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PREFACE.

THE aim of this book is to serve as a preparation for reading, writing, and, to a less degree, for speaking Latin. It is designed primarily for boys and girls who are to begin the study of Latin at an early age; but as all who would get from Latin the best mental discipline, or lay a broad and firm foundation for Latin scholarship, must traverse pretty much the same road, and as Latin is begun in this country by most learners before any other foreign language is studied, a beginner's Latin book for those who take up the study at the age of ten or twelve need not be essentially different from one designed for learners of fourteen or fifteen. The most important difference would lie in the knowledge of the terminology and principles of English grammar that might be deemed an indispensable prerequisite. As a matter of fact, children come to the study of Latin with all degrees of ignorance of English grammar, and the minimum of necessary knowledge for the beginner is unquestionably very small. What minimum is considered essential for those who use this book, is indicated on page 6. It is hoped, therefore, that the contents of the book will justify its title; that it does not assume too much, and is not too difficult for the least mature who are likely to use it, and that it will not be found too much simplified,—too juvenile, for those who begin Latin in high schools and academies. Simplicity, clearness, and directness have been studied throughout. The system of inflected forms, which is seldom mastered, but the mastery of which is an indis-