tablet of our own mind an exact copy, both

in design and colouring, of that picture which he has presented to our view. Now if he used more words than were necessary—if, again, any of these failed to transfer the idea which he had pictured, to our mind, so far is his performance faulty; and it is not, on this account, that he is considered a fine or correct writer. Inasmuch, however, as he avoids the commission of these faults, so does he approach towards positive perfection, and attain the envied reputation of a truly great author.

“But,” it may be said, “what have all these critical observations to do with the system of Jacotot? Children cannot criticise individual words and expressions, and perceive the design, or detect the faults and beauties, of an admired literary composition.” To this it is answered, that M. Jacotot has imagined, or to speak correctly, has *proved* beyond a doubt, that little girls and boys, of between the ages of ten and fourteen, can do every thing here enumerated, not only with the classical authors of their own language, but with those of any foreign language (living or dead) which they may be studying;—and the observations referred to embrace in part the method of the system. The pupil of the Universal Instruction is taught to believe, that every word used by a good writer modifies in some respect the idea intended to be conveyed, and that therefore, to understand the whole, he must understand each individual part; and he is never said to have learned a thing which he does not thoroughly comprehend (that is, receive altogether) in his mind, by an accurate perception, of every subordinate notion, and of all its relations with what he has previously learned. The knowledge thus gained is not likely to escape quickly from the mind; and the practice of incessant repetition, which is the soul of the system, renders permanent the first and all intervening ideas received by the understanding; so that of the mass of information, ever rolling on, and becoming augmented by contributions from all sides, may be justly said—

Vires acquirit eundo.

But it may be well to enter more particularly into the details

of the method pursued, that the fitness of the means to attain the end predicted in the foregoing observations, may be at once perceived.

READING AND WRITING.

Instead of spending some few years in the acquisition of these very useful elementary arts, as is generally the case by the common method, the pupils of Jacotot learn to read and write in about a fortnight!—at the termination of which period they are deemed capable of beginning the study of the vernacular language, according to the method which will shortly be explained. In perfect consistency with the harmony and unity of design, which pervades the entire system, the little pupil is taught to acquire, at the very commencement of his studies, those mental habits which are the grand means of success in his advancement throughout the entire course. He is at once taught to **LEARN SOMETHING THOROUGHLY, AND TO REFER EVERY THING ELSE TO IT**; and, consequently, begins to notice resemblances and differences, to exercise his judgment, to analyse, to generalize, and, in short, to bring into play nearly the whole of his intellectual faculties. To attain these advantages, all the customary helps of alphabets, primers, spelling-books, first readings, &c. &c. are neglected, and some standard classical work (generally that which is to be his chief guide afterwards in the acquisition of the language) is put into the hands of the pupil. In answer to anticipated objections, it may be here stated, that the young student is not expected, at this stage of his progress, to understand what he is taught to read. It is, however, highly probable, that his ideas will be quite as clear and definite upon the subject, whatever it may be, as those which he would have obtained by poring over the cabalistical syllables, ba, be, bi, bo, bu, cat, lat, tat, &c. &c. in all their array of conceivable combinations.

The work selected for the initiation of the pupil, and for

purposes hereafter to be mentioned, must, of course, depend upon the will of the master. In the present instance, merely for convenience, reference will be continually made to the English translation of Telemachus, since Fenelon's elegant fiction is the work chosen by M. Jacotot as the standard or model-book of his French pupils, while acquiring the knowledge of their own language.

Supposing, then, that Dr. Hawkesworth's Translation of Telemachus were the work selected, (though, of course, no English teacher would adopt this as a model of English composition), the attention of the pupil is at once directed by the master to the opening sentence of the first book, which runs as follows—

“The grief of Calypso for the departure of Ulysses would admit of no comfort.”

Pointing to the word “The” the master pronounces it in a very distinct tone, and directs the pupil to repeat it after him. He then recommences with the first word and adds the second, and the two words are repeated in succession by the pupil. Beginning again, the third word is added, and the three are repeated by the child accordingly. The same process is used with the fourth word, still recommencing with the first. A pause is now made, and the pupil is at once called upon to exercise his faculty of noticing resemblances and differences. He is asked to point out the respective situations of the words “Calypso,” “grief,” “of,” “the;” the interrogation, after this manner, being continued till he can show, without the slightest hesitation, the place of each. He thus learns to distinguish them from one another. Any page of the book is then opened, and some particular sentence or line being pointed out to him, he is asked if the words that he knows are to be found there. If he is thoroughly acquainted with the forms of them by the previous interrogation, he will have no great difficulty in perceiving those of the same form, in whatever part of the book they may be. As soon as the master is assured that the child is in thorough possession of these four words, he goes on adding successively

the remaining words of the sentence, always recommencing with the first. If the child becomes well acquainted with the word "of" when first met with, he is, of course, expected to recognise it twice afterwards in this sentence. The process of interrogation pursued at the end of the first four words is now repeated with each word of the sentence, until the child learns accurately to distinguish those words which are different, to recognise the likeness between those which are similar, and to point out any word of this sentence in any page of the book that may be opened before him. Proceeding according to strict analysis, the master now recommences the examination of each word of the sentence, dividing every word of more than one syllable into its component syllables, thus—"The grief of Ca-lyp-so for the de-par-ture," &c. The pupil is then called upon to notice and distinguish each syllable, after the same plan as that pursued with respect to entire words, and, at length, he is made acquainted with the name of every letter. After he has been well exercised, in this manner, upon a few sentences, the teacher directs him to go on by himself, without previously pronouncing the words to him, and only assists him when he meets with a word, syllable, or letter, which has never before come under his notice. Still, however, he *must recommence with the first word learned*, as it is by this means only that all his previous acquisitions are permanently retained. He soon begins to have the first three or four sentences, thus so frequently repeated, impressed on his memory, and is told to spell them, dividing them into their component syllables and letters, from recollection. After about sixty lines have been thus gone through, he cannot fail to be acquainted with nearly all, if not all, the letters of the alphabet, and with a vast variety of their combinations. It is, indeed, considered, that he is now taught to read. If any hesitation, indicative of imperfect perception, is evident in the pupil, the master must return to the same words, syllables, or letters, until they are thoroughly distinguished and comprehended. By this means, every new acquisition becomes permanent, and every effort brings with

it the proof of some progress. Hence, as has been before remarked generally, there is no lost labour. If the pupil should only learn one word in an hour, yet is that word for ever learned, and indelibly stamped on the memory by the *incessant repetition of the first thing acquired*, which is the very life of the system. The pupil is never to be assisted, except in what is introduced to his notice for the first time. That which he has already learned, he is expected to recognise wherever he may meet with it. It is he, and not the master, who is to make remarks, and discover relations of difference and similarity. The master asks a great number of questions, and causes the pupil, whenever a wrong answer is given, to discover for himself the error into which he has fallen. To do this, he must reflect, he must make comparisons, and, however young he may be, these operations of the mind are certainly within his reach, and nothing but a want of attention can prevent him from performing them successfully. The moment an infant opens its eyes to the light in this world it begins to make comparisons; that is, to discover resemblances and differences. We can imagine no period in its infantile existence, supposing it to be born in the possession of the corporal senses of humanity, in which it perceives not a distinction between light and darkness, hot and cold, or in which it cannot recognise its nurse from a total stranger. No one, then, can perhaps be found, who will maintain the incapacity of any child that can speak, for the performance of every thing required in the process just described, if only its attention can be gained.

With respect to the motives to be applied, in order to make the pupil attentive, these must be left to the discretion and judgment of the instructor. One means, however, derived from the operation of the system itself, will be found very efficacious, and it is so much the more to be relied on, as it is in unison with the pupil's own feelings. This is, the success of which the child is conscious as the result of his own efforts. However young and thoughtless he may be, a degree of pleasure to himself will always attend the consideration that

he has accomplished his object. He is not allowed to say, he cannot do what he is told to do, for he soon finds that if he will try, he can overcome what at first he may have considered an insuperable difficulty. And if he once succeeds, why not again? and why not always? These questions may not indeed suggest themselves to him spontaneously; it is not to be expected, nor even desired, that he should lose the feelings of a child, and prematurely assume those of a more advanced stage of life; but whenever even the most unpromising pupil is made conscious that he has done well, by paying attention, and that he therefore knows something, his mind is then in a fit state for receiving such injunctions as may gradually, by their constant repetition at seasonable opportunities, induce those mental habits which will subsequently be of the most important service to him in the acquirement of knowledge.

If the foregoing directions have been understood, a tolerably correct notion will be obtained of Jacotot's method of instruction, as regards the art of Reading. It may be observed, that the object of the process described, is simply to make the pupil acquainted with the forms of words, syllables, and letters. What may be called declamatory reading, is reserved for a more advanced stage of his progress, and the general rule given for the attainment of it, is, *Read as you would speak*. This direction has often been given before the time of Jacotot, but it is rare to find instances of its being implicitly and constantly obeyed by pupils at school. Unless the sentences read are understood, they cannot, of course, be felt; and to expect a child to read that which he understands not, and feels not, with the same degree of emphasis and propriety of tone as are dictated to him by nature in his own spontaneous expressions, is to indulge a hope which cannot, by any possibility, be gratified. But the Universal Instruction, as will be presently seen, ensures the thorough comprehension of every idea presented to the pupil's notice, and he is, therefore, so far prepared to read as he would speak.

After the child has received two lessons in reading, he is made to begin to write. And here again, the process employed is very different from that in common use. Instead of commencing with elementary lines, curves, and letters, in what is called text-hand, a complete sentence, written by the master or engraved, in *small-hand*, is put before his eyes, which he is directed to copy. For obvious reasons, this sentence is generally the same as that from which he received his first notions of reading. The two pursuits are thus made mutually to assist each other, and the pupil very soon learns, by himself, to distinguish between the printed characters and those employed in writing. He writes, as well as he can, the first word "The," and no further progress must be made, till, by an attentive comparison of his own performance with the original copy, he becomes conscious of the faults and defects of the former. But in exciting this consciousness, *it is not necessary for the instructor to make the slightest remark, the pupil himself discovers all the faults, and suggests the proper remedies.* The teacher does nothing but ask such questions as may cause the pupil to direct his attention to the subject, and induce him to see that the means of success are entirely within his own power. Some teachers may perhaps be inclined to doubt whether a very young child can observe and particularize by itself every deviation from the standard prototype which is proposed for imitation. The best way of settling such doubts is to make the trial. This will prove that every child can point out its own errors as well as the instructor himself, and the actual advantages gained in the respective cases, admit of no comparison. The pupil who is constantly *told* of his errors, listens, for the most part, to all that is said on the subject, either with vacant indifference, or with that sort of feeling which relies rather on the present indulgence of idleness, than on the future rewards of attention. But a feeling of conscious shame is induced in the mind of the child, who perceives from the answers which he cannot fail to give to the questions propounded, that he is perfectly aware both of the faults of his own performance, and of the

proper remedies to be applied in subsequent attempts. The appeal—You see you know what is right, be careful then to practice it,—is often of considerable service in exciting attention, when other means would probably fail.

The questions referred to as necessary to be put to the pupil are of a similar character and tendency to the following:— Pointing to the first letter of the pupil's attempt, and directing him to look carefully both at it and at the copy, the teacher says,—

Q. Is this *I* well made?

A. No; it is too high, or too short, or too long, &c.

Q. Could it be made better?

A. I think so.

Q. What must you do then to improve it?

A. Make it longer, or shorter, or broader, &c.

Q. How could you have made it better at first?

A. By paying more attention.

These questions, it is easily seen, may be indefinitely varied and extended, according to circumstances, but the principle must never be lost sight of, that *the pupil always corrects himself*. Each letter passes under a similar review, and the whole word is then written over again, the second and each successive attempt being subjected to the same rigid investigation until the pupil learns to correct, in a greater or less degree, every fault, as previously particularized by himself. He then goes on to the second word, in examining which, the process just described is invariably employed, and so on with regard to the rest of the sentence, recollecting, that every time a fresh word is taken, the writing must commence with the first word written, that all the results of the attention previously bestowed may be embraced and preserved each time of transcription, and that the pupil may not fall again into any of the errors of which he has already been made conscious. When the child begins to transcribe a sentence or two tolerably well, he is required to write from memory, and afterwards note his faults by comparison with the original copy. After some considerable practice in the writing of small-

hand, he is carried forward to exercises in the bolder styles of writing, while, at the same time, the incessant maintenance of the principles originally urged upon him, is, on no account, to be looked upon as a matter of slight importance. *He can never perform any thing so well, but that with more pains he may perform it better.*

LANGUAGES.

As soon as the pupil has obtained, by the process already described, a tolerable acquaintance with the elementary arts of Reading and Writing, his future progress in them is made to connect itself with the study of his own language, to which he is now, in course, directed. It is not, however, designed, that he shall cease to give them the same attention as before, but that they shall now be applied to some actual service. He shall be taught to see and prove for himself the useful purposes to which they can be made subservient. An object will thus be apparent to his view; and labour, with an object, is much more cheerfully performed, even by an idler, than that which seems to be exacted arbitrarily, and the end and aim of which are but indistinctly discerned.

M. Jacotot's method of teaching languages, considered as a whole, is so different from all previously pursued, that it is easy to account for the repugnance which many intelligent instructors have evinced, to put the efficacy of it to proof by actual experiment. They have found themselves unable to comprehend, at a glance, the connection between means and end, and have at once decided, that the alleged results are incredible, and the method wholly incompetent. But this is a mere assertion, opposed both by undeniable facts, and by the plausibility of the scheme itself, which, indeed, they would have at once acknowledged, if it had received, as it ought to have done, their serious unprejudiced consideration. It is,

however, hardly to be expected, that any one, unless the positive results were incessantly under his eyes, should heartily adopt the method, before he had, in some degree, satisfied himself with the arguments which serve to establish its theoretical excellence. Were this not the case, one single page would be sufficient to give the teacher all the necessary directions, since, as before said, the practical part of the system is embraced in the words, **LEARN SOMETHING THOROUGHLY, AND REFER EVERY THING ELSE TO IT.** The principle comprehended in these terms, is modified or varied, to suit different circumstances, but it still remains essentially the same. To adapt it to the study of all languages, whether the vernacular or others, it is made to assume the following form:—*Learn one book in the language (whatever this may be) thoroughly, refer all the rest to it by your own reflection, and verify the observations of others by what you know yourself.* He who obeys this direction, acquires languages in about one-tenth of the time usually employed to arrive at the same result. It will be observed, that nothing is here said of learning grammar, writing exercises upon it, &c. Grammar, instead of being introduced to the pupil's attention as soon as he can read, is postponed to a very late stage in his literary education. He writes themes, moral and metaphysical essays, criticisms, &c. &c. and, in short, goes through an entire course of elementary composition, before he is required to investigate the principles of grammar. This must necessarily surprise those who are accustomed to believe, that an acquaintance with the rules of grammar is a prerequisite to correct composition in every language. This assumption, although very generally prevalent, cannot be supported by any arguments whatever. As far as the vernacular tongue is concerned, it is opposed by innumerable facts, which will occur to the mind of every attentive observer. Many persons write with perfect correctness without being able to account grammatically for a single sentence, or even a word, in their composition. Many more speak grammatically, although utterly unacquainted with

grammar. But how could this happen, if a knowledge of that science were indeed so essential to accuracy of language, as it is assumed to be? Again, every one concerned in tuition is aware, that a child may be able to repeat the grammar from one end to the other, and yet be totally incapable of putting three correct sentences together. It is, therefore, evident, that the science of grammar, and propriety of composition in the language, are not quite so intimately connected as some may imagine. No one will indeed deny, that a perfect acquaintance with all the grammatical rules of a language would effectually prevent the commission of errors, if the person thus gifted should recollect, every time he spoke or wrote, the exact rule necessary to be observed in the construction of his sentences. But no one who speaks or writes well does this. He who is accustomed to tremble at the thought of committing a grammatical solecism, or who imagines that his thoughts can be at all strengthened or adorned, by a scrupulous anxiety of this kind, will never thoroughly succeed in composition. His style must, of necessity, be stiff and constrained. Did Milton or Shakspeare stay, before they penned their immortal lines, to consider if the expressions they employed were precisely grammatical? No;—the thought was entire, and they were well acquainted with the conventional signs in which it was to be conveyed, and they wrote what will last for ever; but they did not effect this by a superior acquaintance with the technicalities of grammar;—many a school-boy would, probably, have been more than a match for them both in this respect. The immediate inference from the foregoing considerations, is, that the real importance of grammatical knowledge, in the business of education, is by no means commensurate with that factitious estimation in which it has long been held. The pupil is taught to consider that he is learning his own language, when he is, in fact, only becoming acquainted with the general observations that have been made upon it. Grammar is a science of generalities, entirely derived from the actual state, the facts, indeed, of the language.

The language must indisputably have preceded all the grammatical rules founded upon it. Instead, therefore, of learning rules, in order to apply facts to them, the pupils of Jacotot are directed to learn the facts themselves, and afterwards to verify the rules or observations of the grammarians by their own knowledge. They are, indeed, sent (to use the author's expression) *to the masters of the grammarians*, that is, to the standard classical writers of the language. Here facts are to be found in abundance, and when the pupil is perfectly familiar with the phraseology of his model, he is never at a loss for the means of verification.

Language is entirely conventional, and we learn to employ it correctly by imitating those who are best acquainted with its recognised forms. A child who mixes in no other society than that of well-educated persons, will as naturally speak with accuracy, as another, whose companions are of an opposite character, will imitate their errors and improprieties. And hence we learn to account for the fact, that a man may speak and write well, without knowing grammar. This man has become acquainted with the *masters of the grammarians*, and he therefore speaks and writes grammar as the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* of Molière did prose, without being aware of it.

These preliminary remarks were thought necessary, in anticipation of objections (perhaps not now satisfied) against this particular point of Jacotot's system,*—the finishing, instead of commencing, with the science of grammar. It may now be proper to unfold the method pursued in learning the

* It may be here objected, that Milton, Locke, Dumarsais, Dufief, Hamilton, &c. have all, more or less, developed and enforced this principle, and consequently, that there is neither merit nor novelty in the adoption of it by Jacotot. To this it may be replied, that Jacotot does not assume the novelty of any one of the principles which operate in his system; he merely contends, that he has shown the conformity of them to the system of nature, and brought them together, so as to form a united whole. With respect to other objections on this head, one answer may suffice,—that, with respect to celerity in the acquisition of languages, Jacotot's method far outstrips that commonly designated the Hamiltonian.

vernacular tongue, previously intimating to the reader, that the exercises, soon to be explained in detail, are the exact counterpart of those employed in acquiring a thorough knowledge of foreign or dead languages. The Universal Instruction has but one route.

The pupil is required to commit to memory the first six books of Telemachus, as an introductory exercise.* These he must know perfectly, so as to be able to repeat them, from one end to the other, without the slightest hesitation; and whenever the teacher mentions the first word of a paragraph or sentence, to continue the paragraph or sentence without the omission of a single word. Many persons to whom this has been mentioned, have been at once startled at what they considered so vast a requirement, not recollecting, at the same time, that much more, and, (as will be shown,) to infinitely less purpose, is exacted from the pupil by the common method. When the six books of Telemachus, or an equivalent portion of any eminent work in the language which the pupil may be studying, is once thus thoroughly impressed on the memory, his labour is almost all over. Every exercise afterwards required of him is little better than amusement; he is in possession of all the necessary materials, and his mind will almost spontaneously employ them. In his book, he finds the elements of Grammar, Composition, Criticism, Mental and Moral Philosophy, Logic, the Science of Human

* It is to be recollected, that the writer of this pamphlet merely employs the illustrations of the author for the sake of convenience. Telemachus is the work by which Jacotot's experiments were made in the tuition of French and Belgic pupils. The choice of the most eligible book, for a similar course, as adapted to instruction in England, might require much deliberation. We have not perhaps any work so well fitted, in all respects, for our purpose, as Telemachus is for theirs. The continental pupils of Jacotot's system, who learn English, are directed to commit to memory a portion of Johnson's *Rasselas*, making this their model-book. There are, perhaps, some objections to selecting *Rasselas*, as a standard of style; though most parents, it is believed, would be well satisfied, were their children taught to write English as well as Johnson,—an attainment which this system puts completely within their reach.

Nature in general, History, Geography, Science, &c. &c. of every thing, indeed, that the author deemed it necessary for himself to know, in order to produce his work as it actually exists. He is in thorough possession of the unembodied essence of all the subjects of knowledge just mentioned, though he is not made to stumble and start at their technical nomenclature. Nothing remains but to evolve the various elements, and they are then seen to assume the form and character of distinct sciences. But this is not all; from particular facts, and the particular reflections connected with them, the pupil's mind is led on to analyse circumstances in the aggregate,—to generalize,—to trace the method pervading the whole,—to see the reason of that method,—and thus to enter into the very spirit of his author, and to understand every thing, to think upon every thing, as the author did while composing his work. These are the advantages which it is not said *may* be obtained, but which actually *have* been obtained, from the employment of the method of Jacotot. Let then calm consideration decide the question, whether it is better to commit to memory a portion of any author equivalent to the six books of Telemachus, that the benefits just mentioned may be gained, or whether the same results as easily follow from the pursuit of the methods generally employed. But Jacotot's system effects much more than has been stated. By means of this process of committing to memory the first six books of Telemachus, and performing the subsequent exercises, pupils of fourteen and fifteen years of age, have arrived at a proficiency in composition which would be perfectly incredible, did not the development of the method itself furnish data quite sufficient to induce credulity upon this point. These pupils have learned to equal Fenelon in elegance and correctness of style,—to approximate very nearly to Girard in detecting the difference of synonymous words,—to criticise much better than Madame Dacier often did,—to make general observations on literature not inferior to those of La Harpe,—and, in short, (for to mention all, would, at this stage of development, provoke positive incredulity), to do more than

ever was done by any children, except those who have been by common consent designated geniuses. It will hardly be maintained after this, that the labour necessary to be applied in committing thoroughly to memory six books of Telemachus, is worth a single thought, when such advantages are consequent on the exercise.* But whatever may be said, the fact is, that the aggregate of *words* actually committed to memory, is far greater in the common system than in that of Jacotot. Some, however, who feel convinced that this must be true, and that to learn a hundred pages, in order to acquire a language, is in itself no very laborious task, yet object, that to commit these pages to memory, so as continuously to repeat them from beginning to end, without hesitation, would, to some children, be quite impossible. M. Jacotot at once denies the assertion, and maintains, that *all children have memory, and an equal memory*, and therefore, that all may be made to learn, what any one can learn. He does not indeed maintain, that all have an equal will; nor again, does he assert, that those who have not been accustomed to committing to memory, will, at first, succeed quite so well as those who are adepts in the exercise. A little practice will, however, give a facility which might have appeared unattainable at the commencement of the attempt. This objection, indeed, cannot be maintained on any ground of argument. We say a child has a bad memory, when, in nine cases out of ten, it is inclination, or, to say the least, exercise that is wanted,—not the faculty

* The benefits of this exercise, it may be observed, are not restricted to the immediate purposes of the scholastic education in view. Every person tutored by the system of Jacotot will doubtless be able to commit any thing (whatever it may be) to memory more speedily, and to retain it more durably, than one unaccustomed to the process of this system. The pages indelibly stamped on the memory, as above directed, and anatomised, (so to speak,) by the subsequent interrogatory scrutiny, will form in the mind a grand mnemonical gallery of pictures with which almost every thing within the range of human knowledge will form some kind of association. Schenkel's once very celebrated System of Mnemonics was founded upon a principle similar to this.

of remembrance. This very child, were he interrogated on any topic connected with his spontaneous amusements, would very soon convince the questioner, by the infinite variety of facts recollected, that there could not, by possibility, be any radical defect in his memory. Were this really deficient, how could any kind of facts be so minutely remembered, and so clearly particularised. Give, however, the same child a lesson of grammar to learn by heart. He cannot be made to feel the same interest in grammar, that he does in sports and games, and besides, he does not understand the subject. What then is the consequence? He pays little or no attention, repeats the stipulated task very miserably, and we infer, that he has a very bad memory. It would be more correct to say, he has paid little attention to his lesson; and it should then be a point of conscientious consideration, whether we had chosen the proper means for inducing attention, by teasing him with dry technical terms, which he could not understand, and by not properly training his memory; that is, by requiring too much from it at this particular time, without regard to the previous state of exercise to which it might have been accustomed. We owe all our knowledge to memory, for without this faculty, the moment we closed our eyes on external nature, the mind would be a perfect blank. We possess not a single idea for which we are not ultimately indebted to memory. *Reasoning is essentially based on facts*, and unless the mind possesses the necessary facts, there can be no act of judgment, no connected chain of argumentation. It is the practice of founding our reasonings on the reasonings of others, which leads to mistaken notions and erroneous conclusions. This view of the subject, intended to confirm the brief axioms of Jacotot, is, it will be at once seen, quite incompatible with the observations made by Montaigne, Watts, Edgeworth, &c. that an accurate judgment, and what is called great genius, may be totally unconnected with a good memory. No great genius ever existed without memory, nor without being indebted to memory for nearly every thing which stamped its productions with eminence. Miss Edgeworth, in the Prac-

tical Education; labours to show that Shakspeare had a very indifferent memory;—but was not this quite impossible? If he depicts natural scenery, what supplied him with the materials which he put into new combinations, but memory? If he makes general reflections, whence were these obtained, but from particular facts? and how are facts associated and retained for reflection, but by memory? And again, how could the numberless historical facts, upon which he builds the entire structure of most of his surprising dramas, have been in his mind ready for use, if memory had not preserved them? Could Shakspeare, more than any other man, have pourtrayed with his pen an accurate picture of a thing without previously having the idea of it mentally before him? and could he have derived this idea from any other source than facts? If he himself were personally cognisant of these facts, memory must have treasured his perceptions; if he received them from a secondary source, memory must still have held the record. But because Shakspeare did not sit down in the corner of a room, and commit to memory a set form of words, but chose rather to see things, and because he chose to make his own reflections, and not learn by rote those made by others, is his faculty of memory to be depreciated? The idea is too absurd to be entertained for an instant. It would be much easier to maintain, in direct opposition, (though such a hypothesis is incompatible with Jacotot's opinion, already cited,) that as we do not precisely know what genius is, Shakspeare's unrivalled eminence was owing to a superiority over other men in the very article of memory. We do not learn facts by intuition, nor do we arrive at general notions, except from facts. Perception supplies us with these, and memory retains them for the use of the mind. But perhaps too much time has been already devoted to this subject, in consistence with the limited plan of the present work. It has been thought necessary to develop it more fully, from the connexion it manifestly exhibits to one of Jacotot's most important principles, that *the pupil is directed to commit to memory facts, and to make his own*

reflections upon them. He never commits to memory the reflections of others, but he is taught to examine the correctness of these by reference to the facts upon which they are of necessity founded. From all the preceding remarks, may be easily seen, in what the connexion maintained between the memory and the judgment, by the system of the Universal Instruction, really consists. The memory is considered as the faculty which supplies materials for the operations of the mind. This duty is thought to be inefficiently performed, if the stores are suffered to be lost, (*for to forget, is the same as never to have learned,*) or if they remain, like lumber, unappropriated to any useful purpose. The provisions of the system against these mischances, are the incessant repetition of every thing learned, and the constant vigilance excited in the mind, that every idea introduced there for the first time, shall not only find an associate amongst some of the ideas already firmly established there, but shall itself serve the same purpose with reference to any others subsequently introduced, whenever called upon. Thus, all the materials are rendered serviceable, and, as they are permanently retained, no part of the labour spent in the acquisition of them is lost. If then it be allowed, that the memory is a most invaluable faculty, and that we naturally acquire all our ideas, whatever they may be, by its instrumentality, we must not forget to follow Nature's plan, with respect to those things which we, to answer particular ends, find it necessary to deposit in its custody. No ideas can long be retained in the memory, which are not deeply impressed by repetition. Were it not for constant repetition, we might even forget our own names, as we frequently do those of strangers. This exercise has been hitherto far too much neglected in education, though even the greatest men,—and, in fact, all who have attained to true and solid learning,—have invariably availed themselves of its powerful aid. Porson, in early life, was accustomed to repeat the same Greek verses over and over again a great many times, and he attributed to this practice the wonderful

facility of reference which he ever afterwards possessed. Permanent retention can, in fact, be ensured by no other process. Repetition, therefore, is considered of vital importance in the system of Jacotot; not a mere repetition of the lesson of the preceding day, or even week, as is the case in some schools, but of every thing previously committed to memory. Nothing is omitted. It follows from this, that the facts learned and comprehended, are seen by the mind, not merely as detached, insulated points, but in all the varieties of analogy, succession, and consequence.

Learn then by heart, and understand, says Jacotot, the first six books of Telemaque, or an equivalent portion of any eligible work in the language to be acquired, and repeat it incessantly. Refer every thing else to this, and you will certainly learn the language. The following is the method proposed by Jacotot, in order to attain that perfect mental retention necessary to the efficient operation of this system.

The pupil must learn every day a sentence, a paragraph, or a page, according as his memory is more or less habituated to this exercise; and he must never fail to repeat all that he has previously learned, from the first word of the book. Thus, if he learns one sentence at first, on the following day he learns the next sentence, but repeats the two, commencing with the first word of that previously learned. The same method is pursued to the end of the sixth book. As however this repetition, as the pupil goes on, necessarily occupies much time, it is sometimes found advisable to divide the portion thus accumulating; but still the general repetition of the six books must have place at least twice a week. The oftener the whole is repeated, the more prompt and durable are the results.

It is confessed that the preceding exercise is tedious and wearisome, and great care is required on the part of the teacher to prevent it from becoming repulsive and disgusting to the pupil.* Too much must not at first be exacted. If the child

* It is submitted, with much deference, that were some few of the admirable exercises which succeed this mnemonical practice, to precede it,

cannot learn a paragraph in a day, let him learn two sentences, one sentence, or even a single word. At all events he must learn something thoroughly; on the next day he will learn something more, still repeating what has been previously learned; and after a fortnight's practice there will be little reason to tax him with want of memory. When the pupil knows the first six books of Telemachus thoroughly, it is not necessary to commit the remaining eighteen to memory; but he must read every day some pages of them, with a degree of attention sufficient to enable him to *relate* what they contain. This is a very important exercise, and is on no account to be neglected. The recital of the pupil serves as an evidence of the attention that he has paid during his perusal, and what is more, accustoms him to the practice of speaking without hesitation upon a fact present to his memory, and of employing expressions which he has seen used in the book, in accordance with the peculiar circumstances of the fact or facts narrated. By this means he becomes accustomed to the use of words as the signs of ideas actually in his mind; and hence results propriety and facility of diction. He speaks of what he understands, and of course speaks clearly, and, in a certain degree, well. This second exercise, however, on no account excludes the general or partial repetition of the first six books, which the pupil must go through at least once a week, even when they are fixed immovably in his memory.

The pupil's greatest difficulties are now conquered. He knows all he ought to know: *as he knows one book he knows*

much of the difficulty, confessedly great, of committing thoroughly to memory a mass of words but imperfectly comprehended when first learned, would be obviated. If the pupil were made to read carefully over each passage to be committed to memory, and rigidly interrogated as to the meaning, until all the ideas which it embraced were comprehended by his mind, the task of subsequently learning it by heart, would be comparatively very slight; nor does it appear, that by so doing, any one principle of the system would be sacrificed; since the same interrogations might be afterwards repeated. Still, however, this is merely a suggestion; of its propriety, let others judge.

*all books.** All that now remains for him, is to *distinguish*, to *compare*, and to *refer*. The materials have been stored, and the mental faculties are now called upon to do their part. It is singular, that what is generally accounted the most difficult point of attainment by the common method of tuition, the getting the pupil to think, becomes, in the system of Jacotot, the easiest. The pupil cannot help thinking; that is, he cannot help noticing resemblances, and distinguishing differences, and consequently exercising his judgment, when led on according to the process now to be illustrated. Previously, however, what was formerly intimated may be again remarked, that *the master*, who pursues the method of the Universal Instruction, *tells the pupil nothing. He explains nothing, insists upon nothing, affirms nothing. The pupil is taught to see every thing himself, and to make his own reflections, not to receive those made by others.* He is called upon to answer the repeated interrogations put to him by his teacher; which, however, tell him nothing; they only lead him to view the subject in all its points of observation. This view must be the same that his mind, were it actuated by the free impulses of his will, that is, were he really desirous of thoroughly comprehending the matter, would of necessity take. Hence is the System of Jacotot undeniably based on the system of nature.

In pursuance of this method, the pupil is directed to read the two first paragraphs of the first book. He is told to pay the utmost possible attention to them; and *the teacher then puts questions to him on every word and phrase*, on each paragraph, and on the two together; and, in short, the passage is not dismissed from view, until it is evident that nothing has escaped the pupil's attention.

The manner in which this is done will now be made to appear; and it may be recollected, that the principle on which its efficacy depends, is, that the author would have not used

* The strict import of this phraseology will be more apparent hereafter; for the present it is sufficient to enunciate it as the dictum of Jacotot.

every word, unless every word had been necessary to convey his ideas to the reader. If then it was necessary for the author to employ all the words and expressions brought before us, it must be equally necessary for us to understand them. That the full force of this exercise may be apparent, a translation of the first paragraph, (altered from Hawkesworth's, which is too diffuse,) is subjoined.

“ The grief of Calypso for the departure of Ulysses would admit of no comfort. In the height of her sorrow, she even regretted her immortality. Her grotto echoed no more with the music of her voice, and her attendant nymphs dared not to address her. She often walked alone upon the flowery turf, with which an eternal spring had decked the borders of her isle; but the beauties which bloomed around her, far from soothing her grief, only revived the sad remembrance of Ulysses, who had been so frequently the companion of her walks. Sometimes she stood motionless upon the beach, which she bedewed with her tears, turning herself incessantly to that direction in which the vessel of Ulysses, cleaving the waves, had disappeared from her view.”

The following questions and answers are, of course, given merely as illustrations. If the method be thoroughly comprehended by the teacher, he will, with the greatest ease, adapt himself to the circumstances of the case. Taking then the first sentence—

The grief of Calypso for the departure of Ulysses would admit of no comfort—

The teacher asks—Who was gone?

The pupil answers—Ulysses.

Q. Who was grieved?

A. Calypso.

Q. Who were Calypso and Ulysses?

A. I do not know.*

Q. What was the cause of Calypso's grief?

A. The departure of Ulysses.

Q. Did Calypso love Ulysses?

A. Yes.

* The pupil is supposed to know nothing of the characters, but what he can obtain from an attentive examination of every word which relates to them in his book.

Q. How do you know that?

A. Because her grief for his departure would admit of no comfort.

Q. Was she slightly grieved, or very much?

A. Very much.

Q. What do we call that grief which admits of no comfort?

A. Inconsolable.

The teacher will use his own discretion as to asking such questions as the last, which require in the answers the use of words and phrases not to be found in the original sentence. It is generally thought advisable to confine the attention solely to questions which will introduce the very words of the sentence under notice. If, however, such interrogations as the last be made, the pupil will not find the slightest difficulty in giving appropriate answers. When once he understands the idea, he will surprise his teacher by the many modes in which he shews himself capable of giving it expression. He will be found to have a distinct perception of the very lights and shades of the image depicted on his mind. The teacher may ascertain this to his own perfect satisfaction, *without telling or explaining to his pupil a single word*. The mind is to be *directed*, not *taught*. It is to be placed so that it may see the subject in every possible point of view, and the interrogation must be continued, until the entire scene, the actors, the action performed, the cause and object of the action, the modifying circumstances, &c. &c. are all distinctly in view.* Not

* The particular attention of the reader is requested to this part of the system, for it is to the analysis (by means of the interrogatory process above explained) of every complex idea presented to the pupil's notice, into its component simple ideas, that the wonderful results of Jacotot's method are ultimately owing. An illustration of the efficacy of this plan is afforded by the instance of the Abbé Longuerue, who lived in the reign of Louis XIV., a man (to use D'Alembert's expression) of "prodigious memory and terrible erudition." He wrote a folio history of France entirely from memory, without referring to a single book. When once asked by the Marquis d'Argenson to what he attributed his surprising powers of retention, he answered, "Sir, the elements of every

a word must be neglected, This comprehends the *learning thoroughly*; and the practice of *referring every thing to the first thing learned*, can, as will be seen directly, even at this initiatory stage, be brought into operation. The next sentence is read:—

In the height of her sorrow, she even regretted her immortality.

Q. To whose sorrow is reference here made?

A. To that of Calypso.

Q. Who was immortal?

A. Calypso.

Q. Why did she regret her immortality?

A. Because Ulysses was gone, and in her sorrow she would have wished to die.

Q. Why wish to die?

A. That she might lose her sorrow.

Q. Why could she not die?

A. Because she was immortal.

Q. What is it then to be immortal?

A. Not to be able to die.

Q. What do we know of Calypso from this sentence?

A. That she was sorrowful and immortal.

Q. Did we know these circumstances from the first sentence?

A. No; only one of them, that she was sorrowful.

Q. What more then do we now see?

A. That she was immortal.

Q. Was Ulysses immortal?

A. I do not know.

Some may consider such questions as these ridiculous, and find abundant matter for sport, in the idea that this kind of

science,—the first principles of every language,—the a, b, c; as I may say, of every kind of knowledge,—must be learned whilst we are very young. This is not difficult in youth, especially as it is not necessary to penetrate far,—*simple notions are sufficient; when these are acquired, every thing we read afterwards finds its proper place.*”

exercise should ever teach a child to write his own language, as well as the author whose work is put into his hands. Some again will contend, that there is not the least novelty in it, and that the practice of interrogation is pursued by every teacher who wishes to ascertain the knowledge of his pupil. To the former party of objectors, Jacotot simply says, *Try, and you will be sure to succeed; an experience of ten years warrants my prediction*; and to the other party he replies, I acknowledge you ask questions, but your questions are confined to the technicalities of grammar; and I propose to reverse the order that you follow, and to finish by grammar. But he might have said more than this. No plan of interrogation was ever so eminently successful as that now proposed, for *it puts the pupil in full possession of every idea that is brought before him*, and, as he finds himself able to answer every question, he gains confidence as he advances, and perceives every difficulty vanish before him. Nine-tenths of the actual waste of time in the common method, arises from the pupil's obtaining an indistinct perception of many things, which lie in the mind in a disjointed and disorderly state, because the mutual bond of connection is hidden in the obscurity which veils them. If he knew a little more about them, all would be clear; as it is, almost every thing is misty. The system of Jacotot allows of no such semi-perceptions. The youngest child may, with the slightest attention, answer these questions, and consequently comprehend the successive ideas which they are intended to lay open before him. We proceed to the next sentence:—

Her grotto echoed no more with the music of her voice, and her attendant nymphs dared not to address her.

Q. To whom are we referring here?

A. Calypso.

Q. Was she accustomed to sing?

A. Yes.

Q. Was she always singing?

A. No; she did not sing now.

Q. How do you know that?

A. Because her grotto echoed no more with her voice.

Q. Where did she generally sing?

A. In her grotto.

Q. Why did her grotto echo no more with her singing?

A. Because she was sorrowful.

Q. Who were Calypso's attendants?

A. Nymphs.

Q. Why did they not dare to address her?

A. Because she was sorrowful.

Q. What more of Calypso do we know than we did before?

A. That she had a grotto, that she sung, and that she was attended by nymphs.

She often walked alone upon the flowery turf, with which an eternal spring had decked the borders of her isle; but the beauties which bloomed around her, far from soothing her grief, only revived the sad remembrance of Ulysses, who had been so frequently the companion of her walks.

Q. Where did Calypso walk?

A. Upon the flowery turf.

Q. Where did she live?

A. In an island.

Q. Did we know that before?

A. No.

Q. Was it cold in the island of Calypso?

A. No: there was an eternal spring.

Q. In whose company did she walk?

A. She walked alone.

Q. With whom had she been accustomed to walk?

A. With Ulysses.

Q. Why did not she walk with him now?

A. Because he was gone.

Q. How do you know that?

A. Because in the first sentence the grief of Calypso for the departure of Ulysses is mentioned: this shows he was gone.

Q. Why was the remembrance of Ulysses sad?

A. Because Calypso loved him, and he was gone away from her.

Q. Why did Calypso now walk alone ?

A. Because she was sorrowful.

Sometimes she stood motionless upon the beach, which she bedewed with her tears, turning herself incessantly to that direction in which the vessel of Ulysses, cleaving the waves, had disappeared from her view.

Q. In what part of her isle did Calypso dwell ?

A. Near the sea shore.

Q. How do you know that ?

A. Because she often walked on the turf which was on the border of her isle, and because her grotto must have been near at hand, or it would not have been mentioned.

Q. Do we know, from the preceding sentences, in what manner Ulysses had departed ?

A. No.

Q. Do we now know ?

A. Yes ; in a vessel.

Q. Was the vessel of Ulysses still in view ?

A. No ; it had disappeared.

Q. Why "cleaving the waves ?"

A. Because the vessel was in motion.

Q. How do you know that ?

A. Because, if it had been still, it would not have been said to cleave the waves.

Q. Can you give any other reason ?

A. Yes. If it had been still, it would have been yet in view.

The foregoing illustrations may suffice to shew what is meant by *asking questions on every word, phrase, &c.* After each sentence of the first two paragraphs has been thus passed through, the teacher may propose questions on each paragraph, then on the two together. This may be illustrated with reference to the first ; its further application will be obvious.

Q. What persons have been mentioned by name in this paragraph ?

A. Two : Calypso and Ulysses.

Q. What do you know of Calypso ?

A. Calypso was a female, an immortal, attended by nymphs, and dwelling in an island. She lived near the sea shore.

Q. What is she said to have done in this passage ?

A. To have walked alone ; to have repulsed her nymphs ; stood still weeping by the sea shore, &c.

Q. Why did she act thus ?

A. Because she was sorrowful.

Q. What do we know of Ulysses ?

A. Ulysses was a man who had accompanied Calypso in her walks, whom she loved very much, and who was now gone away in a ship.

When the attention of the pupil begins to waver at all, it is proper to ask questions, which, unless he were strictly on his guard, would lead him into an absurdity. Thus, for instance, Ulysses went away :—

Q. Did Ulysses go away in a coach ?

A. No ; in a ship.

Q. Did he go along the high road ?

A. No ; he went upon the sea, and there are no roads on the sea.

Q. Is it expressly said that he went on the sea ?

A. No : but he could not have travelled in a ship except on the sea ; and, besides, the expression “ cleaving the waves,” shews that the sea must be meant.

The pupil in this way becomes well acquainted with each word, phrase, paragraph, several paragraphs united, and, in short, with an entire book. As the exercise is continued, and the pupil accustomed to answer, his progress becomes more and more interesting. Every new character, every new fact or group of facts, must be compared with those that have preceded. The unremitted vigilance of the teacher must stimulate the pupil to instruct himself, by reflecting on the facts of his book, by associating and classifying them, and by putting them into new combinations. Especial care must however be taken (as has been already hinted) that *no questions be asked, the answers to which are not to be obtained from the book that the pupil knows*. It matters not in what part they may be, for though the elements of the solution be scattered, the memory will reunite them. *The understanding always sees*

well what it really sees, and we reason amiss, only when we speak of what we do not see.

A very interesting exercise is now proposed to the pupil,—that of defining words by the comparison of passages solely derived from his model-book. Thus, suppose for instance, he were asked—

What is the meaning of the word “*Spring?*” He answers, —I observe the word *Spring* in the following passages:—*Flowery turf, with which an eternal Spring had decked, &c.* (book i.)—*They brought all the fruits which Spring promises, and Autumn, &c.* (b. i.)—*He celebrated the flowers which crown the Spring, the fragrance which she diffuses, and the verdure that rises under her feet, (b. ii.) &c. &c.*

Well, says the teacher, what reflection do these passages excite in your mind?

A. I see that *Spring* is that season of the year in which fragrant flowers begin to bloom, buds to open forth, birds to sing, &c. &c.

As the pupil advances, he is *exercised* in *generalising*, that is, speaking of a particular fact in a manner applicable to all facts of the same nature. *He is not taught to generalize; the faculty is common to all men. Let him be made to direct his undistracted attention to the subject before him, and he will reason upon it as well as his instructor.* In order then to bring this faculty into exercise,—as soon as a great number of questions, (similar to those given for the sake of illustration,) have been proposed on the first paragraph, the pupil is asked, What do you perceive in the whole of this paragraph? He will answer, probably, *grief, sorrow*, or something of the kind. Suppose he answers *grief*. He is immediately asked, What then is *grief*? and he is at once obliged to generalise.

The answer to the question, What is *grief*? founded upon the facts of the paragraph under review, will of necessity assume a form similar to the following, which is, indeed, the translated reply of a child who had just commenced the study of his own language.

“ Grief is a passion of which we become sensible after the loss of any one dear to us. The person who experiences grief seeks solitude, ceases to take delight in the most agreeable places, and repulses the attentions of those who would willingly administer solace.”

As soon as this, or a similar composition, is produced by the pupil, he is called upon to justify every sentence employed, by reference to the facts from which his general notion is derived. Thus the teacher asks—

Why do you say, *Grief is a passion of which we become sensible after the loss of any one dear to us?* The pupil replies, Because, after the departure of Ulysses, the grief of Calypso would admit of no comfort.

Q. Why do you say, *The person who experiences grief seeks solitude?*

A. She often walked alone on the flowery turf, &c.

Q. Why have you said, *Ceases to take delight in the most agreeable places?*

A. Calypso took no pleasure in her beautiful isle; she noticed not the flowery turf; she thought of nothing but Ulysses.

Q. Why say, *Repulses the attentions, &c.?*

A. Her attendant nymphs dared not to address her.

The composition in question, it should be remarked, is generally submitted to three distinct readings. After the first, it is examined as a whole; after the second, the pupil gives an account of the facts upon which he has written; and, after the third, particular attention is paid to individual words, and to improprieties of diction, if they occur. During the first reading, the pupil is made to pay great attention to the manner in which he reads; he must pronounce very distinctly all the syllables of each word, and introduce the proper inflexions of voice. At the second reading, without waiting for questions, he should explain his composition in the following manner: “ I have said, Grief is a passion of which we become sensible after the loss of any one dear to us; because I have seen, that after the departure of Ulysses the grief of Calypso would admit of no comfort, &c. &c. After the third reading, the pupil may

be required to point out in *Telemachus* every word and phrase that he has employed; for it is distinctly understood, that he must never wander from his guide. Every expression not authorised by his model, even though perfectly correct, is inadmissible. This restriction ensures propriety of language, for he is of necessity obliged to seek his phraseology from passages which he well understands, and the ideas arising from which are, of consequence, distinctly associated in his mind, with their appropriate verbal signs. As long as he remains in pupillage he must follow the model book as his guide in every respect. Afterwards, when he has acquired sufficient experience to pursue his way alone, nothing will prevent him from employing or imitating the expressions of other eminent authors. He will, indeed, do this without previous reflection, but never without being able to justify his language by reference to good authority.

Another very important exercise is made to depend upon what Jacotot calls the oratorical artifice of *repetition*. The meaning of this term will better appear from the following example, than from any brief explanation which could be given.

Q. Of what does the first paragraph of *Telemachus* consist? (see p. 29.)

A. Of the fact—that Calypso's grief for the departure of Ulysses was inconsolable: it therefore contains three things; Calypso (1), her inconsolable grief (2), and the departure of Ulysses (3).

Q. How do you prove this?

A. *In the height of her sorrow*,—and—*she even regretted*, &c. are only repetitions of—her grief was inconsolable. *Her immortality*, gives the idea of Calypso. *Her attendant nymphs*—this makes me think of Calypso—*dared not to address her*, reminds me of her grief. *Her grotto* (1) *echoed no more*, &c. (2). *She often walked alone* (2) *upon the flowery turf*, &c. (1). But these beautiful places (1), *far from soothing*, &c. (2), *only revived the sad remembrance*, &c. (2, 3). *She incessantly turned*, &c. (1, 2, 3), *to the direction in which*, &c. (3).*

* The purport of this exercise is too obvious to need explanation.

Now that the pupil can answer every question propounded to him, can generalise, and justify every thing that he has said or written, it only becomes necessary to vary his exercises, and thus to lead him gradually and easily to write whenever and upon whatever he pleases; and finally, to speak extemporaneously upon a given subject. The entire course, then, comprehends the following exercises:

1. To imitate.
2. To make general reflections upon known facts.
3. To distinguish between synonymous words.
4. To distinguish between synonymous expressions.
5. To examine parallel subjects.
6. To examine analogous thoughts.
7. To transfer or translate the reflections arising from one subject to another somewhat similar.
8. To analyse a chapter, book, poem, &c.
9. To develop or paraphrase the thoughts of an author.
10. To find subjects for transference.
11. To write upon a literary or critical subject; to furnish descriptions of things observed.
12. To imitate a thought.
13. To write letters.
14. To portray a character.
15. To compare characters.
16. To write tales, sketches, &c.
17. To verify the grammar.
18. To write upon any given subject in a given time.
19. To speak extemporaneously upon a given subject.
20. All is in all.

During the performance of all these exercises, the pupil continues the general repetition of the six books of *Telemachus*, and the reading (accompanied with recital) of the remainder.

A very brief notice of the most important exercises, must, in the present instance, suffice. A more ample development may be hereafter furnished.

1. *Imitations*.—In writing *an imitation*, the pupil applies the terms which express a general sentiment by means of special facts, to the development of the same sentiment under

different circumstances. Thus, Calypso *regretted the departure of Ulysses*, and Philoctetes, in the fifteenth book, *regretted his perjury*, in betraying the secret of the burial place of Hercules. Inasmuch, then, as the same sentiment is exhibited in the two instances, so will the general terms of expression be the same, or very similar. The circumstances alone entirely differ. To describe one, therefore, taking the other as a model for general phraseology and succession of circumstances, is to produce an *imitation*. Thus, to recur to the instances already cited, the pupil preserves the features of regret and sorrow in both; but takes due care to notice, that Calypso was a goddess, Philoctetes a mortal; that the one lived in a beautiful island, and was attended by nymphs, that the other inhabited a solitary cavern, and was surrounded only by wild beasts; that the former lamented the loss of a being whom she had loved, that the latter deplored the commission of an irretrievable act of bad faith, &c. &c. All the points of distinction in the two cases must be noticed, while those only are to be preserved in the composition, which belong to the subject of the imitation. A sentence or two from a piece written by one of Jacotot's pupils, may illustrate this exercise.

"The grief of Philoctetes for having revealed the secret of Alcides' death, which he had sworn to conceal, would admit of no comfort. In the height of his sorrow he found the remembrance of his perjury less supportable than the cruel abandonment of the Greeks, the treachery of Ulysses, and the dreadful agonies occasioned by his wound. Night and day his groans reverberated through the cavern in which he dwelt." &c. &c.

After the pupil has read his composition aloud, he is called upon to justify the introduction of each circumstance.

Q. Why have you said, *For having revealed the secret of Alcides' death?*

A. Philoctetes says himself (see 15th book) *I eluded the vow that I had made to heaven, &c.*

Q. Why, *which he had sworn to conceal?*

A. Philoctetes also states this himself, *The secret which I had sworn to keep.*

Q. Why mention, *The abandonment of the Greeks, the treachery of Ulysses, &c.*?

A. All these facts are particularised in the history of Philoctetes, at the commencement of the fifteenth book of Telemachus, &c. &c.

It is easy to amplify this, as every other series of questions proposed in accordance with the system, to any extent. The only direction that can be given with respect to their number, is, that *the pupil must be interrogated until he evinces, by accounting for every expression employed, a perfectly accurate conception of every idea.*

The exercise of *imitation*, now under notice, is especially useful in habituating the pupil to employ correct phraseology.

2. *To make general reflections upon particular facts.*— This exercise is merely an extension of that before referred to under the name of generalisation. The pupil now takes a wider range of facts, and introduces into his composition a greater number of reflections. He is told to consider attentively a given passage or passages of his author, and to derive therefrom the reflections connected with a proposed subject. His success will evidently be proportionate to the combinations of facts, which his memory will enable him to form, and to the care with which he notices every part of his subject. He thus learns to perceive how the actual state of things under review is influenced by the modifications of the sentiment which he is required to develop. Children begin to generalise naturally, and to study the reciprocal relations of cause and effect, at a much earlier age than we are accustomed to consider; but their faculties often lie dormant because we overlook their existence. The process of Jacotot's system leads the young pupil to observe, that he partakes in the common features of human nature, and hence spontaneously generalises upon matters which concern him. By extending this principle, he considers that were he placed in circumstances similar to those unfolded in his book, his actions would, for the most part, resemble those attributed to the personages under his notice. He knows as well that sorrow attends the loss of any thing he may have held dear, as that the sun-beams do not freeze water; and hence he ac-

knowledges that the grief of Calypso, for instance, resembles human grief in general. This is the true basis of the exercise in question.

Every sentence that the pupil reads and thoroughly understands, must suggest a reflection of some kind or other. If, then, he discovers in every instance the name of this reflection,—the proper terms in which it should be expressed, the difficulty is over.

To exemplify the exercise is unnecessary. It should be remembered, that the pupil must be able to justify every reflection by reference to the facts upon which it is founded.

As soon as the pupil is tolerably well accustomed to this kind of composition, it is considered advisable to exercise him in *speaking upon different subjects*. The greatest difficulty is, to induce him to make the attempt; but when once his reluctance has been overcome, he will easily advance, and with undoubted success.

3. *Synonymous words*. 4. *Synonymous phrases*.—When called upon to distinguish between words or phrases, generally accounted synonymous, the pupil, in the first instance, repeats from memory a number (the extent of which may be determined by the teacher) of sentences containing the words or phrases in question, and he is particularly urged to recollect the precise circumstances in which they were employed by the author. He is then required to produce a general composition, founded upon the special facts under his notice, of every part of which composition he is finally made to render an account.

When he becomes well practised in this exercise, he is shown, that the authors who have written on synonymy, have arrived at their results, by pursuing a method precisely similar to that in which he has been led; and that if their productions are more methodical and elaborate than his own, the only reason for this superiority is found in the greater patience and attention that they have bestowed on the subject. Thus, for instance, the explanation of any particular word, as given by some reputable writer on the subject, (Girard, or Crabbe, or Hill, for instance), is read to the pupil,

and he is told to justify every part of it by facts with which his memory will supply him from the pages of Telemachus. By no means the least advantage consequent upon this practice, is its leading the pupil to discover, that in *learning one book thoroughly he learns all books*; for the writer of the synonymes undoubtedly collected his observations from a vast number of sources, though this exercise proves that the justificatory facts may be derived from a single one.

5. *Parallel subjects.* 6. *Analogous thoughts.*—As a preliminary part of the former of these exercises, the pupil is required to furnish an analysis of all the books of Telemachus. The following short specimen of an analysis of part of the first book may suffice to give an idea of what is meant:—*regrets,—artifice,—entreaty,—invitation,—situation,—advice,—repast,—invitation, &c.* In this way, the pupil learns to notice the different parts of his author, in which similar subjects are treated, and he is then required to contrast the manner of composition in any two or more of them. For instance, Telemachus, in the first book, addresses Acestes,—and in the second, Sesostris,—the pupil must compare the circumstances under which these addresses were made, and their respective objects—

1st. Telemachus, wandering in search of his father, is in the presence of a king; the subject is the same.

2d. The situation is the same. He is in the power of Acestes,—he is in the power of Sesostris.

3d. But Acestes speaks harshly to him,—Sesostris treats him with kindness, &c. &c.

The above will serve to show the design of this exercise, to the careful performance of which, great importance is attached.

The process of examining analogous thoughts requires no explanation. The pupil has only to perform with the general reflections, what he has, in the preceding exercise, performed with the facts of his author. As a variation, the pupil is told to open any book whatever, at random, and read aloud the first sentence that his eye may happen to glance upon. He is then asked to bring to mind reflections or facts in

Telemachus similar to that accidentally discovered in the book which he opens. It will rarely happen, that a single reflection can thus come under his view, in which he cannot observe some point of similarity to those already remarked in the pages of Telemachus. *Sometimes a maxim is selected from any book of general reflections, and the pupil is required to justify it by facts from Telemachus.* Wherever he turns his eyes, he perceives Fenelon, and hence Jacotot contends, that *one book contains all books*, or more generally, that *All is in all*. In this technical expression, *All is in all*, is comprehended the fundamental principle of the Universal Instruction.

7. *Translation or Transfer.*—This exercise is somewhat similar to that termed *Imitation*, but differs from it in assuming a more general character. In the latter, particular circumstances are imitated; *translation* consists in imitating the general reflections derived from those particular circumstances, and it therefore embraces the results of two distinct operations of the mind. The pupil must generalise before he can transfer,—this is not necessary in the exercise of imitation, in which a simple comparison of facts is required.

Thus it was before seen, that the circumstances of Calypso's grief, resembled, in several respects, those which evidenced the wretchedness of Philoctetes, and upon this observed similarity was founded an *imitation*. The regret of Calypso, stripped of the accessory circumstances, must resemble, in certain points, all regrets whatever. Hence *the regrets of the victim of ambition*, may be modelled on the *regret of Calypso*, and thus will be performed the exercise of *translation*. Every passage in the book may furnish materials for it, and by the combination of passages, one with another, the resources become positively inexhaustible.

It would be impossible, consistently with the plan of the present publication, to enter into the details of the succeeding exercises. If those already explained, have been rendered intelligible, the slightest consideration will suffice to show the nature and object of the rest. The 12th is a very important exercise,—*To write on any subject whatever*. Thus,

an ode, a sonnet, an oration, &c. &c. being put into the pupil's hands, he is required *to determine from the production itself, the rules of art according to which it is constructed.* Whatever be the subject, he learns to describe it in the common language with which he is acquainted by his previous training. The dialects of science and art, he may subsequently acquire. He is exercised in *Epistolary Composition*, by being required to write letters, with an object in view, and upon subjects which he well comprehends. Thus he keeps up a fictitious correspondence between Penelope, Telemachus, Mentor, Ulysses, &c. In making *Portraits*, the pupil traces biographical sketches of the various personages of his model-book, abstracting their characteristic features from the associations in which they are originally found. To this succeeds the exercise of comparing one *portrait* with another, or, as it is termed, making *parallels*, (after the manner of Plutarch,) the importance of which speaks for itself.

Last of all comes the *examination of grammar*, the comprehension of which is rendered by the previous course remarkably easy, for the pupil already knows the language. He is now only called upon to remark the correctness of his own observations, and to verify the observations of others by comparison with facts which have long been in his possession. This verification forms a *vivâ voce* exercise for the pupil, and, when once gone through, will scarcely need repetition. He is told before-hand, that the study of grammar will add nothing to his knowledge of the language, as far as words and phrases are concerned, and that he will not be supplied by that science with resources of expression previously inaccessible. He simply learns the technical verbiage adopted to express the observations made upon the nature, order, and reciprocal relations, of the words of the language. By comparing, therefore, his own observations, with those of the grammarian, the pupil acquires the conventional terms in which they are appropriately expressed.

A grammar is put into his hands, which he is directed to read, at the same time carefully reflecting upon every

sentence, and producing from Telemachus examples confirmatory of every observation and rule met with. Thus, for instance, he reads,—A noun is the name of any thing which exists, or of which we have any notion. This definition he at once justifies by adducing the words *grotto, turf, &c.* as the names of things that exist; and *sorrow, anger, &c.* as the names of things of which he has a notion. This example will suffice to show the nature of the exercise.

The exercises of *extemporaneous composition and speaking* upon a given subject, (and in the former cases within a given time of ten minutes or a quarter of an hour,) are rather to be considered as developments of the astonishing capabilities of the system, than as necessary parts of the process employed. The pupil who shall have performed every previous exercise, will, of necessity, be competent to the performance of these, since all the elements which enter into them will have become perfectly familiar to him by incessant repetition. He has been habituated to the *vivâ voce* recitation of facts from the very commencement, as well as to repeated compositions, both specific and general, and he is now required to perform, in an unpremeditated manner, that which was in the first instance the work of mature deliberation. Surprising, then, as are exhibitions of this kind, when considered by themselves, they appear simply as the natural results of the previous process, to any one who carefully estimates the end attained, by the propriety of the means employed. But it should be remembered, that such results were never before attained by any process, nor are they now attainable by any other than that of Jacotot, for the Universal Instruction is the Educational System of Nature.

The last exercise consists in verifying the assertion, *All is in all*. As soon as the pupil knows Telemachus, he is required to point out, speaking extemporaneously, the particular art exhibited by Fenelon in the composition of that work; he is directed to refer other productions of literary art to this, and to observe, that the human mind, under all circumstances, whatever be its end or means, follows very nearly the same route. It is scarcely possible to take any two sentences from any two works.

of the most opposite character and nature, without observing some points of similarity. If the whole of one complex idea is not like the whole of another, some of the subordinate components will discover mutual analogies and relations. Thus, every action must be like every other action in several respects. No action can be performed without an agent and an object, nor without the intervention of motion. Other circumstances may vary, but these are of necessity fixed. More generally, it may be asserted, that though one book does not, strictly speaking, contain all others, yet it contains some particulars which are common to all others: it contains the starting points of all knowledge, though not the amplification of the full course. It has been remarked, that the entire amount, independent of repetitions, of human knowledge, might be comprehended in a very few volumes. The method of Jacotot tends to confirm the correctness of this observation, and the proposition, *All is in all*, is, in fact, the fundamental principle of the system. It is because *All is in all*, that the precept, *Learn something thoroughly, and refer every thing else to it*, leads in practice to results so astonishing as those which are the proud trophies of the Universal Instruction. Hence it is, that by a thorough acquaintance with the words, syllables, and letters, of the first sixty lines of Telemachus, the pupil is taught to read,—that by writing only one line well, he learns the entire graphic art,—that by completely mastering one book, he masters all books,—that is, acquires the language. It would be easy to show, that this principle is not limited to the bare facts just enumerated,—to the mere operative machinery of education,—but that it pervades the Universe of Nature. It only assumes another form when we call man a microcosm,—a miniature of the entire mass of human intelligence. It is merely modified by Byron, when he says,—

———— History, with all her volumes vast,
Hath but one page :

and again, contemplating a solitary ruin of Rome,—

Ages and realms are crowded in this span.

Lady Montague, when she wittily said she had travelled from London to Constantinople, and could find nothing but men and women, and the common sense of mankind, when it pronounces that Men are ever the same,—merely diversify the proposition, *All is in all*. The observation has been made thousands of years ago, but Jacotot has first conceived the idea of rendering it practically useful, of deriving from it a precept applicable to the acquirement of the various elements of Universal Knowledge. *He then, says Jacotot, who knows one book knows all books, for all is in all*. Let not the expression be contemned. Those who have shone most as divines, poets, mathematicians, orators, sculptors, or painters, were men who devoted themselves to one book, to one model. The profound theologian, is he who is thoroughly acquainted, not with countless glosses and comments, but with that one book,—the Bible. The argument likewise receives confirmation from the fact, that Demosthenes wrote out the Greek History of Thucydides eight times,—that Racine committed to memory, and repeated very often, the entire works of Euripides. Will not he who is thoroughly master of the Iliad find a translation of it in the Æneid, and again, for the most part, in Paradise Lost? This observation respects ideas only; but considering both language and ideas, is not the Iliad of Homer to be found in the greater portion of the dramas of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides? Without doubt,—and he who knows (according to the system of Jacotot) the Iliad, will have very few difficulties to contend with in reading the Greek tragedians. He who would be a geometer learns thoroughly Euclid's Elements, and refers every thing connected with geometry to them. Again, a grain of sand resembles a world; and the assertion in mathematics, that two and two make four, is analogous to this in moral reasoning,—that an accumulation of facts strengthens conviction; increased consequent force are common to both; hence *All is in all*. In Telemachus then is found grammar, history, geography, &c., and, in fact, all the subjects before particularised. The author abbreviates in some passages what he amplifies in others. He imitates himself; he

translates himself; he does, in short, every thing that the human mind can do, in any science whatever.

To shew how the principle is verified, the teacher opens any author,—Massillon, for instance, and reads—

“ Pleasure is the first thing that endangers our innocence. The other passions develop themselves and ripen (so to speak) only with the advancement of reason.”

The pupil is asked if he can verify the reflections of Massillon by the facts of Fenelon; and he answers in the following manner:—

Telemachus yielding to pleasure in the island of Cyprus, shews that *pleasure endangers innocence*, and it is the *first thing*; because, on the first occasion in which Telemachus found himself exposed to peril, pleasure was the cause. The *other passions*, &c.—this is seen by Telemachus in the camp of the allies, by Idomeneus, &c.

It is easily seen that this exercise may be diversified to an indefinite extent. Not merely literary productions, but all works relating to science and the fine arts are submitted to its operation, and the result, in every case, verifies the proposition *All is in all*. The same thing may be said of the system itself, properly designated from its comprehensiveness, Universal Instruction. Here *All is in all*; the features of the whole are discoverable in every part, and its method, therefore, is the exact counterpart of the method of Nature.

The brief exposition originally contemplated is now brought to a termination, and the system of Jacotot is before the reader. It would be incompatible with the evident design of the present publication, to shew the manner of applying the principles enforced and illustrated in the preceding pages, to the various subjects generally considered to form—an Education. If, however, the reader thoroughly comprehends the precept, *Learn something thoroughly, and refer every thing else to it*, he will have no difficulty in perceiving the manner of its application to them. The pupil must still learn by heart,—repeat incessantly

santly,—compare by reflection,—and verify the observations of others; and the teacher must still be careful to explain nothing,—to interrogate perpetually,—to make the pupil discover his own errors, and justify every thing performed by himself.

To furnish some idea of the manner of its application to classical languages, the writer of this pamphlet is enabled to state the particulars of an experiment made by himself upon a pupil, a little boy of only eleven years of age. The experiment was instituted, and is now carrying on, under circumstances by no means favorable to the attainment of a flattering result, and which indeed rendered the thorough adoption of the method of Jacotot inadvisable. Enough, however, has been positively ascertained, to allow of a tolerably accurate conjecture as to the ultimate result. The little pupil in question, had been some time employed in committing to memory the Greek grammar, and was about to commence the business of elementary translation in that language, just at the time when the writer of these pages first heard of the New System. It was resolved by him, at once to put the pretensions of this method to the test, and to make his pupil proceed according to the instructions of Jacotot. The grammar was therefore temporarily abandoned, and the Iliad of Homer, with an interlinear translation of the first book, was at once put into the pupil's hands. He was told to commit to memory the first five lines, and at the same time to observe attentively in his translation, the English meaning of every word contained in them. Five additional lines were stipulated for the next day's task, which were repeated, together with the five first learned. He continued to learn daily five or six lines, always commencing the repetition with the beginning of the book, until one hundred were thoroughly impressed on his memory, which brings the experiment to the period of the present statement. Whatever improvement then is at present evident, has been derived from the thorough investigation of this century of Greek verses. At first, the task of committing even five verses to memory, and repeating them without a single error, was thought very difficult by the pupil, and the blundering and hesitancy of the first repetition, certainly

repressed a little the sanguine anticipations of his instructor. Perseverance, however, in the practice of always commencing with the first word learned, soon produced a surprising facility of repetition. Within a week, the first thirty verses were so well impressed on the pupil's memory, that he could not only repeat them as quickly as utterance would permit, without the omission of a single word, but whenever the first word of any sentence whatever contained in them was mentioned, he continued that sentence without the slightest hesitation. *But more than this, whatever word was pronounced, even though it were a mere unemphatical conjunction, he could repeat successively every line in which it was to be found, within the range of his then limited acquaintance with the book.*

Before, however, the pupil had arrived at this proficiency of repetition,—as soon, indeed, as the second lesson had been repeated, he was directed to translate, from the Greek text alone, the ten lines with which he had then become acquainted, by means of the interlinear translation. This being performed without the least difficulty, a series of questions upon the subject itself was commenced by the instructor, of which the following formed a part. The answers are nearly verbatim those given by the pupil himself.*

Q. What is the subject of the Iliad of Homer ?

A. The wrath of Achilles.

Q. How do you ascertain that ?

A. Because the Muse is called upon by Homer to sing the wrath of Achilles.

Q. Do you know whether the wrath of Achilles produced any mischievous effects ?

A. Yes ; it is called *destructive* wrath, and Homer says it *caused ten thousand woes* to the Achaians.

Q. Has the epithet *destructive* any connection with the fact, that ten thousand woes were occasioned by the wrath of Achilles ?

A. Yes ; it was called *destructive, because it occasioned, &c.*

* It should be observed, that the very words and phrases of the Greek text were given in the answers of the pupil. It was not thought necessary to intermingle the two languages in the present illustration.

Q. What kind of scenery may we expect to be introduced to in the Iliad ?

A. Scenes of battle and bloodshed.

Q. Why not pictures of pastoral happiness or riotous joy ?

A. Because these would be inconsistent with *destructive wrath*.

Q. Why inconsistent ; could not then these be introduced into the poem ?

A. Yes ; but there must be more of the others.

Q. What do you infer from the expression,—*And made them preys to the dogs and all birds ?*

A. That their bodies were left unburied on the field of battle.

Q. Does it positively state that ?

A. No ; but if they had been buried, the dogs and birds could not have got at them.*

After about twenty lines had been translated, and examined thoroughly by questions, in order to discover whether his attention had been uniform, the following question was asked :—

Did you perceive in any line that you have translated, a word or words not strictly necessary to the sense ?

The prompt answer was—Yes ; Homer says, Apollo sent an *evil* pestilence into the camp ; the word *evil* is not quite necessary,—it could not be good.

He afterwards said he thought there was another such instance in the eighth verse,—to fight *in strife*, they could not fight, he said, *without strife*.

To ascertain how far he could generalise upon what he knew, he was told to observe the twelfth and nine following verses, (which narrate the arrival of Chryses at the camp of the Achaians for the purpose of redeeming his daughter, with his address to the army,) and to mention the sentiment or

* As the instructor had resolved to make the pupil find out every thing himself, it was not thought advisable to explain, that the Greeks were accustomed to *burn* and not to *bury* their dead. He shortly after inferred this himself from the fifty-second line, where it is stated, that *funeral pyres were incessantly burning* in the camp of the Achaians, on account of the numbers destroyed by the pestilence. Other passages subsequently met with he *referred* to this, and thus confirmed his conjecture.

feeling discovered in action. He at once answered, Parental affection. The subjoined colloquy then occurred.

Q. Why came Chryses to the Achaian camp?

A. To redeem for himself his daughter.

Q. How did he hope to effect his wishes?

A. By bringing boundless ransoms, and by showing himself to be Apollo's priest.

Q. What did he appeal to in bringing ransoms?

A. Their love of money.

Q. And what in exhibiting the insignia of the priesthood?

A. To their religious reverence.

Q. Can you confirm your assertions?

A. Yes; Chryses, in his address to the army, begs them to liberate his daughter, *reverencing* the son of Jove, *far-darting* Apollo.

The pupil having been led by two or three simple questions, to notice that Chryses, the priest, is twice observed supplicating within the first fifty verses, was told to distinguish between the objects of these two several addresses, and the persons to whom they were made. He answered,—Chryses, in the first instance, addressed Atrides and the Achaian camp,—in the second, King Apollo. The object of his first prayer was, the recovery of his daughter; of the second, vengeance on those who had insulted him.

It was remarked,—The expression of Chryses is,—May the Danaans atone for my tears by thy darts. What have you to say upon this?

A. The Greeks had given him tears, and he asked Apollo to give them darts.

His reasoning faculty was sometimes brought into exercise by the following plan:—Any fact amongst those that he knew, was chosen as a point to set out from, and he was made to show how it stood connected in both the relation of cause and effect, with what preceded and succeeded it. For example, verse 58,

And rising up, addressed them swift-footed Achilles—

Q. Whom did Achilles address?

A. The people then assembled.

Q. Why were they assembled ?

A. Because Achilles had called them together.

Q. Why ?

A. Because Juno put it into his mind to do so.

Q. Why ?

A. Because she pitied the Danaans.

Q. Why did she pity them ?

A. Because she saw them dying.

Q. Why dying ?

A. Because Apollo had sent a pestilence.

Q. Why ?

A. Because he was enraged at his heart.

Q. Why was he enraged ?

A. Because Chryses had told him of his wrongs, and prayed for revenge.

Q. Why did Chryses thus pray ?

A. Because he had been harshly treated.

Q. Who treated him harshly ?

A. Agamemnon, because he did not wish to give up his daughter.

Q. How do you know Agamemnon had her ?

A. Because he says expressly,—I will not liberate her until old age comes upon her in our (or my) house in Argos.

Q. Do you know from any single passage what we have thus discovered, namely, that the harsh treatment of Chryses was the cause of the pestilence sent upon the army ?

A. Yes ; Homer states it beforehand,—the son of Latona and Jove, being enraged with the king, sent a pestilence, &c. because Agamemnon dishonoured Chryses, &c.

He was thus led to perceive the unity of design pervading the work, and to enter into the spirit of every circumstance introduced. But he did more. Not a single word was passed until the idea of which it was the representative was distinctly pictured in his mind, and hence, whenever the word afterwards occurred, both the idea itself, (which is evidently independent of language,) and the English term which answered to it, were instantaneously suggested. The constant repetition was maintained, and his acquaintance with the English expressions

equivalent to those of the Greek was ascertained, by the exercise of giving sometimes the Greek phrase and requiring instantly the corresponding literal English; sometimes by giving the latter and requiring the former:—thus, the pupil was told to give the Greek for “Sing thou the wrath of Achilles,”—“and prematurely sent many brave souls,”—“and the will of Jove was accomplished,” &c. In the first instance, the exact expression was preserved. After a little time, the exercise was varied by slightly changing the sentences, still requiring nothing but what (as his prompt answers invariably shewed) he was fully competent to perform, thus—“Sing thou, goddess, the wrath of Pelides’ son,”—“and sent brave souls,” &c.

After his perfect acquaintance with the corresponding terms and expressions in the two languages was thus ascertained, and he had been interrogated, (as previously shown,) it was considered that he thoroughly understood the sense of the hundred lines in question, and his attention was sedulously directed to the terminations, prefixes, &c. of all the words, and to the strict analysis of compounds. Whenever a word came under notice which he had before known, but the meaning of which he had forgotten, he was made to refer to the previous sentences in which it was found, discover what must have been its signification there, and give the same meaning in the passage in question. *He was never told a single word*, nor allowed to refer to dictionary or interlinear translation while receiving a lesson. The author was always made to interpret himself.* The present result is easily stated. From the acquaintance he has obtained with the one hundred lines in question, *after not more than twelve hours of lessons*, it is considered, (and indeed this has been ascertained by

* The following passage from the Quarterly Review, No. XLIV., serves to enforce the superiority of this method of acquiring languages. “The only method of obtaining an accurate or extensive knowledge of any language is, to study it with as little use of the dictionary as possible, to discover the exact signification and propriety of words by a comparison of different passages, and to interpret authors by themselves.”

careful examination,) that he will scarcely meet with fifty words in the remainder of the first book of the Iliad, of which he will not know something. He will be able to interpret the meaning, the prefix, or the termination. Other experiments, of the same kind, are now making, the results of which will shortly appear.

From the preceding pages, it appears that the advantages of Jacotot's system may be comprehended in the following summary:—*It calls into action the mental faculties of the pupil himself*,—he cannot rely on his teacher, he gains confidence in his own powers, and his improvement is of necessity solid. Hence, *It tends to cultivate in the highest possible degree the faculty of attention. It employs the analytical plan in the place of the synthetical*,—the pupil is not puzzled with abstractions and generalities at the first stage; he is previously led to comprehend the facts upon which they are founded. *It thus conducts from the known to the unknown*,—the pupil makes what he knows serviceable in interpreting what he knows not. *It exercises equally the memory and the judgment*,—every thing that the pupil commits to memory, he makes thoroughly his own by reflection. And finally, *it ensures the utmost facility of performance by the incessant repetition of every prescribed lesson and exercise.*

THE END.

Shortly will be published, by the writer of this Treatise,

FACTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

CONNECTED WITH

JACOTOT'S SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

Printed by J. Rider, Little Britain, London.

DEC 6 1889

CANCELLED

DUE OCT 66 H

CANCELLED

Educ 170.1.80
A compendious exposition of the pri
Widener Library 006271779



3 2044 079 657 516