

PREFACE

"There is not, and there never was, a text-book so richly deserving a history," James Bach McMaster remarked of *The New-England Primer* in 1885. Twelve years later Paul Leicester Ford wrote that history, in an edition of the *Primer* that even today remains strikingly up-to-date. True, there is an undeniable quaintness about certain of Ford's passages, as, for example, the long concluding jeremiad about the incidence of crime and depravity in early New England; and more recent scholarship has indicated that the first edition of the *Primer* may well have been published before 1687 or 1688, as suggested by Ford. Yet, on the whole, Ford's essay remains the best brief introduction to the *Primer*, its antecedents in England, and its successive versions in the New World; and the 1727 edition of the *Primer*, which Ford reprinted, is still the earliest extant copy. The present volume is essentially a facsimile of Ford's work, with the exception of the appendices and several of the illustrations.

Readers who wish to delve further into the history and significance of *The New-England Primer* will find a wealth of relevant material in Charles C. Butterworth's *The English Primers* (Philadelphia, 1953), Charles F. Heartman: *The New-England Primer Issued Prior to 1830* (New York, 1934), Clifton Johnson: *Old-Time Schools and School-Books* (New York, 1904), George Emery Littlefield: *Early Schools and School-Books of New England* (Boston, 1904), and John A. Nietz: *Old Textbooks* (Pittsburgh, 1961).

LAWRENCE A. CREMIN

THE NEW-ENGLAND PRIMER

A HISTORY OF ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT
WITH A REPRINT OF THE UNIQUE COPY OF THE EARLIEST
KNOWN EDITION AND MANY FAC-SIMILE ILLUSTRATIONS AND REPRODUCTIONS.

EDITED BY
PAUL LEICESTER FORD.

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NOTE

THE following is a facsimile of the earliest known edition of the New England Primer, taken from the unique copy in the Lenox Library. From its lacking one leaf in the first signature, it is presumed that a portrait of the reigning King of Great Britain preceded the title page. Part of pages 21-2, and all of pages 23-4 are lacking, but the probable text is restored in this reprint. The last leaf is also wanting, the text of which is supplied so far as possible.



New-England
PRIMER

Enlarged.

For the more easy attaining
the true Reading of ENGLISH

To which is added,

The Assembly of Divines

CATECHISM

BOSTON: Printed by S Kneeland, &
T. Green, Sold by the Booksellers. 1727



.n
.n be is

... will not depart from it.
Chap. 23. 17, 18. Let not thy heart
envy sinners, but be thou in the fear
of the Lord all the day long.

For surely there is an end, and
thy expectation shall not be cut off.

Eph. 1. 1. Children obey your Pa-
rents in the Lord, for this is right.

Of Serving GOD.

1. God will have no time to save
us, if we find no day to serve Him.

2. Shall we have six days in
seven, and God not one?

1 Chron. 28. 9. My son, know thou
the God of thy Father, & serve Him with
a perfect heart, & with a willing mind,
for the Lord searcheth all hearts.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x
y z &

Vowels.
A E I O U Y a e i o u y

Consonants,
b e d f g h i k l m n p q r s t v w x z

Double Letters,
ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff

Italick Letters.
Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh
Ii Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq
Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Italick Double Letters
ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff ff

Words of four Syllables.

Ac-com-pa-ny	Accompany
Be-ne-vo-lence	Benevolence
Ce-re-mo-ny	Ceremony
Dis-con-tent-ed	Discontented
E-ver-last-ing	Everlasting
Fi-de-li-ty	Fidelity
Glo-ri-fy-ing	Glorifying
Hu-mi-li-ty	Humility
In-fir-mi-ty	Infirmity.

Words of five Syllables.

Ad-mi-ra-ti-on	Admiration
Be-ne-fi-ci-al	Beneficial
Con-so-la-ti-on	Consolation
De-cla-ra-ti-on	Declaration
Ex-hor-ta-ti-on	Exhortation
For-ni-ca-ti-on	Fornication
Ge-ne-ra-ti-on	Generation
Ha-bit-a-ti-on	Habitation
In-vi-ta-ti-on	Invitation

A



In *Adam's Fall*
We Sinned all.

B



Thy *Life* to Mend
This *Book* Attend.

C



The *Cat* doth play
And a *ster* slay.

D



A *Dog* will bite
A *Thief* at night.

E



An *Eagle's* flight
Is out of sight.







F



The *Idle Fool*
Is whipt at *School*.

G		As runs the <i>Glass</i> Mans life doth pass.
H		My <i>Book</i> and <i>Heart</i> Shall never part.
J		<i>Job</i> feels the <i>Rod</i> Yet blesses <i>GOD</i> .
K		Our <i>KING</i> the good No man of blood.
L		The <i>Lion</i> bold The <i>Lamb</i> doth hold.
M		The <i>Moon</i> gives light In time of night.

N		<i>Nightingales</i> sing In Time of Spring.
O		The <i>Royal Oak</i> it was the <i>Tree</i> That sav'd His Royal <i>Majestie</i> .
P		<i>Peter</i> denies His <i>Lord</i> and cries.
Q		<i>Queen Esther</i> comes in <i>Royal State</i> To Save the <i>JEWS</i> from dismal <i>Fate</i>
R		<i>Rachel</i> doth mour. For her first born.
S		<i>Samuel</i> anoints Whom <i>God</i> appoints.

T		<i>Time</i> cuts down all Both great and small.
U		<i>Uriah's</i> beauteous Wife Made <i>David</i> seek his Life.
W		<i>Whales</i> in the Sea God's Voice obey.
X		<i>Xerxes</i> the great did die, And so must you & I,
Y		<i>Youth</i> forward slips Death soonest nips.
Z		<i>Zacchaeus</i> he Did climb the Tree His Lord to see,



Now the Child being entred in his Letters and Spelling, let him learn these and such like Sentences by Heart, whereby he will be both instructed in his Duty, and encouraged in his Learning.

The Dutiful Child's Promises,

I Will fear GOD, and honour the KING.
I will honour my Father & Mother.
I will Obey my Superiours.
I will Submit to my Elders,
I will Love my Friends.
I will hate no Man.
I will forgive my Enemies, and pray to God for them.
I will as much as in me lies keepe all God's Holy Commandments.

I will learn my Gatechism.
I will keep the Lord's Day Holy,
I will Reverence God's Sanctuary,
For our GOD is a consuming Fire.

An Alphabet of Lessons for Youth.

A Wise Son makes a glad Father, but
a foolish Son is the heaviness of
his Mother.
Better is a little with the fear of the
Lord, than great treasure and trou-
ble therewith.
Come unto CHRIST all ye that la-
bour and are heavy laden, and He
will give you rest.
Do not the abominable thing which
I hate, saith the Lord.
Except a Man be born again, he can-
not see the Kingdom of God.
Foolishness is bound up in the heart of
a Child, but the rod of Correction
shall drive it far from him.
Grieve not the Holy Spirit.

Holiness becomes God's House for
ever.

It is good for me to draw near unto
God.

Keepe thy Heart with all Diligence, for
out of it are the issues of Life.

Lars shall have their part in the lake
which burns with fire and brimstone.

Many are the Afflictions of the
Righteous, but the Lord delivers
them out of them all.

NOW is the accepted time, now is
the day of salvation.

Out of the abundance of the heart
the mouth speaketh.

Pray to thy Father which is in secret,
and thy Father which sees in secret,
shall reward thee openly.

Quit you like Men, be strong, stand
fast in the Faith.

Remember thy Creator in the days
of thy Youth.

Salvation belongeth to the Lord.

B

Trust



MR. *John Rogers*, Minister of
the Gospel in *London*, was
the first Martyr in *Q. Mary's* Reign,
and was burnt at *Smithfield*, *Febru-*
ary the fourteenth, 1554 His Wife,
with nine small Children, and one
at

at her Breast, following him to the
Stake, with which sorrowful sight
he was not in the least daunted,
but with wonderful Patience died
courageously for the Gospel of
Jesus Christ.

Some few Days before his Death,
he writ the following Exhortation
to his Children.

Give ear my Children to my words,
whom God hath dearly bought,
Lay up his Laws within your heart,
and print them in your thought,
I leave you here a little Book,
for you to look upon:
That you may see your Fathers face,
when he is dead and gone.
Who for the hope of heavenly things,
while he did here remain,
Gave over all his golden Years
to Prison and to Pain.
Where I among my Iron Bands,
inclosed in the dark,
C

Not many days before my Death
I did compose this Work.
And for Example to your Youth,
to whom I wish all good ;
I send you here God's perfect Truth;
and feel it with my Blood
To you my Heirs of earthly Things;
which I do leave behind,
That you may read and understand,
and keep it in your mind.
That as you have been Heirs of that
which once shall wear away,
You also may possess that part,
which never shall decay.
Keep always GOD before your every
with all your whole intent ;
Commit no Sin in any wise,
keep his Commandement.
Abhor that arrant Whore of Rome,
and all her Blasphemies ;
And drink not of her cursed Cup,
obey not her decrees.
Give honour to your Mother dear,
remember well her pain ;

And recompense her in her Age
with the like love again.
Be always ready for her help,
and let her not decay ;
Remember well your Father all
that should have been your flay,
Give of your Portion to the Poor,
as Riches do arise ;
And from the needy naked Soul
turn not away your eyes.
For he that doth not hear the cry
of those that stand in need,
Shall cry himself and not be heard,
when he does hope to speed.
If GOD hath given you increase
and blessed well your store,
Remember you are put in trust,
and should relieve the poor.
Beware of foul and filthy Lusts,
let such things have no place,
Keep clean your Vessels in the Lord,
that he may you embrace.
Ye are the Temples of the Lord,
for you are dearly bought

And they that do defile the same
shall surely come to nought.
Be never Proud by any means,
build not thy house too high,
But always have before your eyes,
that you are born to die.
Defraud not him that hired is,
your labour to sustain;
And pay him still without delay,
his wages for his pain.
And as you would another Man
against you should proceed,
Do you the same to them again,
if they do stand in need.
Impart your Portion to the Poor,
in Money and in Meat,
And send the feeble fainting Soul
of that which you do eat.
Ask Counsel always of the wise,
give ear unto the end,
And ne'r refuse the sweet rebuke
of him that is thy Friend.
Be always thankful to the Lord,
with Prayer and with Praise,

Begging of him to bless your work,
and to direct your ways.
Seek first I say the living GOD,
and always him adore;
And then be sure that he will bless
your basket and your store.
And I beseech Almighty GOD,
replenish you with Grace,
That I may meet you in the Heav'ns,
and see you face to face.
And tho' the Fire my Body burns,
contrary to my kind;
That I cannot enjoy your love,
according to my mind.
Yet I do hope that when the Heav'ns,
shall vanish like a scrowl,
I shall see you in perfect shape,
in Body and in Soul,
And that I may enjoy your love,
and you enjoy the Land
I do beseech the living LORD
to hold you in his hand.
Though here my Body be adjudg'd
in flaming Fire to fry,

My Soul I trust will straight ascend,
to live with GOD on high,
What though this Carcase smart a while,
what though this Life decay,
My Soul I trust will be with GOD,
and live with him for aye.
I know I am a Sinner born,
from the Original;
And that I do deserve to die,
by my Fore-Fathers fall.
But by our Saviour's precious Blood,
which on the Cross was spilt,
Who freely offer'd up his Life,
to save our Souls from Guilt,
I hope Redemption I shall have,
and all that in him trust;
When I shall see him face to face,
and live among the Just.
Why then should I fear Death's grim look,
since Christ for me did die?
For King and Cæsar, Rich and Poor,
the force of Death must trie,
When I am chained to the Stake,
and Faggots girt me round,

Then pray the Lord my Soul in Heav'n
may be with Glory crown'd.
Come welcome Death, the end of fears,
I am prepar'd to die;
Those earthly Flames will send my Soul,
up to the Lord on high.
Farewel my Children to the World,
where you must yet remain,
The Lord of Hosts be your defence
till we do meet again.
Farewel my true and loving Wife,
my Children and my Friends,
I hope in Heaven to see you all,
when all things have their ends
If you go on to serve the Lord,
as you have now begun,
You shall walk safely all your days,
until your life be done,
GOD grant you so to end your days,
as he shall think it best,
That I may meet you in the Heav'ns,
where I do hope to rest.

The



MR. JOHN ROGERS, Minister of the Gospel in London, was the first Martyr in Queen Mary's Reign, and was burnt at Smithfield, February 14th 1554. His Wife with nine small Children, and one at her Breast, following him to the Stake; with which sorrowful Sight he was not in the least daunted, but with wonderful Patience died courageously for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. *Some*

The Burning of John Rogers

(From the "New England Primer." Boston: 1762)



INTRODUCTION

IN the apocryphal poem of John Rogers "unto his children" which was included in every New England Primer, he said:

*"I leave you here a little booke
For you to looke upon,
That you may see your father's face
When I am dead and gon."*

*The New England Primer
a mirror of
Puritanism*

No better description of the New England Primer itself could be penned. As one glances over what may truly be entitled "The Little Bible of New England", and reads its stern lessons, the Puritan mood is caught with absolute faithfulness. Here was no easy road to knowledge and to salvation; but in prose as bare of beauty as the whitewash of their churches, in poetry as rough and stern as their storm-torn coast, in pictures as crude and unfinished as their own glacial-smoothed boulders, between stiff oak covers, which symbolized the contents, the children were led, until, from being unregenerate, and as Jonathan Edwards said, "young vipers, and infinitely more hateful than vipers" to God, to that happy state when, as expressed by