

WEBSTER'S SPELLER.

EVOLUTION OF THE ONCE POPULAR "SPELLING BOOK."

Noah Webster's Great and Successful Enterprise—The Fortune of a Connecticut School Teacher's Work—The Famous "Select Fables."

One of the books which in vogue in the colonies, Thomas Dilworth's "New Guide to the English Tongue," and when first published, about 1760, it was probably the most improved of its kind in the country.

To native level of the language is something to be corrected, and a poor piece of work something that needs improving.

Webster had originally intended to call his book "The American Instructor," but by the advice of Dr. Ezra Stiles, president of Yale college, the title was changed to "A Grammatical Institute of the English Language."

It was the custom then for authors to sell the right to print a book to a certain number of years, and accordingly Webster sold his privilege to printers in Boston, Hartford, Albany, New York and Philadelphia.

Each printer varied his editions in particulars to please his own fancy. The Philadelphia printer "embellished" his with a portrait of the "Father of his Country," and Thomas, the great New England printer, not to be outdone, ornamented his with a view of wood cut of what purported to be "Noah Webster, Jr., Esq., in the act of printing."

The spelling book slowly underwent alterations. The printers discovered very soon that the title was clumsy and that it was "The American Spelling Book."

THE SOIL OF WYOMING.

The Land that is called "Draught."

East Nebraska is a prairie; west Nebraska, with its alluvial streams and sand hills, begins to take somewhat of the character of this country.

There is no water in these in this section. They usually follow the natural drainage, but here they are everywhere upon the plain, and, strange of all, are as deep and valleys in their level as any you find.

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ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

TIMES WHEN URRILLAS MADE LIFE UNPLEASANT ON STEAMERS.

Confederate Partisan Fishing for Food—Gadagons—Steamboat Passengers—Enter Fire—How the Hobby of a Widow Was Prematurely Stopped.

One of the amusements of the period was to take a run on a steamer up to Cairo. It was generally an exciting amusement.

There are as few people who can remember these as there are who remember the most of the facts, though people generally think it is very easy.

I presume there is a more appreciable difference in telegraph operators than in any other class of men in the world.

On such occasions there was little to be obtained in the shape of provision for safety.

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COURTSHIPS OF BIRDS.

NATURALIST HOLDERS VERY INTERESTING COLLECTION OF FACTS.

The Sandhill Crane's Bird Circus—Feet of Feathered Dancers—The Humming Bird's Fight for a Wife—Other Curious Courtships.

In some of the African tribes who marry by proposal by the dusky lover the maiden puts him through a course of physical sprouts that is considered a test of his capacity.

PROLOGUE OF FEATHERED DANCERS. The cock of the rock ranks next to the crane in the strangeness of its evolution.

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AN OLD "FORTY-NINER"

TELLS HOW BEARDS WERE POPULARIZED BY CALIFORNIA PIONEERS.

The Story of Gradual Emancipation from the Bannock—A Pictorial of Men in the Land of Gold—The Doctor to the Rescue.

"The early gold seekers in California—unconsciously upon the country—unconsciously, but for which the younger generation can hardly be grateful."

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THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE

FOR BEARS AND

George Stinson & Co., Portland, Maine, can give you work that you can do and live at home, making great pay.

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COUGH BLOCKS.

FROM THE GREAT COUGHER.

FOR WAYSIDE, April 1884.—I have given the cough blocks to my children, and they have found them very useful.

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