PRIMER

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Primer by H. H. Kingsley & Eva A. Smedley & Martha C. Olsen

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H. H. KINGSLEY & EVA A. SMEDLEY & MARTHA C. OLSEN

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By

H. H. Kingsley
Superintendent of Schools, Evanston, Illinois.

Eva A. Smedley
Principal Noyes Street School, Evanston.

Martha C. Olsen
Primary Teacher, Noyes Street School, Evanston.

Illustrated by
Dorothy Dulin

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Preface

Learning to read is the most important step in formal education. It is work. But it is joyous work if the child's interests are utilized, and the steps are such as can be taken successfully.

This Book of Beginnings, prepared for the very little ones, has for its first consideration the child and the things which he enjoys. His interests are varied and superficial, therefore many subjects are presented. He is held to one subject until he has assimilated but not exhausted it. His joy in his own creative imagination is not overlooked nor limited.

The child's power of concentration is slight. Stories and rhymes make a strong appeal to him, and by holding his attentention increase his ability for continued attention. So the story element predominates, although nature, animals, playmates and the home all have their delightful place in these pages.

The child gains little in going rapidly from one story to another. He must live the story. This he is helped to do by taking it into the domain of play,—in the cutting, modeling and drawing, in the dramatization, and in happy allusion.

That which is intended for silent reading should be so used, the child showing his mastery of the thought by what he does.

This includes all of the "Seat Work," and is suggestive of much more silent reading that should be given from the blackboard.

The phonic work leads to independence.

The vocabulary is small, and gradually introduced. There is much repetition, yet not one sentence appears merely for the purpose of drill without a worthy, connected thought content.

Expressive reading is encouraged by the conversational form of the matter presented for oral reading.

Each page is the outgrowth of school-room experience, and has stood the test of being tried out with various groups of children.

The test of our work in teaching reading is not the quantity read, but the power acquired, the child's taste and enjoyment in reading.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the authors and publishers who have generously permitted the use of selections from their copyrighted material.

We offer this book in the hope that it may be of assistance to our fellow workers in the foundation work in teaching reading.

father

mother

baby