ESSENTIAL WORDS: BOOK ONE

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Essential Words: Book One by Edward L. Bailey

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Essential Words is the result of many years of experiment with the spelling problem from the viewpoint of children and teachers. It is the author's firm conviction that a few words actually learned are better than many studied, and that the only sure way to learn to spell is through drill. For this reason *Essential Words* contains only the commonest words — those which every person should be able to spell correctly.

The word lists are based on the investigation of Dr. Leonard P. Ayres, of the Russell Sage Foundation, and Dr. Franklin W. Jones, formerly of the University of South Dakota. By the employment of heavy black type, special prominence has been given the thousand commonest words in personal and business correspondence, and a serious effort has been put forth to secure maximum efficiency in the spelling of these words. A point to be noted is the system of reviews provided at the beginning of each successive year's work. No time is wasted, however, in reviewing words which the Ayres Measuring Scale shows that children in the particular grade do not misspell.

Believing that the real test of education is ability to adapt one's knowledge to the needs of any environment, a determined effort has been made to develop independent spelling power. Ability to spell words, the use of which one does not understand, is of little value. Not only does *Essential Words* contain hundreds of dictation sentences, timed according to the Thorndike Writing Scale, but also many phrases to be incorporated into

FOREWORD

sentences. Throughout both books there is much drill on words frequently misused.

The author believes that every child should use the dictionary as a part of his course in spelling. It has been his observation that only a small number of those entering high school are able to do this expeditiously and intelligently. Beginning in Book One the children are trained, by progressive steps, in finding words quickly and determining their pronunciation, accent, and syllabication, etc. In Book Two much attention has been devoted to derivation, synonyms, and word building by means of the addition of prefixes and suffixes. The principal rules of spelling are developed inductively, and later their application is brought to the pupil's attention by the aid of questions.

Teachers should remember that good spelling is largely the result of good teaching. If they expect their pupils to show satisfactory results, they must plan the lessons in spelling with the same care given other lessons. Although *Essential Words* employs the most approved aids for securing interest, such as riddles and pictures, teachers should not rely wholly on the text for their spelling devices.

In the making of this series, many people have had a part. The author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Miss Mary Peeples and Miss Laura Lester, of the Jackson Schools, for a careful and critical reading of the manuscript, and for many helpful suggestions. He wishes especially to acknowledge his obligation to the late Dr. John Greer Deupree, Professor of Pedagogy, University of Mississippi.

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PREPARATORY LESSONS

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Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man, So I will, master, as fast as I can.

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