

THE CHILDREN'S FIRST READER

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The Children's First Reader by Ellen M. Cyr

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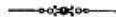
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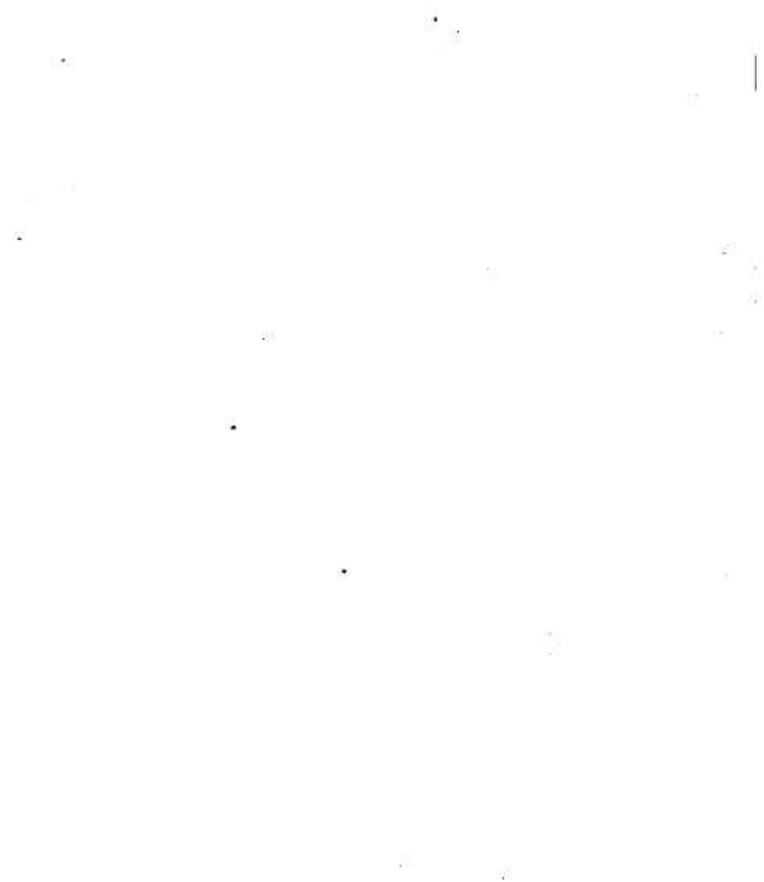
ELLEN M. CYR

AUTHOR OF THE CHILDREN'S PRIMER, ETC.



BOSTON, U.S.A.
GINN & COMPANY, PUBLISHERS
1893

TO
MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,
Marie, Marguerite,
AND
Jacqueline.



TO THE TEACHERS.

"We have not wings, we cannot soar,
But we have feet to scale and climb."

If the course of study in many cities be examined, it will be found that the program in reading for the first year of school is the first half of such books as are provided.

What is the significance of this? That the larger share of the first-year books are too difficult to be completed by the class, and therefore a part of the book is left unread.

The first half of the book can be mastered, but the children are overwhelmed by the flood of words which are introduced in the second half, and must sink back to the uninteresting beginning of another book where, when they have once more reached a point where reading seems to hold some pleasure and profit, they are again defeated by the too numerous words, and must begin the routine anew.

What are the consequences of scaling these different ladders, only to be cast back again to the foot when a prospect begins to dawn upon the view, and the toilsome rounds of the ladder cease to fill the eye and mind? Lack of interest and expression, loss of time. A child at the end of four or five months' work has gained in mental power. He is able to learn new words more readily, he can grasp the meaning of a sentence with less effort, and he is certainly able to go on as rapidly as when he first began to read.

This is realized by those who write the first readers; but they lose sight of the other fact that he is still but a beginner, and must retain what he has learned as well as acquire the new words, and so the vocabulary is introduced too rapidly for the struggling brain.

We primary teachers have not had proper tools. Like the Israelites of old we have been forced to make our bricks without straw, and it is due to the supplementary work upon blackboard and paper that the work in reading has had its success.

In this series, it has been my purpose to have a complete primary course, — a set of reading slips, which may be used again and again, a Primer, and the First Reader.

I have aimed to make the simple stories such as will interest the children and help them to a love of each other and of Nature, and to catch some glimpse of God's love, which underlies it all. I believe this the true preparation for scientific and natural history work which can be introduced very early.

Children do appreciate much that is beyond them; and, with this in mind, I have suggested from time to time some poem to be read to the class, hoping that the simple little story preceding it may have led them into the spirit to receive it.

Very sincerely yours,

ELLEN M. CYR.

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Sāturdāy bēfore brīght yēars
Good morning, little Elsie!