

The German Language

CLEARLY TAUGHT AND QUICKLY LEARNT.

LESSON X.

As we have spoken of the gender of German nouns, we now pass on to the consideration of their number and case. Some grammarians divide nouns into seven or eight declensions; but, as we consider that these numerous divisions puzzle the student unnecessarily, we shall not adopt them.

The nominative singular and the nominative plural are given in the dictionary. These once ascertained, the cases, both in the singular and plural, may easily be known by attention to the following rules.

Observe—we take it for granted that you have found out the nominative singular and the nominative plural of the nouns you wish to decline.

1st Rule—Feminine nouns in the singular are the same in all their cases.

2nd Rule—Nouns that have the nominative singular and the nominative plural alike take an *s* in the genitive singular.

3rd Rule—In the plural, nouns are the same in all the cases, excepting in the dative, which always ends in *n*.

4th Rule—The nouns that become plural by the addition of *e* or *er* to the singular, take *es* in the genitive singular, and *e* in the dative singular.

Nouns that become plural by the addition of *n* or *en* to the nominative singular, keep this addition through all the other cases.

The accusative singular of the neuter is always the same as the nominative singular.

In the next lesson we intend giving you the declensions, in illustration of the preceding remarks.

By this time, the vocabulary must have taught you how great a resemblance exists between the English and German languages. This resemblance must have given you courage and confidence. Soon the vocabulary will cease, in order to make room for short, easy, German exercises, with a key (or exercise corrected), to enable you to find out where you have erred, and thus become your own teachers.

WORDS NEARLY THE SAME IN ENGLISH AND GERMAN.

The sun.	Die Sonne.
The moon.	Der Mond.
A planet.	Ein Planet.
A comet.	Ein Komet.
Night.	Die Nacht.
Midnight.	Die Mitternacht.
The ocean.	Der Ozean.
The Alps.	Die Alpen.
The Pyrenees.	Die Pyrenäen.
An island.	Eine Insel.
A volcano.	Ein Vulkan.
The lava.	Die Lava.

The verb *werden*, "to become," is, in German, used as an auxiliary verb. Commit it to memory, as you ought already to have done the verbs *haben*, "to have," and *sein*, "to be."

THE VERB *WERDEN*, "TO BECOME."

INDICATIVE.

Present.

ich werde,	I become.
du wirst,	thou becomest.
er wird,	he becomes.
sie wird,	she becomes.
es wird,	it becomes.
man wird,	one becomes.
wir werden,	we become.
ihr werdet,	ye become.
sie werden,	they become.
Sie werden,	you become.

Imperfect.

ich wurde (or ward),	I became.
du wurdest (wardst),	thou becamest.
er wurde (ward),	he became.
sie wurde,	she became.
es wurde,	it became.
man wurde,	one became.
wir wurden,	we became.
ihr wurdet,	ye became.
sie wurden,	they became.
Sie wurden,	you became.

Oddities.



TOBIAS HOBSON.

MANY persons who have heard of "Hobson's choice" may not be aware who Hobson was, or what were the circumstances which gave rise to the proverb. Tobias Hobson may be said to have been a man of one idea; but it was a very lucrative one. He lived at Cambridge two hundred years ago, and having observed that the under-graduates of the University were particularly fond of riding on horseback, and that this inclination was by no means confined to those who could afford to keep horses to ride, it occurred to Hobson that money might be made by buying a number of saddle-horses, and allowing gentlemen the use of them for a day or an hour, as the case might be. In a word, Hobson was the first man who conceived the idea of letting horses on hire: he was the original job-master.

An impression has got abroad, justly or unjustly, that Mr. Hobson's successors in his particular line of business are not usually very scrupulous in their dealings. We hope this impression is unfounded; and such would certainly be the case if Hobson's principles, as well as his ideas, had descended to modern times. He was thoroughly and unimpeachably honest. He did justice not only between man and man, but between horse and horse; and he found his system to prosper so well, that he amassed a very large fortune. His establishment, after a few years, consisted of about forty horses, with a proportionate supply of riding-boots, saddles, bridles, whips, and, in short, all the equipments of an equestrian. But when a gentleman presented himself to hire a horse, he was obliged—no matter how many horses might be in the stables—to take the animal which happened to be nearest the door. By this means the proprietor insured to each customer an equal chance of the best horses, and to each horse his regular turn of work. This condition being rigorously enforced, and every temptation to depart from it being resisted, gave rise to the proverb, which is now known all over England; and whenever a person had only one article to choose from, it was called "Hobson's choice."

Tobias Hobson was born in 1544, and died in 1630, during the plague, at the age of eighty-six years. He employed his fortune for the benefit of the town in which he had made it, by constructing a conduit, with an aqueduct, for the supply of water. The Cambridge under-graduates, rather given then as now to doggerel verse, composed certain epigrams upon Hobson's peculiarities. It is to be hoped that they did not omit this last peculiarity—perhaps the most striking of any—that of a wise generosity.

The portrait of Hobson, which we have engraved above, may still be seen, painted in fresco, in an inn in Bishopsgate-street. The portrait is, to some extent, satirical. Hobson is represented holding in his hand a purse of £100 sterling, with this inscription—"Fruitful mother of a hundred others."

Facts and Scraps.

THE EYE DECEIVED.—Orange or lemon juice left upon a knife, or other piece of iron, will, in a few days, produce a stain so nearly resembling that caused by blood, as to deceive the most careful observer; and not many years ago, in Paris, a man was nearly convicted of murder, owing to a knife being found in his possession, stained with what was pronounced by several witnesses to be blood, but was afterwards discovered to be lime juice.

THE COMPASS FLOWER.—A little plant is found upon the prairies of Texas, called the "compass flower," which, under all changes of weather, rain, frost, or sunshine, invariably turns its leaves and flowers towards the north, thus affording an unerring guide to the traveller who, unaided by the needle, seeks to explore those vast plains alone.

A PEACEFUL HOME.—The house is no home which holds a grumbling father, a scolding mother, a dissipated son, a lazy daughter, and a bad-tempered child. It may be built of marble, surrounded by garden, park, and fountains; carpets of extravagant costliness may cover its floors; pictures of rarest merit may adorn its walls; its tables may abound with dainties the most luxurious; its every ordering may be complete, but yet it will not be a home. To make it such there must be a change of inmates.

PRESENCE OF MIND.—If a man faint away, instead of yelling out like a savage, or running to him to lift him up, lay him at full length on his back on the floor, loosen the clothing, push the crowd away, so as to allow the air to reach him, and let him alone. Dashing water over a person, in a simple fainting fit, is a barbarity. The philosophy of a fainting fit is that the heart fails to send the proper supply of blood to the brain. If the person is erect, that blood has to be thrown up hill; but if lying down, it has to be projected horizontally, which requires less power, as is apparent.

Scientific Notes.

ANESTHESIA.—Cases frequently occur wherein there is a lack of the courage or the strength needed to sustain a patient under the anguish of surgical operation. Where the organisation is peculiarly delicate, such is often the sensitiveness to pain, that the shock attendant on the application of the knife may kill. The rude expedient of stupefying the sufferer by narcotics was superseded by the happy discovery that the inhalation of ether or chloroform produced an insensibility to pain advantageous both to the surgeon and his patient, though occasionally, from some constitutional peculiarity, death has unfortunately ensued—indicating the necessity of great caution in the use of these kindly agents. Mesmerism has also been successfully resorted to for the same purpose—a condition analogous to catalepsy being induced, the reality of which—whatever be the variety of opinion as to its nature and mode of action—cannot be disputed, though yet there are many on whose vigorous frame and will it may be found inoperative. In India Dr. Esdaile repeatedly applied mesmerism to professional purposes, under circumstances discountenancing any suspicion that the imagination of the subject had aided in superinducing the mesmeric slumber—the process having been conducted in obscurity, and unknown to him. The medical journals are now occupied in discussing the merits and real discoverer of a new method of producing anaesthesia—lately introduced in France by a surgeon of Bordeaux—which the *Lancet* asserts to be only a revival of a neglected discovery of our countryman, Mr. Braid. In this process—the patient having been placed in a convenient position, either sitting or recumbent, as the circumstances demand—the operator holds before his eyes, so near as to prevent distinct vision, and so high as to require the eyes to be forcibly directed upwards, any bright object that may be at hand, such as a spoon or metallic button. When the patient looks steadily at this object, strabismus occurs; and after two or three minutes the effort becomes so fatiguing as temporarily to paralyse the optic nerves. The pupils alternately contract and dilate; the lids quiver, fall, and finally close in sleep. The symptoms are invariably the same, though varying in strength and duration in different patients—a cataleptic condition, followed by anaesthetic insensibility, not to be disturbed by pricks or pinches; to which, after from three to fifteen minutes, succeeds a period of nervous excitement. At any phase of