

by sufficient authority; to the third, because they are not used in general speech or writing; and to the fourth, because they do not differ in derivation, meaning, or pronunciation, from the words from which they are formed. After all these deductions and omissions, there still remain nearly forty thousand words, which are contained in the present Work, and for which quoted authority will be found in the larger Dictionaries.

In the *spelling* of words, the Compiler has taken as his guide the prevailing usage of the principal lexicographers. A more uniform system might have been introduced by adopting certain general rules, according to which particular classes of words might have been spelled. But every such rule would have led to greater changes in the usual practice than the Compiler felt himself authorized to make. Instead of aiming at uniformity, therefore, he has preferred that mode of spelling each word which he found to be supported by the greatest number of authorities.

He has pursued a similar plan in the *pronunciation* of words. Generally, the system of Walker has been adopted, as being most in accordance with the usage of the educated portion of society; but the Compiler has not hesitated to depart from it, whenever he found it at variance either with the majority of authorities, or with general practice.

In the mode of indicating pronunciation, however, the present Work differs, in various respects, from that of Walker. In the first place, marks have been preferred to figures, as being equally precise and less perplexing. In the second place, the pronunciation is indicated only by the marks and the ordinary sounds of the letters, no attempt being made to render the pronunciation more plain by a different mode of spelling; except in peculiar words, and in such as are pronounced in two different ways, one of which ways is generally indicated by marks, and the other by spelling the word as it is pronounced. In the third place, marks are placed only above the vowels in syllables which have the primary or secondary accent, most of the others being pronounced so obscurely that the sound cannot be exactly indicated. At the foot of each page is a key to the notation, and appended to this Preface is a table of the sounds indicated by marks, or by syllabication; by the help of which there will be no difficulty in ascertaining, with all necessary precision, the pronunciation of every word.