A FIRST COURSE IN ALGEBRA

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A first course in algebra by Webster Wells

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WEBSTER WELLS

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BY

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Prof. Florian Cajani Compliments of Rx short

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PREFACE

In the preparation of this text the author acknowledges joint-authorship with Robert L. Short.

This book meets the demand that the pupil be given an elementary algebra containing no more than can be accomplished in the time allotted to the subject. It is not intended for a complete course, but gives the student a good working knowledge of the subject through simultaneous quadratics. It should be followed by a second course by those intending to pursue the study of higher mathematical subjects. This book is sufficient preparation for geometry, and the frequent introduction of geometric ideas and geometric problems not only prepares for geometry but also makes that subject attractive to the learner.

This text is as brief as the algebra of years ago, and yet contains all that is good in modern mathematical thought. Attention is called to the introduction of graphical methods through simple horizontal and vertical measurements (Exercise 4, Exercise 41, problems 28–30). This procedure makes the transition to Cartesian coördinates a natural one. Teachers will find that the color scheme recommended in graphs will greatly aid the student in connecting related data. Pedagogical advantage is gained through the combining of related and reverse processes. (Chapters III, VII, X, XII, XIII.)

The use of the fractional exponent in operations involving surds is recommended, thereby avoiding confusion, since the four fundamental laws and the exponential laws of Multiplication, Division, Involution, and Evolution, are the only ones involved. The complete index will be found helpful to both pupil and teacher. No attempt is made toward technical

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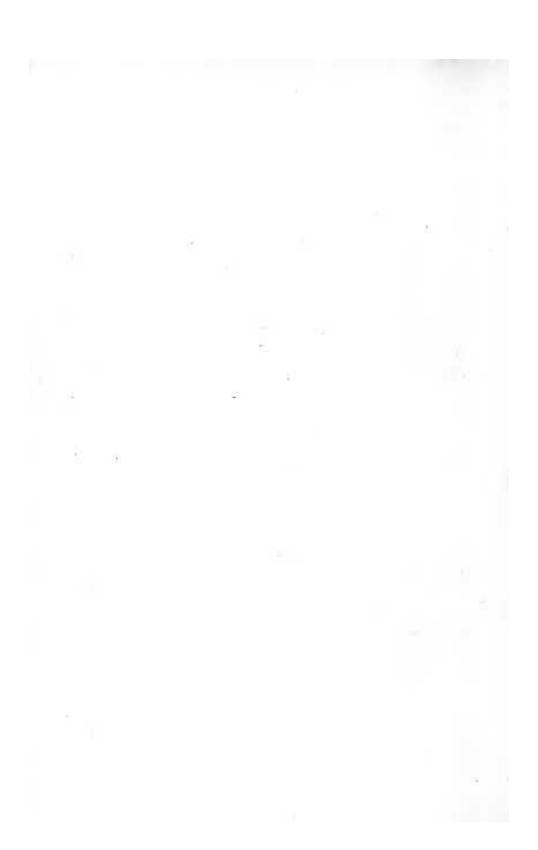
definition. Definitions for the beginner must be explanatory and descriptive. The lists of queries will aid in fixing both definitions and principles.

The authors thank the many teachers of mathematics who have made this book better and have brought it close to actual class-room conditions by their timely criticism and suggestion.

WEBSTER WELLS.

CONTENTS

1.	DEFINITIONS AND NOTATION. AXIOMS. EQUATIONS .	1
	Algebraic Expressions	
II.	POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE NUMBERS	10
III.	Addition and Subtraction. Parentheses 1	4
IV.	MULTIPLICATION OF ALGEBRAIC EXPRESSIONS 2	27
v.	DIVISION OF ALGEBRAIC EXPRESSIONS	35
		12
		51
	SOLUTION OF EQUATIONS BY FACTORING 7	76
VIII,	Highest Common Factor	30
	LOWEST COMMON MULTIPLE	33
IX.	FRACTIONS	35
X.	Fractional Equations)4
	RATIO AND PROPORTION	
XI.	SIMULTANEOUS LINEAR EQUATIONS 15	
	Graphs	
XII.	Involution and Evolution	14
XIII.	THEORY OF EXPONENTS	58
	IRRATIONAL NUMBERS	36
	IMAGINARY NUMBERS	
XIV.	QUADRATIC EQUATIONS. GRAPHS 18	37
	EQUATIONS IN QUADRATIC FORM	18
	FACTORING OF QUADRATIC EXPRESSIONS 20	99
XV.	Simultaneous Quadratic Equations	12
	Graphs	17
XVI.	BINOMIAL THEOREM 25	22
	HINTS ON CHECKING	



ALGEBRA

I. DEFINITIONS AND NOTATION

SYMBOLS REPRESENTING NUMBERS

 In Algebra the symbols usually employed to represent numbers are the Arabic numerals and the letters of the alphabet.

The numerals represent known or determinate numbers.

The letters represent numbers which may have any values whatever, or numbers whose values are to be found.

EQUATIONS

- The Sign of Equality, *-, is read "equals."
 Thus, a=b signifies that the number a equals the number b.
- An Equation is an expression of equality.

The first member of an equation is the number to the left of the sign of equality, and the second member is the number to the right of that sign; thus, in the equation 2x-3=5, the first member is 2x-3, and the second member 5.

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- 4. An Axiom is a statement which is assumed as selfevident. Algebraic operations of finite numbers are based in part on the following axioms:
 - 1. Any number equals itself.
 - 2. Any number equals the sum of all its parts.
 - 3. Any number is greater than any of its parts.
- Two numbers which are equal to the same number, or to equal numbers, are equal.