

## PREFACE.

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THE AMERICAN SPELLING BOOK, or First Part of a Grammatical Institute of the English language, when first published, encountered an opposition, which few new publications have sustained with success. It however maintained its ground, and its reputation has been gradually extended and established, until it has become the principal elementary book in the United States. In a great part of the northern States it is the only book of the kind used; it is much used in the middle and southern States; and its annual sales indicate a large and increasing demand. Its merit is evinced not only by this general use, but by a remarkable fact, that, in many attempts made to rival it, the compilers have all constructed their works on a similar plan; some of them have most unwarrantably and illegally copied a considerable part of the tables, with little or no alteration; and others have altered them, by additions, mutilations and subdivisions, numerous and perplexing. In most instances, this species of injustice has been discountenanced by the citizens of the United States, and the public sentiment has protected the original work, more effectually than the penalties of the law.\*

\* The sales of the *American Spelling Book*, since its first publication, amount to more than FIVE MILLIONS of copies, and they are annually increasing. One great advantage experienced in using this work, is the simplicity of the scheme of pronunciation, which exhibits the sounds of the letters, with sufficient accuracy, without a mark over each vowel. The multitude of characters in Perry's scheme renders it far too complex and perplexing to be useful to children, confusing the eye without enlightening the understanding. Nor is there the least necessity for a figure over each vowel, as in Walker, Sheridan, and other authors. In nine-tenths of the words in our language, a correct pronunciation is better taught by a natural division of the syllables, and a direction for placing the accent, than by a minute and endless repetition of characters

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