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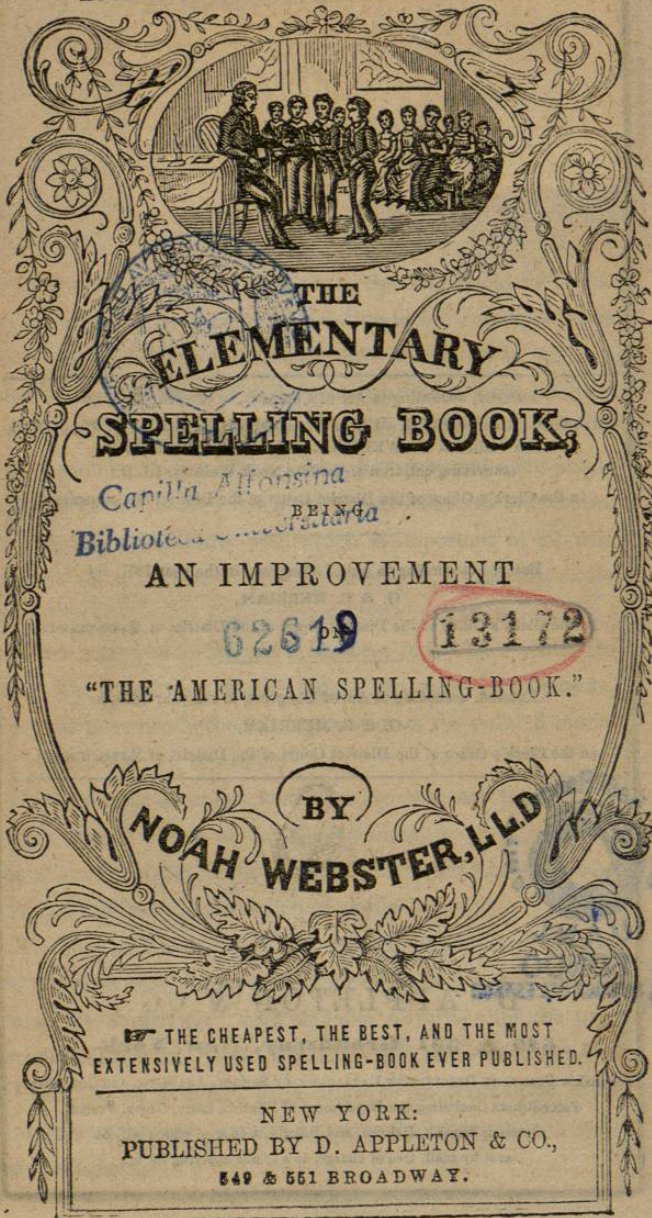
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P R E F A C E .

In this revision of the Elementary Spelling-Book, the chief object aimed at is to bring its notation into a correspondence with that of the recently issued Quarto Dictionary in which a more extended system of orthoepical marks has been adopted for the purpose of exhibiting the nicer discriminations of vowel sounds. A few of the Tables, however, and a few single columns of words are left without diacritical signs as exercises in notation, a familiarity with which is important to all who consult the dictionary. A little attention to the *Key to the Sounds of the marked Letters* will aid both teacher and pupil in this interesting exercise. As it has been found inconvenient to insert the whole Key at the top of the page, as heretofore, frequent reference to the full explanation of the pointed letters on page 15 may be desirable.

In Syllabication it has been thought best not to give the etymological division of the Quarto Dictionary, but to retain the old mode of Dr. Webster as best calculated to teach young scholars the true pronunciation of words.

The plan of classification here executed is extended so as to comprehend every important variety of English words, and the classes are so arranged, with suitable directions for the pronunciation, that any pupil, who shall be master of these *Elementary Tables*, will find little difficulty in learning to form and pronounce any words that properly belong to our vernacular language.

The Tables intended for *Exercises* in Spelling and forming words, contain the original words, with the terminations only of their derivatives. These Tables will answer the important purposes of teaching the *manner* of forming the various derivatives, and the distinctions of the parts of speech, and thus anticipate, in some degree, the knowledge of grammar; at the same time, they bring into a small compass a much greater number of words than could be otherwise comprised in so small a book.

The pronunciation here given is that which is sanctioned by the most general usage of educated people, both in the United States and in England. There are a few words in both countries whose pronunciation is not settled beyond dispute. In cases of this kind, the Editor has leaned to regular analogies as furnishing the best rule of decision.

In orthography there are some classes of words in which usage is not uniform. No two English writers agree on this subject; and what is worse, no lexicographer is consistent with himself. In this book, as in Dr. Webster's dictionaries, that mode of spelling has been adopted which is the most simple and best authorized. The Editor has followed the rules that are held to be legitimate, and has rendered uniform all classes of words falling within them. If established rules and analogies will not control the practice of writers, there is no authority by which uniformity can be produced.

The reading lessons are adapted, as far as possible, to the capacities of children, and to their gradual progress in knowledge. These lessons will serve to substitute variety for the dull monotony of spelling, show the practical use of words in significant sentences, and thus enable the learner the better to understand them. The consideration of diversifying the

studies of the pupil has also had its influence in the arrangement of the lessons for spelling. It is useful to teach children the signification of words, as soon as they can comprehend them; but the understanding can hardly keep pace with the memory, and the minds of children may well be employed in learning to spell and pronounce words whose signification is not within the reach of their capacities; for what they do not clearly comprehend at first, they will understand as their capacities are enlarged.

The objects of a work of this kind being chiefly to teach *orthography* and *pronunciation*, it is judged most proper to adapt the various Tables to these specific objects, and omit extraneous matter. In short, this little book is so constructed as to condense into the smallest compass a complete SYSTEM of ELEMENTS for teaching the language; and however small such a book may appear, it may be considered as the most important class-book, not of a religious character, which the youth of our country are destined to use.

The modifications in this revision, although important, are not of a character to embarrass those teachers who use the old editions in the same classes, very few words having been substituted for others, and those only to correct an obvious error, or to carry out some important analogy.

In the revision of this work, the Editor has availed himself of the suggestions of experienced teachers and others competent to advise, and especially of WM. A. WHEELER, Esq., whose PRINCIPLES OF PRONUNCIATION add so much value to the new Illustrated Quarto Dictionary of Dr. Webster.

W. G. W.

NEW YORK, 1866.