

**THE MOUNT VERNON READER: A
COURSE OF READING LESSONS,
SELECTED WITH REFERENCE TO
THEIR MORAL INFLUENCE ON THE
HEARTS AND LIVES OF THE YOUNG**

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The Mount Vernon Reader: A Course of Reading Lessons, Selected with Reference to Their Moral Influence on the Hearts and Lives of the Young by Jacob Abbott & Old Harlo

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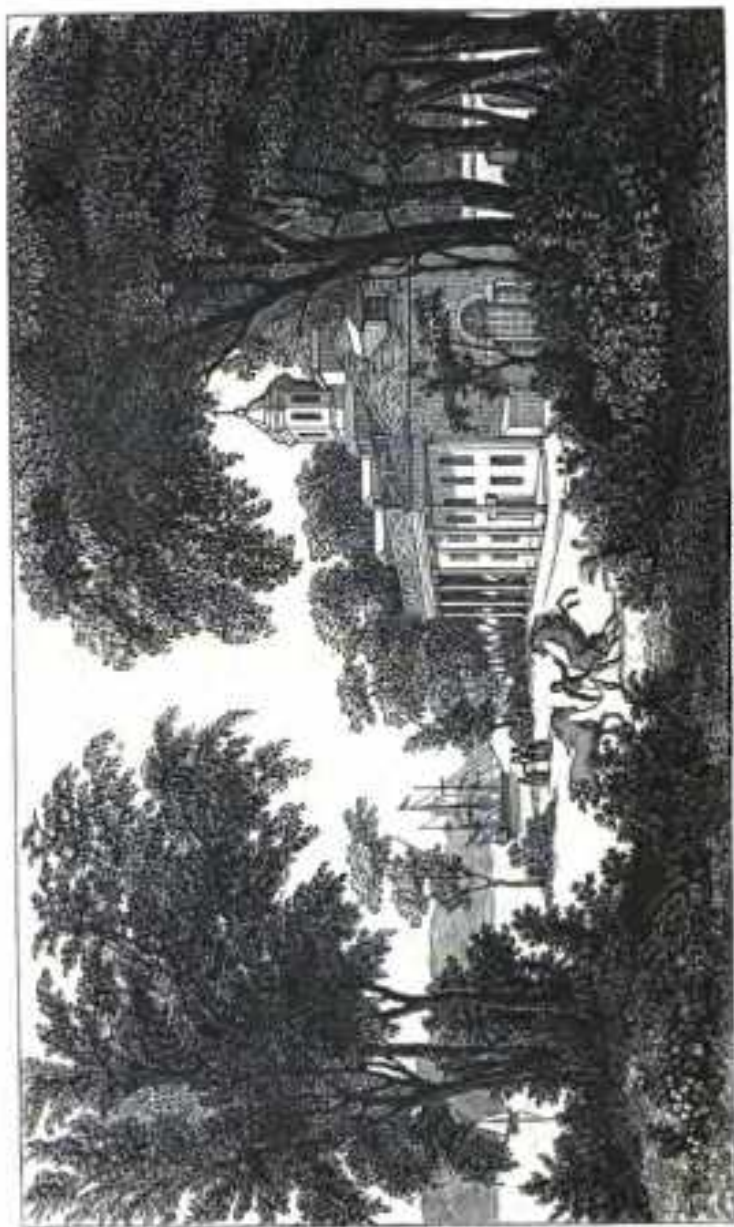
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JACOB ABBOTT & OLD HARLO

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MOUNT VERNON.
From a Sketch by Capt. Raynsb. In the "Center of the Perimeter."

KC 10530



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PREFACE.

THERE has been a very strong and increasing desire in this country, to make our common schools the means of exerting a more decided and powerful moral influence upon the children educated in them. The compilers of this work, in common with other Christians, have felt this desire; and, as they have taken special interest in writings for the young, they have often had their attention called, by friends of education in various parts of the country, to the propriety of preparing something to be used as a class-book in schools, with a view to aiding in the accomplishment of this purpose.

On mature deliberation, however, it appeared that a series of reading books, for which selections should be made, with special reference to reaching the hearts and cultivating the moral sensibilities of the young, might exert an influence more extensive and powerful than a didactic class-book. Reading books can be more extensively introduced, and also they admit of a greater variety in respect to the form and manner in which the moral lessons are presented, and in the methods, direct and indirect, by which the heart of the pupil may be reached. The result of these reflections has been the preparation of this volume.

The design, then, of the *MOUNT VERNON READER* is, to exert a direct and powerful moral influence upon the hearts of the children receiving education in the schools of this country: such an influence as shall make them

faithful and industrious in the improvement of their time, obedient and affectionate to their parents, kind towards their playmates, and upright and honest in all their intercourse with others. The selections are designed to produce this effect, not by formal exhortation or precept, but by narratives and delineations of character, such as are calculated to win their way to the hearts of the young, and insensibly to instill those principles, and cultivate those habits, which will make them useful, both to themselves and others, and happy both here and hereafter. The compilers have honestly endeavoured to exclude every thing, which they supposed would be unacceptable to any of the friends of piety and morality, of whatever name.

In the compilation, the editors have been aided by several individuals, who are, or have been, practically engaged in the business of teaching, and have felt a special interest in the moral improvement of their pupils. Many of the articles are original; others have been contributed by authors, from their own writings; others have been selected by the compilers from such writings as they have thought suitable to their purpose; and, in this case, credit has been given. It is intended that this work shall be followed by two others, for classes younger and older than those for whom this is designed.

The name is selected as one convenient for the purpose of distinction, and, at the same time, having pleasant associations in the mind of every American. The compilers hope that this work may contribute something to extend, among the rising generation of our land, those feelings of piety, philanthropy, and patriotism, which alone can promote the permanent safety and happiness of this nation, and which were so powerfully inculcated upon us, both in precept and example, by the Father of his country, whose remains now moulder in the tomb at Mount Vernon.

MOUNT VERNON READER.

LESSON I.

WHAT COULD A CHILD DO WITHOUT FATHER AND MOTHER?

1. It may assist boys and girls a little to estimate their obligations to their parents, to inquire what would become of them, if their parents should refuse to take care of them any longer. You at times, perhaps, feel unwilling to obey your parents; now suppose they should say:

"Very well, my child, if you are unwilling to obey us, you may go away from home and take care of yourself. We cannot be at the trouble and expense of taking care of you unless you are grateful and obedient to us."

2. "Well," perhaps you would say, "let me have my hat and coat, and I will go immediately."

"*Your hat and coat!*" your mother would reply "The hat and coat are not yours, but your father's. He bought them and paid for them. Why do you call them yours?"

3. You might possibly reply, after thinking a moment, "They are mine because you gave them to me."

"No, my child," your mother would say, "we have only let you have them to wear. You never have