

Thomas HOOD (1799-1845)

“To Henrietta, on Her Departure for Calais”, (1843)

When little people go abroad, wherever they may roam,
They will not just be treated as they used to be at home;
So take a few promiscuous hints, to warn you in advance,
Of how a little English girl will perhaps be served in France.

Of course you will be Frenchified; and first, it's my belief, 5
They'll dress you in their foreign style as à-la-mode as beef,
With a little row of beehives, as a border to your frock,
And a pair of frilly trousers, like a little bantam cock.

But first they'll seize your bundle (if you have one) in a crack, 10
And tie it with a tape by way of bustle on your back;
And make your waist so high or low, your shape will be a riddle,
For anyhow you'll never have your middle in the middle.

Your little English sandals for a while will hold together,
But woe betide you when the stones have worn away the leather;
For they'll poke your little pettitoes (and there will be a hobble!) 15
In such a pair of shoes as none but carpenters can cobble!

What next?—to fill your head with French to match the native girls
In scraps of *Galignani* they'll screw up your little curls;
And they'll take their nouns and verbs, and some bits of verse and prose,
And pour them in your ears that you may spout them through your nose. 20

You'll have to learn a *chou* is quite another sort of thing
To that you put your foot in; that a *belle* is not to ring;
That a *corne* is not the nubble that brings trouble to your toes;
Nor *peut-être* a potato, as *some* Irish folks suppose.

No, no, they have no murphies there, for supper or for lunch, 25
But you may get in course of time a *pomme de terre* to munch,
With which, as you perforce must do as Calais folks are doing,
You'll maybe have to gobble up the frog that went a wooing!

But pray at meals, remember this, the French are so polite,
No matter what you eat or drink, "whatever is, is right!" 30
So when you're told at dinner-time that some delicious stew
Is cat instead of rabbit, you must answer "*Tant mi—eux!*"

For little folks who go abroad, wherever they may roam,
They cannot just be treated as they used to be at home;
So take a few promiscuous hints, to warn you in advance,
Of how a little English girl will perhaps be served in France!

Claude de SAINLIENS, aka Claudius HOLYBAND (born in Moulins in the 16th century, lived in London from 1565 to 1597)

The Treasurie of the French tong: / Teaching the way to / varie all sortes of Verbes: / Enriched so plentifully / with Wordes and Phrases / (for the benefit of the studious / in that language) as the / like hath before / bin published. / Gathered and set forth by / CL. Hollyband. / For the better vnderstanding of the order / of this dictionarie, peruse the Pre- / face to the reader. London : Imprinted by Henrie Bynneman, 1580, fol. iij^{r-v}.

Claudius Holliband, to the Students of the French tong.

Having already (gentle Reader) for thine ease and facilitie in attaining of our French tong, set forth my Bookes *De pronunciatione linguæ gallicæ*, and French *Littleton*, whereby I haue opened the way to all sortes aswell learned as vnlearned, for the perfect reading and pronunciation therof : and yet perceiuing thy want and indigence of a sufficient meane for th'vnderstanding of the same, I haue nowe for thy further 5
auaile, published this my present worke whereby although perchaunce I shall not be founde fully to resolute thee of euery ambiguitie that may rise in our language, yet I trust I haue performed that, wherein for the most parte thou mayest bee satisfied, althoughe not wholly, yet I hope, for the most parte. For, besides that I haue expounded all the harde wordes by diuers and sundrie examples, yet I haue giuen thee 10
the Theame and principall Tenses of all our most difficulte Verbes. I call the Theame, speaking to the vnskillfull in the Latine tong, whereby we begin to decline a Verbe, as by example; In other Dictionaries thou hast onely the Infinitue moode of any Verbe, as *Aimer*, to loue: *Vouloir*, to will or to be willing: *Lire*, to reade: *Fuir*, to run away: and yet for all that thou arte not much the wiser, because thou knowest not howe to 15
begin in the present tense, so that thou canst say in French, to loue, *Aimer*: but thou dost trouaile to say, I loue, thou louest, I haue loued, read, taught, I shal or wil go, sleepe. And beholde, here I deliuering thee out of such perplexitie, doe set it verie plainly before thine eies, thus: First I doe specifie th'Infinitue mode, *Aimer*, to loue: *Courir*, to run: and straightaway I shewe the present tense of the Indicatiue, which is 20
j'aime, I loue, *tu aimes*, thou louest: then followeth the first perfect tense, *j'aimay*, I loued: *tu aimas*, thou loudest: thirdly, the second perfect, *j'ay aimé*, I haue loued: laste of all the future tense, *j'aimeray*, I shall or will loue: so that thine order goeth thus: to

loue, then thou beginnest I loue, I loued, I haue loued, I shal or wil loue: and so thou
muste iudge the reste: so that hauing al these tenses, thou mayest easily decline any 25
Verbe thorough all moodes and tenses, because al the reste are deriued and formed of
those which be heere specified in this *Dictionarie*, as from their head spring. And yet
to ease thee the better in this declining of Verbes, I haue put forth to light a little
treatise concerning the same, printed by *Thomas Vautrollier*: so that hauing here the
chiefest Tenses, and in that Pamphlet the examples of all the Coniugations declined at 30
length through all moodes and tenses, with the Hiteroclites: ioyning these three workes
together, that is: the French *Littleton*, this *Dictionarie*, and my treatise of Verbes, thou
shalt haue occasion, I truste, taking my labour in good parte, to giue mee thankes. But
some perchaunce, wil saye, that hee hath not the proper exposition of many wordes,
but only by circumlocution: whiche in deede I doe confesse: but whether it be not 35
better to finde th'Interpretation of the Frenche by circumlocution, than by a false
Englising, as dydde those whiche brake the Ice before, as they doe terme it, let the
indifferent, iudge thereof. Then I might leaue this burthen to some other Frenchemen
to carry: yea, but if none durst venture it? As for the Englishmen, it is as hard for them
to vnderstand and expounde truly al our Frenche wordes, as it is tedious for mee to 40
apply a proper and apte Englishe to the same. Furthermore, lette the Reader marke this
warning, to make a difference betweene this, *j*, which is a consonante, and the other, *i*,
common: likewise of this, *v*, in the midst of the word, least he shold pronounce it as
this *u*, being a vowel: & that he looketh not for the theame & tenses of al Verbes,
whose Infinitiu do end in *er*, as *enseigner*, *bailer*, because they be the easiest to be 45
found of al the rest, for hauing the Infinitiu moode, one may find the present tense, by
taking away *r*, as of *marcher*, *trencher*, you saye, *je marche*, I go: *je trenche*, I do cut:
whyche cannot be saide of Verbes whose Infinitiu doe ende in *oir*, *re*, or *ir*: the
whyche for the most part, haue a special or particular forming of their Theame &
Tenses. But why doe I keepe thee so long, seeing that al these difficulties be made 50
easie by our saide treatise of Verbes? Take then, these our laboures to thy
furtheraunce, praying the Lord, so to blesse thy studies, that it may redounde to hys
honor and glorie, and the commodities of the *commonwealth*.

William HOGARTH (1697-1764), *Marriage à la Mode*, « The Tête à Tête », 1743
Oil on canvas, 70 x 90.8 cm, The National Gallery, London.

