

PREFACE.

THE design of this work, which is largely a compilation, is to furnish the pupil with material to enable him to extend his vocabulary, to appreciate the nice distinctions in the use of words, and to acquire some degree of proficiency in the correct spelling, syllabication, pronunciation, and general use of his mother-tongue.

(1) The section on ORTHOEPY, which is preceded by a series of explanatory rules for the class-room, gives the pronunciation, according to the best and most accepted authorities, of some *four thousand words* in more or less general use. The orthoepical notation followed is that of Stormonth, which, it is believed, will be found at once simple and effective. The same authority's pronunciation has also, in the main, been adopted, as that which has not only the approval of the Department of Education for Ontario, but is sanctioned by the present usage of cultivated society. The compilers, however, have not slavishly followed Stormonth, preferring, in disputed cases, to give the alternative pronunciation where such is allowed by good and competent authority. Where they have differed from Stormonth, their preference, it is proper to state, has been given to English rather than to American lexicographers: in all cases they have striven to avoid pedantry on the one hand and undue license on the other. They have also eschewed all orthographical innovations, save such as have the sanction of recognized English authority. In the list of words apt to be mispronounced will be found a few proper names and the most commonly used Latin and French words and phrases.

(2) In the section on SYNONOMY, the compilers have endeavoured to supply a much-needed manual of English Synonyms and Antonyms, such as would be useful in the schools in enabling the pupil to acquire a knowledge of the most commonly used synonymous words in the English language, with illustrations of their usage, and some idea of their various shades of meaning. The importance of this section, in supplying an aid in the cultivation of correctness and precision in English composition and in our every-day speech, will hardly be questioned.