

# MÄRCHEN UND ERZÄHLUNGEN

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Märchen und erzählungen by H. A. Guerber & W. R. Myers

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**H. A. GUERBER & W. R. MYERS**

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Der Fieber von Sameln

*Frontispice*



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PREFACE

THIS reader may advantageously be used for *beginners of all ages*. Its aim is to present a series of tales, interesting enough to stimulate the curiosity of even the youngest pupils, yet so easy as not to discourage anyone at the very outset. The stories have therefore been narrated in the simplest manner possible, and every new word introduced has purposely been repeated frequently enough in the following sentences to insure its being remembered by even dull pupils. All idioms have likewise been used repeatedly with the same object in view. As none but ordinary words and expressions have been introduced, pupils soon acquire a sufficient vocabulary to serve all their purposes, and are able to read and understand easy German prose at sight.

These stories, of which every word has its special purpose, have been used with excellent results with pupils of all ages; and while complete success depends greatly upon the teacher, the method is so simple and practical that it can profitably be used by pupils who wish to study alone. The author's plan of proceeding, which, of course, varies according to the age and intelligence of the pupils, may be briefly outlined as follows, using the introductory paragraph of the first story

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as an example: The first sentence is read aloud, slowly and distinctly, and the pupils are taught to repeat it correctly. As this is used for the *first* German lesson, with pupils who know nothing whatever of the language, every word is translated. Then the pupils are called upon to read and translate the words, in any order, as rapidly pointed out by the teacher.

A few moments' rapid drill enables them to memorize these few words, whose similarity to the English equivalents cannot but appeal to them. The teacher next reads the second sentence, of which the pupils translate all the words which occurred in the previous sentence, the teacher supplying only the translation of *new* words, or of such as do not seem to convey their own meaning to unaccustomed ears.

When the reading and translating drill on the first paragraph is finished, the books are closed, and the pupils are questioned *in German*, none but the words already given being used, and the questions being framed at first so as to supply their own answer, as it were. Example: Query, "*War Jakob ein Mann?*" Answer, "*Jakob war ein Mann.*" Pupils are encouraged to answer these questions in German only, and the words of the story are made the basis for supplementary questions by personal application.

With many classes where pupils are old enough to be depended upon, no translation is made, except when they fail to comprehend every word, and then only those words are given in English. The lesson may also be dictated, either in

German or in English, each pupil supplying his or her own translation in the latter case. In this way reading, writing, translation, and conversation can successfully be carried on with the same material, and a pleasant variety is secured.

Of course, as the pupil's vocabulary increases, the questions gradually become more varied and comprehensive, the lessons longer, and the pupils are not only encouraged to *guess* at the meaning of new words, but also to tell the stories in their own way. Further to accustom them to the rapid continuous sound of the language, it is always a good plan to tell them the story in the usual conversational tone; at first, after they have finished reading it, and, as they advance further, before they have begun it, when it will be seen that they can often glean all the sense, even if they fail to understand some of the words.

By personally reading or telling the advance work to the pupils, the teacher secures from the outset a correct pronunciation, for the class will copy his or her accent and enunciation, instead of being confused by hearing mispronunciations and corrections which are inevitable when beginners read the advance lessons, or prepare them by themselves. It is a pedagogical axiom that it is easier to form good habits at first, than to correct the bad ones which are invariably contracted when the old-fashioned method is used. By preparing the advance lesson in class, a teacher secures closer attention, and hence more rapid

and satisfactory progress. To make sure the lesson has been properly reviewed between recitations, the teacher may require the pupils to make a list of the words they cannot translate satisfactorily at sight. These words can be translated by the members of the class who have not noted them, and thus their work can be subjected to a constant, effective test.

The lesson prepared on one day may also be used as German Reading Lesson for the pupils on the next, the teacher rapidly quizzing the class on the more difficult words and passages.

By using German constantly in class, new words may easily be defined in that language, so that very little translation into English will be required. For instance, the first time *böse* occurs, the teacher explains: "*Das heisst: nicht gut.*" Many of the definitions in parentheses serve as illustrations of this mode of procedure.

With the exception of the introductory story, for which the well known "House that Jack Built" has purposely been used, all tales familiar to Americans have been avoided, and miscellaneous legends, fairy-tales, and anecdotes have been retold, the author constantly keeping the main object in view, — that of *providing the pupils with a practical working vocabulary*. This they acquire almost unconsciously, owing to the constant repetition, while carried away by the interest of these tales. In some cases rather long stories have been