

PREFACE.

Is a Speller a Necessary School-Book ?—The old-fashioned Spelling-Book has been discarded by teachers generally. Many valid objections were properly urged against its use, and it passed away.

Entire dependence upon *oral spelling* may also be fitly styled a method of bygone days. Unfortunately for the old spelling-book it was associated with all the folly and weakness of "oral spelling," and this partly accounts for its rejection.

What have the reformers given as a substitute for a Speller ? They took our bread and have given in return but a stone. The bread even though a little stale was much more wholesome than the stone. In Canada parts of the lessons to be found in the Readers are taken as dictation lessons, and the pupils are turned loose on society to shock it by their bad spelling, and disgrace the schools which they attended, and in which they should have been taught. The Readers do not contain all the words that boys and girls will have to spell in life, and if they did, the lessons are not arranged in proper form for spelling lessons. Only a comparatively small portion of the Readers can be written from dictation in schools. Bad as were the old Spellers, they were infinitely better than nothing. This fact is now recognized in Great Britain and the United States, in both of which countries many valuable