

The A B C

*Both in Latyn & Englyshe.*



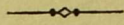
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## PREFACE.



THE following pages contain a *facsimile*, produced by photography, of what is believed to be a unique specimen of one of the A B C Primers, published soon after the breach with Rome, in the reign of Henry VIII. It is now preserved in the Library of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. The use of such primers was, as the name implies, educational. They were to be the first books placed in the hands of a child, and to contain all that was necessary for him to know, to enable him to understand the rudiments of the Christian Religion, and to join in the services of the Church, and even to serve at Mass, or, as it is called, 'to help a Priest to sing.' Beginning, therefore, with the Alphabet,



it goes on to the first sentence pronounced by the Priest, in Latin and English; then to Pater Noster, also in Latin and English, and the Hail Mary, also in both languages, and concludes with certain prayers and graces to be used before and after meals.

This primer has no date; but it was printed by Thomas Petyt, 'at London, in Paules' Chyrch yarde, at the Sygne of the Mayden's head.' Thomas Petyt, or Petit, supposed to be a relation of a famous French printer John Petit, printed at London from 1536 to about 1554; and in 1538, among other things, printed 'The Pater Noster, the Crede, and the Commandements of God, in Englyshe, with many other Godly lessons. Ryght necessary for youth and all other to lerne and know accordynge to the Commandements and Injunctions: gyven by thauctorite of the kynges hyghnes; through this his realme.'\*

The present A B C may be regarded, perhaps, as an introduction to this larger primer; and

\* Herbert's Ames, p. 553.



the late Mr. Bradshaw, in a paper read before the Antiquarian Society, in May, 1875, expressed himself as 'satisfied that it must have been printed about 1538.' He also mentions other editions of the A B C: I., in London, by William Powell, without date, but probably about 1547; II., in London, by John Day, without date, but by internal evidence shown to have been printed between March and July, 1553; III., one printed in Dublin, in English and Irish, for the Stationers' Company, in 1631.

The object of primers, to which the A B C was thus a kind of introduction, and what they were expected to contain, is set forth in the preface to 'thenglysh primer,' published by authority in 1535:

'It was never ordeyned, o good reder, without the singler providence, and moſte abundaunt grace of almightie god, that the multitude of christn people ſhuld lerne by herte the ten commaundements of almightie god, the beleve, called the Crede, and the prayer of the lorde, called the Pater noſter. For truely he that under-



standeth these thre, hath the pythe of all those thynges, whiche holy scripture doth conteyne, and whatsoever may be taught necessarily unto a faithfull christian, and that not only purely and plentifully, but thereto so briefly and clerely, that no man can compleyne, or excuse hymselfe justly, syth that knowledge, which is of necessity required to the atteyninge of the lyfe eternall, is neither tedious, no yet harde, but that it may be well had and gotten of all that have grace.\*

It will be seen that the three things set down as necessary are, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. But the A B C primer here reproduced omits the Commandments, as probably did others. Accordingly, in an English primer of 1545-6, printed by Richard Grafton, 'printer and servaunte to our moste dereft sonne Prince Edward, with Edward Whitechurch, citizen of London,' this defect is supplied; though the Commandments are given in a shortened form—the fourth, for instance,

\* Imprynted at London, in Fletestreet, by John Byddell, for William Marshall, 1535.



consisting of one clause, 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath daye'; and the fifth only 'Honor thy father and thy mother'; while the tenth begins, 'Thou shalt not unjustly desire.'\*

The words of the Royal injunction attached to this and other official primers will best indicate the position of the unauthorized A B C primers, such as that here reproduced :

'Among the manifolde busines an most weightie affaires appertaining to our regal authoritie and office, we much tendering the youthe of our realmes, (whose good education and vertuous bringing up redouneth most highly to ye honoure and prayse of almyghtie God) for divers good considerations, and specially for that the youth by divers personnes are taught the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, Crede, and X Commandementes, al in Latin, and not in English, by meanes whereof the same are not brought up in y<sup>e</sup> knowledg of ther faith, duties and obedi-

\* The copy in the Emmanuel Library is imperfect; part of the Calendar is lost, and if it had the A B C, that is lost also.



ence, wherein no Christen person ought to be ignoraunt. And for that oure people and subjectes whych have no understanding in the Latin tong and yet have the knowledge of readyng, may praye in theyr vulgar tong, which is to them best knowne: that by the meane thereof thei shuld be the more provoked to true devotion, and the better set their hartes upō those thinges that they pray for. And finally, *for the avoyding of the diversitie of primer books that ar now abrod, wherof ar almost innumerable sortes*, which mynister occasion of contentions and vain disputations, rather then to edify, and to have one uniforme ordre of al such bookes throughout al our dominions, both to be taught unto children and also to be used for ordinary prayers of all our people not learned in the latyn tong: have set furth thys Primer or boke of prayers in Englysh to be frequented and used in and throughout all places of oure said realmes and dominions, as well of the elder people, as also of the youth, for their common and ordinary prayers, willing, commaundyng



and ſtreightly charging that for the better bringing up of youth in the knowledge of theyr duty towardes God, their prince, and all others in their degre, every Scholemaſter and bringer-up of yong beginners in lernyng nexte after their A B C *now bi us alſo ſet furthe*, do teache this primer or boke of ordinary prayers unto them in Englyſhe, and that the youth customably and ordinarily uſe the ſame until thei be of competent underſtanding and knowledge to perceive it in Latyn. At which time they may at their libertie ether uſe this primer in Engliſhe, or that whiche is by oure authoritie likewyſe made in the Latyn tong, in all poinctes correſpondent unto this in Englyſhe.’

This paſſage ſtates fully the object of ſuch A B C primers, namely, to ſerve as an elementary reading-book, and a firſt book of religious inſtruction for children, as well as of ordinary prayers for adults. It alſo ſhows that, beſides the authorized editions, numberleſs others were publiſhed, differing in details, according as their authors were more or leſs



inclined to depart from the old formularies or doctrines. The attempt to confine the people to the use of one authorized primer was, doubtless, unsuccessful ; and in fact, the words of the Act, 34-5 Henry VIII., 'for the advancement of the true religion and for the abolishment of the contrary,' seems to except Pfalter, Primers, Pater Noster, Ave, and Creede in English, from among those books that were not to be read by 'women, artificers, 'prentises, journeymen, serving-men of the degree of yeomen or under, husbandmen nor labourers.'

This book, then, is the earliest known specimen of this class of unauthorized primers, containing the alphabet, and the prayers and elementary religious formularies used in the teaching of children and the daily life of home.





The ABC.







**C** The. **B A C** bothe in latyn  
and in Englyshe.

**+** A a b c d e f g h j k l m n o p  
q r s t v u x y z & z est Amen.

a e i o u a e i o u

ab eb ib ob ub ba be bi bo bu

ae ee ie oe ue ca ce ci co cu

ad ed id od ud da de di do du

af ef if of uf fa fe fi fo fu

ag eg ig og ug ga ge gi go gu

**I**n nomine patris & filij & spiritus  
sancti. Amen. **C** In the name of

the Father and of the Sone and of  
the holy ghost. Amen.



**P**ater noster qui es in celis  
sanctificetur nomen tuum.

Adueniat regnum tuum

Fiat voluntas tua sicut

in celo et in terra. Panem nostrum

quotidianum da nobis hodie. Et

dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et



nos dimittim⁹ debitoribus nostris.  
Et ne nos inducas in temptationē.  
Sed libera nos a malo. Amen.

**O**ur father which art in heuen  
halowed be thy name Let thi  
kyngdome come to vs. Thy Wyl be  
fulfylled as well in earth/ as it is in  
heuen. Gyue vs this day our dayly  
fode. And forgyue vs our offences/  
as we forgyue them that offend vs.  
And let vs not be ouercom by tēpta  
cyō. but deliuer vs frō all euell. Amē

**A**le maria grātia plena dñs tecū  
Benedicta tu in mūlierib⁹/ et be  
neditus fructus ventris tui Jēsus.

**H**yle Mary full of grace/ our  
lorde is with the/ blyssed arte  
thou amonge all womē/ & blyssed is  
the fruyte of thy wombe Jēsus Amē

**A**redo in deū patrem omniipo  
tentem creatorem celi et terre



Et in Iesum christū filiu eius vniū  
dominu nostru. Qui cōceptus est de  
spiritu sancto nat⁹ ex maria virgine  
Passus sub poncio pilato: crucifixus  
mortuus & sepultus. Descēdit ad in-  
ferna: tertia die resurrexit a mortuis  
Ascēdit ad celos sedet ad dexteram  
dei patris omnipotentis. Inde ven-  
turus est iudicare viuos et mortuos  
Credo in spiritum sanctū / sanctam  
ecclesiam catholicā / sanctorū cōmuni-  
onem / remissionē peccatorū / carnis  
resurrectionē et vitam eternā Amen.

**I** Byleue in God the Father al-  
myghtye creatour of heuen &  
earth. And in his onely sone Iesus  
Chryste our lord. Whiche was con-  
teyued by the holy ghost / and borne  
of the virgyn Mary. Which suffred  
vnder Poncio Pylate / and was cru-  
cyfied and dyed / and was buryed. 1



And descended in to the helles/ and  
rose agayne the thyrde day fro deeth  
to lyfe. And ascended in to the heuēs  
& sitteth on the ryght hande of the  
father almyghty. And shal come a-  
gayne/ & iudge both quycke & dead.

**I** byleue in the holy ghost/ and the  
holy chyrch catholyke/ the holy com-  
munion of sayntes/ & the remyssion  
of synnes/ & the generall resurreccyō  
of the body & soule/ and euerlastyng  
lyfe. Amē. To helpe a prest to syng.

Confiteamini dño quoniam bonus:  
Quoniam in seculū misericordia eius

**C**onfiteor deo / beate Marie /  
omnibus sāctis et vobis / quia  
peccavi nimis cogitatione locutione  
et opere mea culpa. Precor sanctam  
Mariā / oēs sanctos dei et vos orare  
pro me. Misceatur vestri omnipo-  
teas deus / et dimittat vobis omnia



peccata vestra : hberet vos ob omni  
malo saluet et confirmet in bono et  
perducat vos ad vitā eternā. Amen

**A**diutorium nostrum in nomine  
domini. Qui fecit celum et terram.

**S**it nomen dñi benedictū. Ex hoc  
nunc & vsq; in seculū. **A**rye eleyson

**X**p̄e eleyson. **A**rye eleyson. **C**Se

quentia sancti euangely secundum/  
Marcū / Matheū / Lucā / Iohannē.

Gloria tibi dñe. Per omnia secula  
seculorū. Amen. **D**ñs vobiscū. Et

cum spū tuo. **S**ursum corda. Habe-  
mus ad dñm. **G**ratias agam⁹ dño

des nostro. Dignum et iustum est.  
**P**ax domini sit semper vobiscū. Et

cum spiritu tuo. **I**ta misse est. Deo  
gratias. **R**equiescāt in pace. Amen.

**C**Grace to be sayd before dyner.

**B**enedicite. Dñs. The eyes of  
euery thyngge do loke vp / and



they hope in the good lord / & thou  
gynest them theyr fode in tyme con-  
venient. Thou openest thy hande &  
doest repleynsthe euery sensyble cre-  
ature with thy benediccyon. Glory  
be to the father / to the sone / & to the  
holighost. As it was in the begyn-  
nyng / & as it is nowe & euer shall  
be. Amē. Lorde haue mercy on vs.  
Chyste haue mercy on vs. Lorde  
haue mercy on vs. Our father. &c.  
And let vs not be ouercōme by tem-  
ptacyon. But delyuer vs from all  
euill Amen. Nowe let vs all pray.  
Good lord blyss vs & all thy gyfts  
which we shal receyue of the by thy  
bounteousnesse thoro we Chyste our  
lorde Amen. O lorde commaunde  
thou to blyss. The kynge of eter-  
nall glory make vs to be pertenars  
of the celestyall mele. Amen.



**G**od is charite / & he that dwelleth  
in charite dwelleth in god / and god  
dwelleth in hym. Let vs pray that  
god maye dwell in vs / and that we  
may dwell in hym. Amen.

**G**race after dyner.

**T**he god of peace & loue dwell  
alwaye with vs. O Lorde  
haue mercy on vs. Thankes be to  
god. Good lorde let all thy workes  
gyue knowledge to the / and let thy  
holy sayntes gyue blyssynge to the.  
Glorie be to the father. &c.

We gyue thankes to the almyghty  
god for all thy vniuersall gyftes &  
benefites / whiche lyuest & reygneste  
as god thozoughout all the worlde  
of worldes Amen.

O all ye nacjons laude ye the lorde  
And all ye people prayse ye hym  
Bycause his mercye is cōfyned on



vs and the trueth of our lord doth  
remayne eternally. **G**lorie be to **sc.**  
**L**orde haue mercy on vs. **C**hryste  
haue mercy on vs. **L**orde haue mer  
cy on vs. **O**ur father which art. **sc.**  
**C**hryste dyd dystrybute goodes / &  
gaue it to the poore. **H**is iustice  
abydeth in the worlde of worlde.  
**I** shall blysse our **L**orde in euerye  
tyme. **H**is prayse be euermore in  
my mouthe. **M**y soule shalbe pray  
sed in our lorde. **L**et them that be  
gentyll heare / & they shall therof be  
glad. **M**agnifye ye the lorde with  
me / & let vs exalte his name within  
hym selfe. **B**lyssed be the name of  
our lorde fro the begynnyng. **N**ow  
and euer throughe out the worlde.  
**H**ayle **M**ary. **N**ow let vs praye.  
**C**ouchsafe thou lorde god to gyue  
eternall lyfe vnto al people doynge



good to vs for thy holy name. Amē  
Let vs blysse our lord. Thank be  
to our lord god. God graunt that  
the soules of all faythfull people de-  
parted out of this worlde / by his  
mercy may rest in eternal lyfe Amē  
God preserue his chyrch vniuersal  
And this chyrch of england speciall  
And the supreme heed therof oure  
kyng. And graunt vs the blysse  
without endynge. Amen.

¶ Grace for fyfthe dayes.

**B**enedicite. Dominus. God  
graunt that they that are pore  
in spiryte may fede and they shalbe  
satyfyed: they that seke hym / theyr  
hertes and myndes shal lyue in the  
worlde of worldes. Glory be to ꝛ.  
Lorde haue mercy on vs. ꝛ. Our  
father which art. Let vs pray ꝛ.  
Good lorde blysse vs. ꝛ. O lorde



commaunde thou to blyffe. **T**he  
eternall kynge of glory receiue vs  
w<sup>th</sup> the meate of thy spirituall fode.  
**T**he grace of our lord Iesu chryst  
the charyte of god / the communion  
of the holye ghoſte / be euer w<sup>th</sup> vs  
all Amen. **B**reake to the hungry  
thy breade. **A**nd brynge the nedy  
men and wanderyng men into thy  
house. **W**hen thou ſeſt one bare  
couer hym / and dyspraye not thyne  
owne brothers body.

**T**hus the almyghty lord ſayeth  
**G**race after dyner.

**T**he God of pease and of lone  
dwelle alway w<sup>th</sup> vs. **T**he  
mercyfull god gyuer of mercy hath  
made a memory of his meruels. **H**e  
hathe gyuen meate to all them that  
diede hym. **G**lorie be to the father.  
**W**e gyue thankes to the &c.



**C** A shorte grace to be sayd  
before dyner.

**T**he ryght hande of god blysse  
our meate now brought hy-  
ther and to be brought hyther. In  
the name of the father, & the sone &c.

**C** An other grace to be sayd  
before dyner or souper.

**B**enedicite. Dñs. Good lorde  
for thy grace mekely we call.  
Blesse vs our meates & drynkes all  
In the name of the father, & cetera

**C** A shorte grace after dyner.

**H**Or this feest now let vs blys  
our lorde. Thank; be to god  
Haple Mary. &c. Nowe let vs all  
pray &c. Touchsafe. &c. Let vs all  
blysse our lorde. Thank; be to god  
God graunt &c. God preserue. &c.

**C** An other grace to be sayde  
after dyner or souper.



**B**lyssed be our lord which of  
his grace. hath sende vs our  
fode / good tyme / and space.

Lord haue mercy on vs. Chyrste  
haue mercy. &c. Thankes be to god.

Laude and prayse / honoure / and  
glory. Be to that lord that reygne  
on hye. Whose great mercy is euer  
redy. To all them that for it call.

Therefore laude be to hym eternall.

Nowe blyssed be the name of oure  
lord. Nowe and euer thoroowe out  
the worlde. Amen. God preserue  
his chyrche vniuersall. &c.

¶ Grace before souper.

**B**enedicite. Domin⁹. He that  
gyueth all thyng / now sanc-  
tify our souper. In the name of. &c.

¶ Grace after souper.

**B**enedicite. Domin⁹. Blyssed  
is god in all his gyftes / and



holy in all his wordes. Let hym be  
our helpe in the name of god which  
hath made heuen and earth.

Blyssed be the name. &c. Glouch. &c.

¶ Grace at Ester afore dyner.

**B**enedicite. Dominus. This  
is the day whiche our Lorde  
made/let vs ioye and be glad in the  
same. Gloye be to the. &c. Lorde  
haue mercy on vs &c. And let vs not  
&c. Nowe let vs. &c. Good lorde  
&c. O lorde. &c. The kinge of. &c.  
Cast ye out cleue the olde leuen that  
ye maye be newe dowgh as ye are  
the swete brede/for Chyist our Ester  
Lambe is offered for vs/therfore let  
vs fede in our lorde. Amen.

¶ Grace after dyner at Ester

**C**onfesse your selves to the god  
of heuen whiche gyueth lyfe  
to every sensyble creature O thou



good lorde &c. **T**hankes be to god  
O all ye nacjons laude ye the lorde  
Bycause his mercy is confirmed on  
vs &c. **G**lorie be to the father. &c.  
O Chyfte / in thy resurreccyon the  
heuens and the earth be glad.

**L**et vs pray.

**G**od lorde infuse the spiryte  
of thy charyte in vs / that by  
thy pite thou mayst make vs agre-  
able to those thynges whiche thou  
haste made by thy holy pascall Sa-  
cramentes. By that same our lorde  
Jesu Chyft thy sone which lyueth  
and reyneth with the as god in the  
vnite of the same holy spiryte by all  
the worlde of worldes. Amen.

**T**he ten commaundementes.

**L**ord graūt me grace to honoꝝ the  
One god & neuer to swere in vayne  
The holy day to be kepte by me.



My parentes to obey & maynteyne  
By thoughte ne dede no man to kyl  
To robbe nor to steale no where  
Nor to do lechery in acte or wyll  
Be no lyer / nor false wytnesse bere  
Nor to desyre my neyghbours wyfe  
His landes / seruauntes / or catell  
These x. preceptes lorde all my lyfe  
Graūt me grace I maye kepe well.  
**T**he by. workes of mercy bodily.  
God giue me grace the sicke to visit  
And giue them mete that be hūgry  
To them that thurste Drynke to fet  
And priesoners to redeme and bye  
To clothe the naked euermore redy  
To pore wāderers to giue lodging  
And to brynge the deed to buryng.  
**T**he by. workes of mercy ghostly  
God graūt I may good counsel giue  
And teche them that ygnoraunt be  
To conforte them that be pensyue



And to correcte With charyte  
To suffer in all aduersyte  
By neyghboirs trespas to forgyue  
And to pray for grace Whyle I lyue  
¶ The. vij. Capitall synues.

Good lorde graunt me pryde to for  
And not to syn in couetous (take  
Nor slouth / but in good workes to  
wake

Nor to be Wrath nor furyous  
Nor byldaynous nor ennyous  
Nor for to synne in glotony  
Nor in no carnall Lechery.

Thus endeth the. A B C transla  
ted out of Laten to to Englyshe  
With other deuoute Prayers.

¶ Imprinted at Londo in Paules  
Chyrche yerde at the sygne of the  
maydens heed by thomas Petyt.



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