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International Commercial Language.

ABRIDGED GRAMMAR

OF

**VOLAPÜK**

BY

Prof. KERCKHOFFS.

ADAPTED TO THE USE OF ENGLISH SPEAKING PEOPLE

BY

KARL DORNBUSCH,

*Teacher of Modern Languages.*



CHICAGO:

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.\*)

The creation of a universal language for international intercourse has been the subject of much controversy since the 17th century. While philosophers have by turns extolled it as a bond of union and concord, and a powerful lever to civilization, literary men generally appear to agree in denying its utility; and in our own days many linguists question the possibility of composing an artificial language of real and practical value.

The idea has however, within the last few years, gained much ground, in France and Germany: practical minds remark with justice, that we are in a century wherein new wants spring up every day, and in which the impossibilities of one day become the marvellous realities of the next. Besides, nobody thinks any longer of bringing into use or creating a language which should become one day, like Greek in antiquity, or Latin in the middle ages, a universal organ of science and literature: that is a dream long since abandoned. The question is still less to supersede any of our modern languages in the intercourse of nations.

But, in the same manner as diplomatists have a universal or common language for their international dealings, scholars, travellers and merchants would also find a great advantage in possessing a simple and practical means of communication,

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\*) Extract from the "Leçon d'ouverture" of the Volapuek course held by M. Kerckhoffs at the "Ecole des Hautes Etudes commerciales de Paris."

not only with the different peoples of Europe, but with all the civilized nations of the world.

Every one knows that commercial intercourse with foreigners is entered upon with all the more ease and security as agreements can, by means of a language known to both contracting parties, be established in a clearer and more precise manner. People however are liable to overlook the fact that among the eight hundred and odd languages, which are at the present day spoken it would be necessary to know at least forty or fifty in order to be able to hold communication with the principal civilized nations with whom during the last half century, railways and steamboats have brought us into constant communication.

Now, if it is not very difficult to learn in a few years three or four Romanic or Germanic languages, a much longer time is necessary to master a single Hindoostanee or Semitic dialect. The difficulties become even insurmountable for many persons, when an agglutinative language is contemplated, such as Turkish or Japanese, or a monosyllabic idiom like Chinese or Anamese ; and, still the people who speak Chinese dialects, or have adopted Chinese writing, constitute alone one third of the total population of the world.

The nations of the East are still more embarrassed, when they wish to enter into commercial intercourse with Europe. Devoid of geographical knowledge, imperfectly informed by their political chiefs, they are generally obliged to have recourse to the intermediation of colonists or resident foreigners, and thus become the victims of the intrigues occasioned by political and religious hatred.

Let a universal language become adopted and the situation is completely changed ; the same traveller can visit the most widely different countries, the same commercial journal can be read and understood in all the centres of production and consumption, and the prices of a London or Paris house will be commented upon by the merchants of Pekin, Yeddo, Madras, as well as by those of Alexandria, Constantinople and Moscow !

### III

Navigators would find advantages equally great in being able to communicate easily with one another, either at sea or in the large stations of the Ocean. Maritime nations have, it is true, already adopted a kind of a universal language, by means of which mariners of all nations can understand each other, but it is a semaphoric language, used for communications on the main sea or at a distance and which cannot be adapted to the exigencies of conversation or correspondence.

It is needless to enumerate the immense services which the existence of a universal language would render to science and industry. Not only do the most precious discoveries often remain unknown for years, because they have been explained in an idiom little known, but entire nations remain deprived of the benefits of civilization from the simple fact that their ignorance of European languages prevents the organs of progress and science from reaching them.

It might be asked if, rather than have recourse to an artificial language, it would not be preferable to adopt one of the existing European idioms, for instance, English, German, Spanish or French. English is already the maternal language of 100 millions of individuals, German of 56, French and Spanish are each spoken by nearly 43 millions.

To this scheme are opposed two motives equally powerful; national rivalry, and the difficulties of all kinds that the study of these languages presents; difficulties of pronunciation, spelling, and grammar. If two or three years are necessary for a Frenchman to learn German how long would a Turk, a Japanese or a Chinese require to learn English, German or French, when confined to the resources offered by his native country for the study of those languages?

The verbs alone in German as well as in French will present to him obstacles almost insurmountable. As General Faidherbe lately said in a study on the programme of the French alliance the complications of the verbs often hinder colonial populations from learning a European idiom.

The first attempt in favour of the creation of a universal language can be traced to the 17th century. Some have

looked for the solution of the problem in the invention of an artificial language, divested of all the difficulties which characterize our natural languages; others, and they are the greater number, have only sought a means of communication by written signs and imagined an ideographic system, in which the words, that in the various languages express the same idea are represented by the same sign, similar to that practised in our system of numeration, and in our algebraical and geometrical signs.

It would take long to enumerate all the works that have been published on this interesting subject. It is sufficient for me to cite the names of Descartes, Leibnitz, Becker, Wilkins in the 17th century; those of Kalmar, Berger, de Cornel, Vater, de Marnieux, Budet, Chambry and of the abbé Sicard in the 18th, those of Nasher, Schmied, Niethammer, Stein in the commencement of this century, and lastly, at an epoch nearer to our own, the names of Sinibaldo de Mas, Para, Paic, de Gablenz, Bachmaier, Pizo, Sudre, Ochando, Holmar, Caumont, Letellier and Maldant.

Treasures of science and patience have been spent in the study of this question, and yet it would be difficult to quote, amongst the forty or fifty universal languages, invented in the course of the last two centuries, a single one having any practical value whatever: they were either pasigraphic systems, meant to be read only, or languages accessible only to the highest intellects, or simply some existing language more or less ingeniously mutilated!

A german polyglot, Mr. Schleyer of Constance, a man of letters as well as a distinguished linguist, has at last succeeded, after 20 years' laborious effort, in solving the difficult problem.

He has named his system Volapük, from pük, language, and vol, universe, literally *Universal language*.

By borrowing certain characteristic features from the different idioms of Europe, M. Schleyer has been able to combine a logical, well arranged and extremely simple system.

The difficulties of pronunciation, which characterize



English, French and most of the Slavic languages are done away with in Volapük by the simple fact that each letter, either a vowel or consonant, has but one and the same sound. The difficulties in spelling also are by the same means cleared away, words being always written as they are pronounced and, vice versa, being invariably pronounced as they are written. Moreover, any combination of letters, difficult to conceive or pronounce, has been carefully avoided; it is the same with long compound words, peculiar to certain Germanic languages.

M. Schleyer has solved satisfactorily the problem of accentuation by adopting the principle of the French pronunciation, and always putting the accent on the last syllable. He has borrowed from the French their construction, which is one of the simplest and clearest of all European languages.

The simplicity of the grammar is not less remarkable: no artificial genders, a single conjugation, and no irregular verbs.

The roots of the words in Volapük have been borrowed from all the languages of Europe, but principally from the Romanic and Germanic languages; among the latter English has been particularly put under contribution.

As in Volapük the method of derivation is always the same, as the adjective, verb and adverb, are regularly formed from the substantive and have invariably the same termination, it suffices, we may say, to learn the nouns of the language to know all the words in the dictionary. It is true that the same principle of derivation prevailed in the formation of all our Arian languages; but the thousand influences which in the course of centuries, have from time to time affected their development, have done away with all unity, and the uniformity which characterises Volapük is found as little in our old tongues as in their modern derivatives.

To conclude, I believe there is no exaggeration in affirming that Volapük may be learned in the space of one month, by any person already knowing a Romanic language such as

French or Italian or a Germanic one, as English or German. One will, at least, be able at the end of that time, not only to understand the new language, but to translate correctly and without difficulty a letter from one's maternal language into Volapük.\*)

Some think that it will never be possible to arrive at a uniform pronunciation of Volapük, and fear that direct communication among individuals of different nationalities will on that account be rendered impossible.

In answer to such objections I will call attention to the fact that uniformity of pronunciation does not exist in any language, as little for the natives as for foreigners: the French of Lille pronounce quite differently from those of Bordeaux, and the German of Munich sounds nearly like a strange dialect to the ears of a native of Hamburg. But these differences do not by any means hinder Frenchmen and Germans from perfectly understanding one another. It will be the same with the pronunciation of three or four letters of the universal language, and particularly of the vowels ä, ö, ü.

Not that Mr. Schleyer's work is perfect; perfection is a stranger to this world. Besides a few mistakes, which will be found in the derivation of words, some rules of his grammar might be more precisely laid down, others must be modified. Thus he seems to have been wrong, while adopting the principle of the French construction, in allowing a certain latitude in the order of the different members of the sentence. Is it not affording an open field for individual caprices and for idioms, that are, in a manner the caprices of the multitude? Those who have studied Latin are well aware of the

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\*) The proof of this has been shown at the Commercial High School of Paris where a course of Volapük has been organized for the pupils of the Second Division. This course lasted two months, with one lesson a week; and, though the auditors could not make any written preparation on account of their numerous obligatory studies, they were, after 8 lessons, in a position to correspond without any difficulty with the Volapükists of the other countries of Europe.

embarrassment beginners experience in studying a language in which the construction of sentences is not swayed by one unvaried rule.

Mr. Schleyer might be also blamed for his spelling of proper names, not being such as is required by the orthography of the country to which they belong but according to the phonetic principle of the International language. Besides the orthography of proper names of persons being placed now-a-days under the protection of the law and their immutability being of paramount importance in commercial transactions, would it not be requiring from those who will write in Volapük a thorough knowledge of the pronunciation in every language? But these are only details on which an agreement can be made the more easily as the inventor of the international language lays no claim to infallibility.

A graver reproach has been addressed to Mr. Schleyer on the subject of the essentially synthetic character of his grammatical forms; for some linguists observe that the human mind is progressing in the sense of analysis, and cite in support of their theory the example of all the modern languages of Europe and India.

I confess such was equally at first my opinion, but a more attentive study of his grammar convinced me that a form less synthetic would have considerably augmented the difficulties. Moreover, the objection to which I have just called attention, and which is met with, under diverse shapes amongst philologists, as well as amongst philosophers is at bottom more plausible than well-founded.

The analytical form of our modern languages is the product not of a certain tendency of the mind towards this or that exterior form of thought, but the effect of a simple displacement of the tonic accent, or to speak more clearly, of the loss of the secondary in favour of the principal accent.

Although the first publications of M. Schleyer on the Universal language hardly date from 1881, the disciples of Volapük are now numbered by thousands in the different states of Europe: besides the French Association for the

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propagation of Volapük, 70 societies are already founded with the object of favouring its diffusion and not only in Germany and Austria, but in Russia, Spain, Italy, Holland, Sweden, England, even in the United States, and as far as Beyrout in Syria.

Numerous works have been lately produced, for the study of Volapük: Mr. Schleyer has published along with his grammar a Volapük-German dictionary containing nearly 13,000 words: these two works have reached their fifth edition.\*)

They are about to be translated into all the languages of Europe and Asia. In order to maintain uniformity among the various nations that have adopted or will subsequently adopt the new language, I have agreed with Mr. Schleyer to commit their publication to the care of one and the same publisher. Thanks to the concurrence of some eminent linguists we shall be able to publish, this year, grammars and dictionaries for the use of the English, the Dutch, the Italians, the Spaniards, the Portuguese and the Russians.

A first congress of promoters of Volapük was held last year at Friedrichshafen, on the lake of Constance; 300 members, from all the parts of Europe were present. A second congress took place this year at Munich, and a great international congress of delegates of all the societies of Europe and beyond the seas will meet in 1889 at Paris, on the occasion of the universal exhibition.

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\*) With the view of encouraging those who wish to give themselves up to the teaching of Volapuek, as well as to give them a certain moral authority with their pupils Mr. Schleyer delivers a certificate of capacity (gratuitously) to every person who will send him a dissertation of 7 or 8 pages in Volapuek on any scientific subject whatever, the only condition required being that the work shall be grammatically correct. Up to the present 320 certificates have been delivered.

# GRAMMAR.

## I.

### PRONUNCIATION.

There are twenty seven letters in Volapük, eight vowels and nineteen consonants :

**a, ä, e, i, o, ö, u, ü,**

**b, c, d, f, g, h, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, x, y, z.**

Every letter has but one fixed sound.

The vowels have no short sound :

<b>a</b> is pronounced as	<i>a</i> in <i>father</i> :	<b>fat</b> , <i>father</i> .
<b>ä</b> —	<i>a</i> in <i>mare</i> :	<b>mär</b> , <i>fairy tale</i> .
<b>e</b> —	<i>a</i> in <i>fade</i> :	<b>fed</b> , <i>alliance</i> .
<b>i</b> —	<i>ee</i> in <i>deep</i> :	<b>dib</b> , <i>depth</i> .
<b>o</b> —	<i>o</i> in <i>note</i> :	<b>not</b> , <i>advice</i> .
<b>ö</b> —	<i>i</i> in <i>sir</i> :	<b>söl</b> , <i>sir</i> .
<b>u</b> —	<i>oo</i> in <i>fool</i> :	<b>ful</b> , <i>fulness</i> .
<b>ü</b> sounds like the French <i>u</i> in <i>dur</i> :		<b>pük</b> , <i>language</i> .

When two vowels follow each other, they must be pronounced separately: **laud**, *lark*, pr. **la-ud**; **tein**, *tile*, pr. **te-in**.

The consonants are pronounced as in English, except the following :

<b>c</b> as the English <i>j</i>	:	<b>cel</b> , <i>cherry</i> , pr. <i>jail</i> .
<b>g</b> always hard, as in <i>give</i> :		<b>get</b> , <i>to get</i> , pr. <i>gate</i> .
<b>h</b> is always aspirated.		
<b>j</b> as the English <i>sh</i>	:	<b>jel</b> , <i>shelter</i> , pr. <i>shale</i> .

**s** is always hissing : **sin**, *sín*, pr. *seen*.  
**y** as the English *y* in *yard* : **yel**, *year*, pr. *yale*.  
**z** as *ts* : **zil**, *zeal*, pr. *tseal*.

There are no double consonants.

The accent is always on the last syllable; thus **tikele**, to the thinker, is pronounced: *tikelé* (*tee-kay-lay*).

## II.

### SUBSTANTIVES

#### I.—DECLENSION.

There is but one declension for the nouns and pronouns.

#### SINGULAR.

N. <b>Dom</b> ,	<i>the house.</i>
G. <b>Doma</b> or <b>de dom</b> ,	<i>of the house.</i>
D. <b>Dome</b> or <b>al dom</b> ,	<i>to the house.</i>
A. <b>Domi</b> ,	<i>the house.</i>

#### PLURAL.

N. <b>Doms</b> ,	<i>the houses.</i>
G. <b>Domas</b> or <b>de doms</b> ,	<i>of the houses.</i>
D. <b>Domes</b> or <b>al doms</b> ,	<i>to the houses.</i>
A. <b>Domis</b> ,	<i>the houses.</i>

The prepositions *de* or *al* may be used with common nouns ; they must be used with proper nouns.

**De Schleyer**, *of Schleyer*. **Al Schleyer**, *to Schleyer*.

The definite article and the partitive article are never translated : **vat** means both *water* and *the water*.

The indefinite article is rendered by **sembal** ; it may also be understood: **dom**, or **dom sembal**, *a house*. The number *one* is **bal**, *one house*, **dom bal**.

## II.—GENDER.

There are two genders, the masculine and the feminine ; the female beings alone are feminine. The syllable **of** prefixed to a masculine noun is the mark of the feminine.

**Flen**, *the friend* ;      **of-flen**, *the she-friend*.  
**Tidel**, *the schoolmaster* ; **of-tidel**, *the schoolmistress*.  
**Blod**, *the brother* ;      **of-blod**, *the sister*.

## III.

### ADJECTIVES.

#### I.—FORMATION AND DECLENSION.

The adjective is formed by adding **ik** to the substantive

**Fam**, *glory* ;      **famik**, *glorious*.  
**Dol**, *pain* ;      **dolik**, *painful*.

The adjective is not varied on account of gender, number or case.

The adjectives, save when used as attributes, always follow the noun they qualify :

**Selob bukis gudik**,      *I sell good books*.  
**Buks binoms gudik**,      *the books are good*.

An adjective used as a substantive, has all the terminations of the substantive :

**Vietiks e blägiks**,      *the white and the black*.

*Obs.* — The adverb is formed from the adjective by adding an **o** :

**Famiko**, *gloriously*.      **Doliko**, *painfully*.

#### II.—DEGREES OF COMPARISON.

The comparative and the superlative are formed by adding to the adjective the adverbs **um** (**umo**, *more*) and **ün** (**üno**, *the most*) :

<b>Gletik,</b>	<i>tall.</i>
<b>Gletikum,</b>	<i>taller.</i>
<b>Gletikün,</b>	<i>tallest.</i>

The conjunctions *as, so... as*, are rendered by : **so... ka :**

**Binob so gletik ka ols,** *I am as tall as you.*

*Than* is rendered by **ka :**

**Binom gletikum ka ob,** *he is taller than I.*

## IV.

### NUMERALS.

#### I.—CARDINAL NUMBERS.

1. <b>Bal.</b>	10. <b>Bals.</b>	11. <b>Balsebal.</b>
2. <b>Tel.</b>	20. <b>Tels.</b>	12. <b>Balsetel.</b>
3. <b>Kil.</b>	30. <b>Kils.</b>	31. <b>Kilsebal.</b>
4. <b>Fol.</b>	40. <b>Fols.</b>	43. <b>Folsekil.</b>
5. <b>Lul.</b>	50. <b>Luls.</b>	57. <b>Lulsevel.</b>
6. <b>Mäl.</b>	60. <b>Mäls.</b>	68. <b>Mälsejöl.</b>
7. <b>Vel.</b>	70. <b>Vels.</b>	170. <b>Tum vels.</b>
8. <b>Jöl.</b>	80. <b>Jöls.</b>	180. <b>Tum jöls.</b>
9. <b>Zul.</b>	90. <b>Züls.</b>	690. <b>Mältum züls.</b>
100. <b>Tum.</b>	1000. <b>Mil.</b>	3000. <b>Kilmil.</b>

The units are connected with the tens by the conjunction *e, and* : **bals e bal.**

#### II.—ORDINAL NUMBERS.

The ordinal numbers are formed by suffixing **id** to the cardinal numbers :

<b>Balid,</b>	<i>first.</i>	<b>Balsid,</b>	<i>tenth.</i>
<b>Telid,</b>	<i>second.</i>	<b>Telsid,</b>	<i>twentieth.</i>

#### III.—MULTIPLES.

Multiples are formed by adding **ik** :

<b>Balik,</b>	<i>simple.</i>	<b>Balsik,</b>	<i>tenfold.</i>
<b>Telik,</b>	<i>double.</i>	<b>Telsik,</b>	<i>twentyfold.</i>



## V.

### PRONOUNS.

#### I.—PERSONAL PRONOUNS.

The personal pronouns are the following :

<b>Ob,</b>	<b>obs.</b>	<i>I,</i>	<i>we.</i>
<b>Ol,</b>	<b>ols.</b>	<i>Thou,</i>	<i>you.</i>
<b>Om,</b>	<b>oms.</b>	<i>He,</i>	<i>they.</i>
<b>Of,</b>	<b>ofs.</b>	<i>She,</i>	<i>they.</i>

The personal, like all other pronouns, are declined :

N. <b>Ob,</b>	<i>I.</i>	<b>Obs,</b>	<i>we.</i>
G. <b>Oba</b> or <b>de ob,</b>	<i>of me.</i>	<b>Obas</b> or <b>de obs,</b>	<i>of us.</i>
D. <b>Obe</b> or <b>al ob,</b>	<i>to me.</i>	<b>Obes</b> or <b>al obs,</b>	<i>to us.</i>
A. <b>Obi,</b>	<i>me.</i>	<b>Obis,</b>	<i>us.</i>

There are three more personal pronouns in Volapük : **on**, *one*, **os**, *it*, and the reflective pronoun **oki** (*oke*), *himself*, *one's self*.

<b>Sagon osi,</b>	<i>one says it.</i>
<b>Sagom oke</b>	<i>he says to himself.</i>

#### II.—POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVES AND PRONOUNS.

The possessive adjectives and pronouns are formed by adding **ik** to the personal pronouns :

<b>Obik,</b>	<i>my, mine.</i>	<b>Obsik,</b>	<i>our, ours.</i>
<b>Olik,</b>	<i>thy, thine.</i>	<b>Olsik,</b>	<i>your, yours.</i>
<b>Omik,</b>	<i>his, his.</i>	<b>Omsik,</b>	<i>their, theirs.</i>
<b>Ofik,</b>	<i>her, hers.</i>	<b>Ofsik,</b>	<i>their, theirs.</i>

<b>Fat e son omik,</b>	<i>the father and his son.</i>
<b>Mot e cils ofik,</b>	<i>the mother and her children.</i>
<b>Penob fienes olsik e obikes,</b>	<i>I write to your friends and to mine.</i>

#### III.—DEMONSTRATIVE ADJECTIVES AND PRONOUNS.

The demonstrative adjectives *this* and *that* are rendered by **at** and **et** :

<b>Söl at e läd et,</b>	<i>this gentleman and that lady.</i>
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*This* and *that* having no reference to a determinate noun are **atos** and **etos** :

**Atos binos fikulik,**      *that is difficult.*

*That* followed by a preposition or a relative, is rendered by **ut** :

**Buk at binom ut flena obik,**      *this book is that of my friend.*

#### IV.—INTERROGATIVE ADJECTIVES AND PRONOUNS.

*Who* is **kim**, for the masculine. **kif**, for the feminine ; *what* is **kis** :

**Kim löfom obi?**      *who loves me?*  
**Kisi givols ome?**      *what do you give him?*

*Which, what*, referring to a noun, are rendered by **kiom** :

**Püki kiom studols?**      *what language do you study?*  
**Kiom blodas olik binom is?**      *which of your brothers is here?*

#### V.—RELATIVE PRONOUNS.

The relative pronouns *who, which, that* are rendered by **kel** for both genders :

**Flen keli löfobs,**      *the friend whom we love.*  
**Läds keles pükols,**      *the ladies to whom you speak.*

*What* meaning *that which* is translated by **kelos** :

**No kapälob kelosi sagols.**      *I don't understand what you say.*

#### VI.—INDEFINITE PRONOUNS AND ADJECTIVES.

The indefinite pronouns are the following :

<b>Alim,</b> <i>every one.</i>	<b>Som,</b> <i>such.</i>
<b>Ek,</b> <i>somebody.</i>	<b>Bos,</b> <i>something.</i>
<b>Nek,</b> <i>nobody.</i>	<b>Nos,</b> <i>nothing.</i>
<b>Ans,</b> <i>some.</i>	<b>It,</b> <i>self.</i>

The principal indefinite adjectives are :

<b>Alik,</b>	<i>every.</i>	<b>Votik,</b>	<i>other.</i>
<b>Anik,</b>	<i>some.</i>	<b>Balvotik,</b>	<i>one another.</i>
<b>Nonik,</b>	<i>no.</i>	<b>Valik,</b>	<i>all.</i>
<b>Ot,</b>	<i>same.</i>	<b>Mödik,</b>	<i>much.</i>
<b>Sembal,</b>	<i>a.</i>	<b>Nemödik,</b>	<i>little.</i>
<b>Somik,</b>	<i>such.</i>	<b>Mödikumik,</b>	<i>several.</i>

## VI.

### VERBS.

#### I.—FORMATION.

The verbs in Volapük have an *active*, a *passive* and a *reflective form*.

The root of the verb is generally a substantive :**pük**, *the language*, **pükön**, *to speak*; **pen**, *the pen*, **penön**, *to write*; the persons are expressed by adding the personal pronouns to the root. The tenses of the indicative are marked by prefixes; the other tenses are derived from the former, to which terminations are added.

#### II.—ACTIVE VERBS.

##### *Simple Tenses.*

#### PRESENT OF THE INDICATIVE.

<b>Penob,</b>	<b>penobs,</b>	<i>I write,</i>	<i>we write.</i>
<b>Penol,</b>	<b>penols,</b>	<i>thou writest,</i>	<i>you write.</i>
<b>Penom,</b>	<b>penoms,</b>	<i>he writes,</i>	<i>they write.</i>
<b>Penof,</b>	<b>penofs,</b>	<i>she writes,</i>	<i>theywrite.</i>
<b>Penon,</b>		<i>one writes.</i>	

#### OTHER TENSES OF THE INDICATIVE.

IMPERFECT . . . . .	ä	} penob.	<i>I wrote.</i>
PERFECT . . . . .	e		<i>I have written.</i>
PLUPERFECT . . . . .	i		<i>I had written.</i>
FIRST FUTURE . . . . .	o		<i>I shall write.</i>
SECOND FUTURE . . . . .	u		<i>I shall have written.</i>

The relations of the past and the future are indicated by the same prefixes in the adverbs of time :

<b>Adelo,</b>	<i>to day.</i>
<b>Ädelo,</b>	<i>yesterday.</i>
<b>Edelo,</b>	<i>the day before yesterday</i>
<b>Odelo,</b>	<i>to-morrow.</i>
<b>Udelo,</b>	<i>the day after to-morrow.</i>

*Obs.* — The interrogation is marked, as in Russian, by prefixing **li** :

**Li-studols volapüki?** *Do you study volapük?*

*Derived Tenses.*

The conditional is formed by adding **öv** to the imperfect and the pluperfect of the indicative :

FIRST CONDITIONAL. **Äpenob-öv,** *I should write.*

SECOND CONDITIONAL. **Ipenob-öv,** *I should have written.*

The imperative is formed by adding **öd** to the present of the indicative :

<b>Penol-öd,</b>	<i>write.</i>
<b>Penom-öd,</b>	<i>let him write.</i>
<b>Penobs-öd,</b>	<i>let us write.</i>
<b>Penols-öd,</b>	<i>write.</i>
<b>Penoms-öd,</b>	<i>let them write.</i>

The subjunctive is formed by adding **la** to the tenses of the indicative ; it is rarely used in Volapük :

PRESENT.	<b>Penob-la,</b>	(if)	<i>I write.</i>
IMPERFECT.	<b>Äpenob-la,</b>	(if)	<i>I wrote.</i>
PERFECT.	<b>Epenob-la,</b>	(if)	<i>I have written.</i>
PLUPERFECT.	<b>Ipenob-la,</b>	(if)	<i>I had written.</i>

*Infinitives and Participles.*

The infinitive is always ended by **ön** ; the ending of the participles is **öl**.

FINITIVE PRESENT.	<b>Penön,</b>	<i>to write.</i>
— PAST.	<b>Epenön,</b>	<i>to have written.</i>
PARTICIPLE PRESENT.	<b>Penöl,</b>	<i>writing.</i>
— PAST.	<b>Epenöl,</b>	<i>having written.</i>

III.—PASSIVE VERBS.

The passive verbs are formed by prefixing a **p** to the active tenses ; the present having no prefix takes **pa**.

*Simple Tenses.*

PRESENT . . . . .	<b>Pa</b>	} <b>löfob,</b>	<i>I am loved.</i>
IMPERFECT . . . . .	<b>Pä</b>		<i>I was loved.</i>
PERFECT . . . . .	<b>Pe</b>		<i>I have been loved.</i>
PLUPERFECT . . . . .	<b>Pi</b>		<i>I had been loved.</i>
FIRST FUTURE . . . . .	<b>Po</b>		<i>I shall be loved.</i>
SECOND FUTURE . . . . .	<b>Pu</b>		<i>I shall have been loved</i>

*erived Tenses.*

FIRST CONDITIONAL.	<b>Pälöfob-öv,</b>	<i>I should be loved.</i>
SECOND CONDITIONAL.	<b>Pilöfob-öv,</b>	<i>I should have been loved.</i>
IMPERATIVE.	<b>Palöfol-öd,</b>	<i>be loved.</i>
SUBJUNCTIVE.	<b>Palöfob-la,</b>	<i>I be loved.</i>

*Infinitives and Participles.*

INFINITIVE PRESENT.	<b>Palöfön,</b>	<i>to be loved.</i>
INFINITIVE PAST.	<b>Pelöfön,</b>	<i>to have been loved.</i>
PARTICIPLE PRESENT	<b>Palöföl,</b>	<i>loved or being loved.</i>
PARTICIPLE PAST.	<b>Pelöföl,</b>	<i>having been loved.</i>

*Obs.* — The passive may also be translated by the verb **binön**, to be :

<b>Binob</b>	} <b>palöföl,</b>	} <i>I am</i>	} <i>loved.</i>	
<b>Obinob</b>				<i>I shall be</i>
<b>Äbinob-öv</b>				<i>I should be</i>
<b>Binol-öd</b>				<i>be</i>
<b>Binön</b>				<i>to be</i>
<b>Binöl</b>				<i>being</i>

IV.—REFLECTIVE AND IMPERSONAL VERBS.

The reflective verb is formed from the active verb by adding the accusative of the personal pronouns.

<b>Vatükön oki,</b>	<i>to wash one's self.</i>
<b>Vatükob obi,</b>	<i>I wash myself.</i>
<b>Vatükol oli,</b>	<i>thou washest thyself.</i>
<b>Vatükom oki,</b>	<i>he washes himself.</i>
<b>Evatükob obi,</b>	<i>I have washed myself.</i>

The impersonal verb is marked by the pronominal suffix **os** :

<b>Tötos,</b>	<i>it thunders.</i>
<b>Etötos,</b>	<i>it has thundered</i>

VII.

ADVERBS.

I.—FORMATION.

There are two kinds of adverbs : the primitive, as **si**, *yes*, **no**, *no*, **nu**, *now*, and the derivative, such as **fino**, *at last*, **balido**, *firstly*, **poso**, *afterwards* which are always ended by **o**.

Many adverbs have degrees of comparison :

<b>Suno,</b>	<i>soon.</i>
<b>Sunumo</b>	<i>sooner.</i>
<b>Suntino,</b>	<i>the soonest.</i>

II.—LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL ADVERBS.

*Adverbs of Time and Place.*

<b>Dono,</b>	<i>down.</i>	<b>Nevelo,</b>	<i>never.</i>
<b>Evelo,</b>	<i>ever,</i>	<b>Nu,</b>	<i>now.</i>
<b>Fino,</b>	<i>at last.</i>	<b>Ofen,</b>	<i>often.</i>

<b>Fö,</b>	<i>before.</i>	<b>Poso,</b>	<i>afterwards.</i>
<b>Fovo,</b>	<i>henceforth</i>	<b>Seo,</b>	<i>out.</i>
<b>Ino,</b>	<i>within.</i>	<b>Suno,</b>	<i>soon.</i>
<b>Is,</b>	<i>here.</i>	<b>Suso,</b>	<i>up.</i>
<b>Kiöp?</b>	<i>where?</i>	<b>Täno,</b>	<i>then.</i>
<b>Kiüp?</b>	<i>when?</i>	<b>Us,</b>	<i>there.</i>
<b>Nebo,</b>	<i>close by.</i>	<b>Viso,</b>	<i>opposite.</i>
<b>Nesuno,</b>	<i>late.</i>	<b>Ya,</b>	<i>already.</i>

*Adverbs of Affirmation, of Quality etc.*

<b>Ba,</b>	<i>perhaps.</i>	<b>No,</b>	<i>no.</i>
<b>Beno,</b>	<i>well.</i>	<b>Säto,</b>	<i>enough.</i>
<b>Kikod?</b>	<i>why.</i>	<b>Si,</b>	<i>yes.</i>
<b>Kobo,</b>	<i>together.</i>	<b>Umo,</b>	<i>more.</i>
<b>Liko?</b>	<i>how?</i>	<b>Uno,</b>	<i>the most.</i>
<b>Mödo,</b>	<i>much.</i>	<b>Vemo,</b>	<i>very.</i>
<b>Nemödo,</b>	<i>little.</i>	<b>Za,</b>	<i>about.</i>

## VIII.

### PREPOSITIONS.

The prepositions do not require the complement to be put in a certain case, but are always followed by the nominative :

<b>Al,</b>	<i>to.</i>	<b>Nen,</b>	<i>without.</i>
<b>Bifü,</b>	<i>before.</i>	<b>Plo,</b>	<i>for.</i>
<b>De,</b>	<i>of, from.</i>	<b>Po,</b>	<i>behind.</i>
<b>Dis,</b>	<i>under.</i>	<b>Pos,</b>	<i>after.</i>
<b>Du,</b>	<i>during.</i>	<b>Se,</b>	<i>out of.</i>
<b>Fa,</b>	<i>by.</i>	<b>Segun</b>	<i>according to.</i>
<b>In,</b>	<i>in.</i>	<b>Sis,</b>	<i>since.</i>
<b>Jü,</b>	<i>until.</i>	<b>Su,</b>	<i>on, upon.</i>
<b>Ko,</b>	<i>with.</i>	<b>Sus,</b>	<i>above.</i>
<b>Lä,</b>	<i>near.</i>	<b>Ta,</b>	<i>against.</i>
<b>Nebü,</b>	<i>close to.</i>	<b>Zi,</b>	<i>round.</i>

**Ogolob ko om al Paris,**      *I shall go with him to Paris.*

## IX.

### CONJUNCTIONS.

The principal conjunctions are :

<b>Ab,</b>	<i>but.</i>	<b>If,</b>	<i>if.</i>
<b>Bi,</b>	<i>because.</i>	<b>Jüs,</b>	<i>until.</i>
<b>Das,</b>	<i>that.</i>	<b>Kludo,</b>	<i>therefore.</i>
<b>Dat,</b>	<i>in order that.</i>	<b>Na,</b>	<i>after.</i>
<b>Do,</b>	<i>though.</i>	<b>Ni,</b>	<i>neither, nor.</i>
<b>Du,</b>	<i>while.</i>	<b>Sis,</b>	<i>since.</i>
<b>E,</b>	<i>and.</i>	<b>U,</b>	<i>or.</i>
<b>I,</b>	<i>also.</i>	<b>Ven,</b>	<i>when.</i>
<b>Ibo,</b>	<i>for.</i>	<b>Yed,</b>	<i>yet.</i>

In Volapük the conjunctions are not followed by the subjunctive :

**Do binom liegik,**                      *though he is rich.*

## X.

### INTERJECTIONS.

The most usual interjections are :

<b>A!</b>	<i>ah!</i>	<b>Milö!</b>	<i>zounds!</i>
<b>Adyö!</b>	<i>good bye!</i>	<b>O!</b>	<i>oh!</i>
<b>Ag!</b>	<i>alas!</i>	<b>Ö!</b>	<i>eh!</i>
<b>Bafö!</b>	<i>bravo!</i>	<b>Sö!</b>	<i>hem!</i>
<b>Eko!</b>	<i>behold!</i>	<b>Stopö!</b>	<i>stop!</i>
<b>Fi!</b>	<i>fie!</i>	<b>Spidö!</b>	<i>quick!</i>
<b>Lilö!</b>	<i>halloo!</i>	<b>Takedö!</b>	<i>hush!</i>
<b>Lü!</b>	<i>ho!</i>	<b>Yu!</b>	<i>help!</i>

## XI.

### CONSTRUCTION.

The construction in Volapük follows the general principle that the determining word is always placed after the one determined. Hence the four following rules :



1° The adjective, whether determinative or qualificative, follows the substantive :

**Doms at tel gletik**      *those two great houses.*  
**Flen obik löfik,**      *my dear friend.*

2° The subject is placed before the verb :

**Flens obsik kömoms,**      *our friends come.*  
**Flens obsik li-kömoms?**      *do our friends come?*

3° The complement and the attribute follow the verb :

**Logob omi,**      *I see him.*  
**Pükön gudiko,**      *to speak well.*  
**Moni limödik labols?**      *How much money have you?*

The negation and the interrogative words are placed before the verb :

**No pükom,**      *he does not speak.*  
**Kikod no pükols?**      *why do you not speak?*  
**Moni limödik labols?**      *how much money have you?*

4° The complements follow one another according to their importance. The direct complement comes first, then the indirect complements; the adverbs of time may follow the verb immediately :

**Sedom ofen moni blode omik.**      *he often sends money to his brother.*

## XII.

### FORMATION OF WORDS.

#### I.—ROOTS.

The words of the Volapük dictionary are *roots, derivatives or compounds.*

The *roots* are generally substantives; they have been borrowed from the Romanic and Germanic languages, and chiefly from French and English.

Here are a few words borrowed from the Romanic languages :

<b>Dol</b> (dolor),	<i>pain.</i>	<b>Milag</b> (milagre),	<i>wonder.</i>
<b>Flum</b> (flumen),	<i>river.</i>	<b>Pag</b> (pagus),	<i>village.</i>
<b>Fug</b> (fuga),	<i>flight.</i>	<b>Pop</b> (populus),	<i>people.</i>
<b>Kap</b> (caput),	<i>head.</i>	<b>Sap</b> (sapientia),	<i>wisdom.</i>
<b>Lüg</b> (lugere),	<i>mourning.</i>	<b>Stel</b> (stella),	<i>star.</i>
<b>Med</b> (medio),	<i>means.</i>	<b>Stim</b> (stima),	<i>honor.</i>

Words borrowed from English :

<b>Beg</b> ,	<i>prayer</i>	<b>Smal</b> ,	<i>smallness</i>
<b>Klot</b>	<i>dress.</i>	<b>Smel</b> ,	<i>smell.</i>
<b>Läd</b> ,	<i>lady.</i>	<b>Smok</b> ,	<i>smoke.</i>
<b>Lif</b> ,	<i>life.</i>	<b>Ston</b> ,	<i>stone.</i>
<b>Skil</b> ,	<i>skill.</i>	<b>Tim</b> ,	<i>time.</i>

Words borrowed from German :

<b>Bon</b> (bohne),	<i>bean.</i>	<b>Ket</b> (kette),	<i>chain.</i>
<b>Fad</b> (faden),	<i>thread.</i>	<b>Nad</b> (nadel),	<i>needle.</i>
<b>Fel</b> (feld),	<i>field.</i>	<b>Nef</b> (neffe),	<i>nephew.</i>
<b>Gan</b> (gans),	<i>goose.</i>	<b>Stil</b> (stille),	<i>calm.</i>
<b>Jön</b> (schön),	<i>beauty.</i>	<b>Vun</b> (wunde),	<i>wound.</i>

As the pronunciation of the letter *r* presents difficulties to the eastern peoples, it is generally replaced by *l* :

<b>Bel</b> (berg),	<i>mountain.</i>	<b>Fluk</b> (fructus),	<i>fruit.</i>
<b>Blef</b> (bref),	<i>shortness.</i>	<b>Klon</b> (krone),	<i>crown.</i>
<b>Fil</b> (fire),	<i>fire.</i>	<b>Spel</b> (sperare),	<i>hope.</i>
<b>Led</b> (red),	<i>red.</i>	<b>Vol</b> (world),	<i>world.</i>

The initial letter or syllable is often suppressed ·

<b>Fikul</b> ,	<i>difficulty.</i>	<b>Nim</b> ,	<i>animal.</i>
<b>Liv</b> ,	<i>deliverance.</i>	<b>Plim</b>	<i>compliments.</i>
<b>Mag</b> ,	<i>image.</i>	<b>Rig</b> ,	<i>origin.</i>

At other times the middle letter is dropped or contracted:

<b>Dot</b> ,	<i>doubt.</i>	<b>Mab</b> ,	<i>marble.</i>
<b>Fem</b> ,	<i>fermentation.</i>	<b>Pat</b> ,	<i>particularity.</i>
<b>Fom</b> ,	<i>form.</i>	<b>Pot</b> ,	<i>post.</i>

## II.—DERIVATIVES.

The derivatives are formed from the roots, with the help of suffixes and prefixes; each part of speech has its own affixes.

The principal suffixes are: **ab**, **al**, **am**, **at**, **áv**, **el**, **en**, **il**, **op**, **ul**, etc.

**Av.** — **Planav**, *botany*, from **plan**, *plant*; **natav**, *physics*, from **nat**, *nature*; **talav**, *geology*, from **tal**, *land*.

**El.** — **Fitel**, *fisher*, from **fit**, *fish*; **tedel**, *tradesman*, from **ted**, *commerce*; **kikel**, *lock-smith*, from **kik**, *key*.

**En.** — **Bilen**, *brewery*, from **bil**, *beer*; **búken**, *printing-office*, from **búk**, *impression*; **teinen**, *tileworks*, from **tein**, *tile*.

**Il.** — **Domil**, *cottage*, from **dom**, *house*; **cemil**, *little room*, from **cem**, *room*; **fotil**, *grove*, from **fot**, *wood*.

**Op.** — **Yulop**, *Europe*; **Melop**, *America*; **Fikop**, *Africa*; **Silop**, *Asia*; **Talop**, *Australia*.

Most of the prefixes are adverbs and prepositions.

**Ko.** — **Koblod**, *colleague*, from **ko**, *with*, and **blod**, *brother*; **kovob**, *collaboration*, from **vob**, *work*.

**Ne.** — **Nefen**, *enemy*, from **ne**, *negative*, and from **fien**, *friend*; **nevelat**, *untruth*, from **velat**, *truth*; **nedut**, *idleness*, from **dut**, *diligence*.

**Le.** — **Ledom**, *palace*, from the augmentative **le** and **dom**, *house*; **ledib**, *abyss*, from **dib**, *depth*; **lesin**, *crime*, from **sin**, *sin*.

Lu. — **Lufel**, *heath*, from the pejorative **lu** and **fel**, *field*;  
**lumud**, *ugly mouth*, from **mud**, *mouth*; **lugod**, *idol*,  
 from **god**, *god*.

III.—COMPOUND WORDS.

Volapük admits of all the compound words the meaning of which is obvious and in the composition of which there are not more than two substantives.

In accordance with the principle adopted in English and in opposition to the principle adopted in the rules of construction, the *determining* word, that is the word which expresses the accessory idea, is always placed before the word which is *determined*, or that contains the principal idea: both words are joined together by the letter **a**.

<b>Bukakonlet</b> , <i>library</i>	from <b>konlet bukas</b> , <i>collection of books.</i>
<b>Flolatim</b> , <i>spring</i>	— <b>tim flolas</b> , <i>time of flowers.</i>
<b>Hitatim</b> , <i>summer</i>	— <b>tim hita</b> , <i>time of heat.</i>
<b>Kilagul</b> , <i>triangle</i>	— <b>guls kil</b> , <i>three angles.</i>
<b>Vödabuk</b> , <i>dictionary</i>	— <b>buk vödäs</b> , <i>book of words.</i>

IV.—EXAMPLE OF DERIVATION.

ROOT: **Pük**, *the language.*

A.

<b>Pük</b> ,	<i>language</i> ; <b>pükik</b> , <i>which belongs to the language</i> ; <b>pükatidel</b> , <i>professor of languages</i> ; <b>pükapök</b> , <i>fault of language</i> ; <b>pükön</b> , <i>to speak</i> ; <b>pükönabid</b> , <b>pükönamod</b> , <i>way of speaking</i> ; <b>motapük</b> , <i>maternal language</i> ; <b>volapük</b> , <i>universal language.</i>
<b>Pükat</b> ,	<i>speech</i> ; <b>pükatil</b> , <i>little speech</i> ; <b>pükatön</b> , <i>utter a speech</i> ; <b>telapükat</b> , <i>dialogue.</i>
<b>Pükav</b> ,	<i>philology</i> ; <b>pükavik</b> , <i>philological.</i>
<b>Püked</b> ,	<i>sentence</i> ; <b>pükedik</b> , <i>sententious</i> ; <b>pükedavöd</b> , <i>proverb</i> ; <b>pükedavödik</b> , <i>proverbial</i> ; <b>välapüked</b> , <i>device.</i>
<b>Pükel</b> ,	<i>orator</i> ; <b>pükelik</b> , <i>oratorical</i> ; <b>möpükel</b> , <i>polyglot.</i>

- Püköf.** *eloquence*; **püköfik**, *eloquent*; **püköfav**, *oratory*;  
**püköfavik**, *pertaining to oratory*.  
**Pükot,** *talk*; **pükotik**, *talkative*; **pükotöf**, *talkativeness*;  
**okapükot**, *monologue*.

B.

- Bipük,** *preface*.  
**Deptük,** *contestation*; **deptükön**, *to contest*.  
**Gepük,** *answer*; **gepükön**, *to answer*.  
**Leptük,** *affirmation*; **leptükön**, *to affirm*; **leptüked**, *maxim*.  
**Lenpük,** *harangue*; **lenpükön**, *to harangue*.  
**Libapük,** *acquittal*; **libapükön**, *to acquit*.  
**Lupük,** *chattering*; **lupükel**, *chatterer*; **lupükön**, *to chat-  
ter*; **lupükem**, *gossiping*; **lupükot**, *twaddling*;  
**lupüklam**, *stammering*; **lupüklel**, *stammerer*;  
**lupüklön**, *to stammer*.  
**Mipük,** *lapsus linguae*; **mipükön**, *to make a mistake in  
speaking*.  
**Nepük,** *silence*; **nepükik**, *silent*; **nepükön**, *to be silent*.  
**Septük,** *pronunciation*; **septükik**, *expressible*; **septükön**, *to  
pronounce, to express*.  
**Tapük,** *contradiction*; **tapükön**, *to contradict*.

XIII.

Exercises of translation.

I.

**Plofed de literat flentik äililadom vöno in klad funa-  
pükati fa Flechier su Tu-  
renne.** *A professor of French litera-  
ture was one day reading in  
class the funeral sermon of  
Fléchier on Turenne.*

**Mayed stüla e subim tikas älegäloms julelis valik, e bal  
de oms äsagom kofiko nilele  
omik: „Kitüp okanol mekön  
pükati sümik“? — „Ven obi-  
nol Turenne“, votik ägesa-  
gom.** *The majesty of the style and  
the elevation of the thoughts  
ravished all the pupils, and  
one of them said ironically to  
his neighbour: “When shall  
you be able to make such a  
discourse?” — “When you are  
Turenne”, answered the other.*

NOTES.

**Binön**, to be. — **Fa**, by. — **Flent**, France; **flentik**, French. — **Funapukat**, funeral orison, from **fun**, corpse and **pukat**, discourse. — **Jul**, school; **julel**, pupil. — **Klad**, class. — **Kanön**, to be able. — **Kitup**, when. — **Kof**, irony; **kofik**, ironical. — **Legälön**, to ravish, from **gälön**, to rejoice. — **Liladon**, to read. — **Mayed**, majesty. — **Mekön**, to make. — **Nil**, neighbourhood; **nilel**, neighbour. — **Plofed**, professor. — **Sagön**, to say; **gesagön**, to answer. — **Stül**, style. — **Su**, on. — **Subim**, elevation. — **Tik**, thought. — **Valik**, all. — **Ven**, when. — **Vöno**, one day. — **Votik**, other.

II.

London, balul lid 1886,  
Söle J. Chevalier, Paris.

Söl löfik,

Labob soni keli vipob sedön al zif olsik, dat lenadom plobö püki flentik.

Äbinob-öv vemo kotenik, if äkanols-la lasumön omi in tedadom olsik: älenadom-öv otüpo püki e tedi.

Son obik labom yelis balsejöl; binom vemo dutik, sevom bukami e pcnom nepöko pükis deutik e tälik.

Valadob gepüki sunik e blibob, Söl löfik,

dünan olsik divodikün,

JOHNSON.

NOTES.

**Al**, to. — **Balul**, january, contracted from **bal**, one and **mul**, month. — **Blibön**, to stay. — **Bukam**, bookkeeping. — **Dat**, that. — **Deut**, Germany. — **Divod**, devotion. — **Dünan**, servant. — **Dut**, application. — **Geptük**, answer. — **If**, if. — **Koten**, content. — **Labön**, to have. — **Lasumön**, to take, to receive. — **Lenadön**, to learn. — **Löf**, love; **löfik**, dear. — **Nepöko**, without fault; from **pok**, fault. — **Otüpo**, at the same time. — **Plobö**, thoroughly. — **Sedön**, to send. — **Sev**, knowledge. — **Söl**, sir. — **Son**, son. — **Sunik**, prompt, from **suno**, soon. — **Täl**, Italy. — **Ted**, commerce. — **Valad**, waiting, expectation. — **Vip**, wish. — **Yel**, year. — **Zif**, town.

III.

**Glidi, Söl.**

*Good day, good evening, Sir.*

**Liko stadols?**

*How are you?*

**Stadob bentino.**

*I am very well.*

**Liko fat olsik stadom?**

*How is your father?*

**Li-vilols göledön ko obs?**

*Will you breakfast with us?*

**Dani, no labob timi.**

*I thank you, I have no time.*

**Li-kanols volapükön?**

*Can you speak Volapük?*

**Pükob fientiko e deutiko.**

*I speak French and German.*

**Kanob penön volapüko.**

*I can write Volapük.*

**Kisi sagols, Läd?**

*What do you say, Madam?*

**No kapälob olsi.**

*I do not understand yo*

**Golob al teat.**

*I go to the theatre.*

**Ogekömob odelo.**

*I shall come back to-morrow.*

**Stadols-öd beno!**

*Farewell!*



# THE CONVENTIONAL LIES OF OUR CIVILIZATION.

FROM THE GERMAN OF MAX NORDAU.

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## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

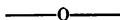
THE SPECTATOR, LONDON. In "The Conventional Lies of Our Civilization," we have an excellent American translation of the seventh edition of a work by Max Nordau, which has been officially proscribed in Austria. The author, who holds that the world is utterly out of joint, believes the discontent and pessimism everywhere prevalent to be due to the perpetual conflict between our secret convictions and our outward life. This inconsistency he treats under its various forms—the lies of Religion and of a Monarchy and Aristocracy, political, economic, matrimonial, and miscellaneous lies. If we admit his premises, as no reasonable Englishman will, that all cultivated people, consciously or unconsciously, accept the Materialistic theory of the Universe, then no doubt it must be allowed that there is a vast amount of self-deception afloat. Apart from this, he deals some telling blows at obvious anomalies in our civilised societies in a trenchant fashion, and with the aid of a style far more incisive and epigrammatic, even in the translation, than we expect to find in a German writer. But many of his onslaughts lose their point to an English reader. His sketch of political life is obviously drawn from his experiences of American professional politicians; and his picture of the galling restrictions of bureaucracy, under which the working classes suffer, may be true of Germany, but is a gross caricature of England. Finally, we would point out that his panaceas for the evils—physical, social, and economic—of civilised humanity, are partly Utopian, and mainly consist of a revolution in the land system, on conditions under which the purely physical excellence of the race would have the freest development. Now, the logical outcome of the evolution theory, in which he firmly believes, precludes the possibility of our ever reverting to such a regime of "physiocracy" as he describes. And Herr Nordau is by way of being nothing if not logical. Nevertheless, though more successful in the destructive than the constructive portions of his book, he in both compels our respect, though seldom our assent, by the sincerity and earnestness with which he propounds his views, even when they are most startling.

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# THE CONVENTIONAL LIES OF OUR CIVILIZATION.



## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

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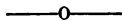
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# THE CONVENTIONAL LIES OF OUR CIVILIZATION.



## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

THE JUNIOR LIBERAL REVIEW, LONDON. The writer of this work is an iconoclast, or, as the dictionaries put it, "a breaker of images." He is of the coterie of thinkers to which Southey in his "Vision of Judgment" gives the appellation of the "Satanic School." The title is a strange one, but the work is still stranger, being in reality a wholesale and unsparing condemnation of the state to which mankind, after eighteen centuries' struggling and stumbling, has arrived. Nothing escapes the censure and satire of the author's pen. Religion, politics, society, the press—all the institutions of our day, whether they be of advanced America or retrograde Russia, whether they be relics of the old or products of the new, decaying or developing, are scoffed at by the author as "lies," which must be exorcised from the world. Brilliant, pungent, and profound, displaying powers of discerning insidious evil where good alone is supposed to exist, M. Nordau, notwithstanding, chills the feeling, and alienates the sympathy of his reader by the extravagance and morbidity of his unhealthy pessimism. Characterized by a strange fervidness and force, pervaded by an enthusiasm which if it resembles fanaticism in the dogmatism of its denunciation, is at any rate the outcome of an analytical study of the things against which it is directed, the book weakens its title to be regarded as the work of a true reformer by the licentiousness of its language. But while few will think our modern civilization deserving of the philippic the author has directed against it, the work is both valuable and interesting as giving us in a succinct form all that can be said against existing institutions and the principles which they embody, and said, too, with a power and incisiveness of expression which will make it a matter for surprise, if they do not cause it to become a world-known book. If we recoil from the miasma of pessimism to which M. Nordau invites us we can at any rate profit by his vigorous and searching inquiry into the evils from which the world is suffering. And absurdly pessimism, whether it be religious or political, had never a more talented exponent than the author of this work.

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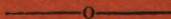
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