

## ALPHABET.

IN forming the alphabet which was to be used in this work, the principle was adopted that each simple sound should be invariably represented by one and the same character. The basis of the system is that proposed by Mr. Pickering in his well-known Essay, published in the Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Some alterations have been made, but such as are agreeable to the principles there laid down. The following are the only peculiarities of the alphabet which require explanation.

1. The vowels have the same general sounds as in the German, Spanish, and Italian languages. *A* is sounded as in *father*, *e* like *a* in *fate*, *i* as in *machine*, *o* as in *note*, *u* as in *rule*, or like *oo* in *cool*. Two other characters, suggested by Mr. Pickering, have been found necessary—the one (*æ*) to represent the sound of *a* in *hull*, the other (*ʊ*) for the sound of *u* in *but*. These do not, indeed, comprise all the distinctions of sound which have been found to exist. The French *u* and German *ü* were heard in some of the dialects. It has seemed best, however, in order to avoid, as far as possible, the multiplication of characters, to be contented with noting the existence of these minor shades of sound in the languages in which they occur.

2. The consonants *b*, *d*, *f*, *h*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *v*, *w*, *y*, *z*, have their usual English sounds. *G* is always hard, as in *go*, *get*. *C'* (*c* with a cedilla) has been used for the sound of *sh* in *shall*. *J* is sounded as in French, or like *z* in *glazier*. *Q* is used for a very harsh guttural, pronounced deep in the throat, which occurs in some of the Indian languages.

3. The new consonantal characters, which it has been found necessary to introduce, have been mostly taken from the Greek. *Theta* (*θ*), *delta* (*δ*) are employed to represent the different articulations of hard and soft *th*, as heard in the words *thigh* and *thy*,—each being the sounds which these two characters have in modern Greek. For the latter (*δ*), a capital letter (*Δ*) has been formed more nearly resembling it than the awkward triangle of the Greek alphabet. To represent the hard guttural, common to the Spanish and Ger-