

I TOLD YOU THAT A SYLLABLE IS A PART OF A WORD.

NOW, CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT A LETTER IS?

IF YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT A LETTER IS, I MUST TELL YOU.

A LETTER IS THE PICTURE OF A SOUND SUCH AS WE MAKE WHEN WE SPEAK OR READ; AND THAT SOUND IS A WORD, OR A PART OF A WORD.

BUT I HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE THAT IT IS NOT SUCH A PICTURE AS A PICTURE OF A HORSE, OR THE PICTURE OF A COW OR OF A HOUSE; BECAUSE THE PICTURE OF A HORSE LOOKS LIKE A HORSE, BUT THE PICTURE OF A SOUND DOES NOT LOOK LIKE A SOUND.

IT IS MORE PROPER TO SAY THAT IT IS A MARK WHICH STANDS FOR A SOUND THAN TO SAY IT IS THE PICTURE OF A SOUND; BUT I CALL IT A PICTURE BECAUSE I THINK YOU WILL UNDERSTAND IT BETTER.

NOW, I WISH YOU TO LOOK AT THE WORDS WHICH YOU

READ, AND SEE THAT SOME OF THEM HAVE BUT ONE PART, OR SYLLABLE, AND THAT SOME OF THEM HAVE TWO, THREE, FOUR, AND MORE SYLLABLES.

AND IF YOU LOOK AT THE SYLLABLES, YOU WILL SEE THAT SOME OF THEM HAVE BUT ONE LETTER, SOME HAVE TWO LETTERS, SOME HAVE THREE, FOUR, OR MORE LETTERS IN THEM.

AND ONE THING MORE I WISH YOU TO SEE, WHEN YOU READ IN THIS BOOK, OR WHEN YOU READ ANYTHING ELSE; AND THAT IS, THAT SOME OF THE LETTERS WHICH BELONG TO SOME SYLLABLES DO NOT STAND FOR ANY SOUND IN THE WORD, BUT THAT THE WORD IS PRONOUNCED AS IT WOULD BE WITHOUT SUCH LETTERS IN THEM.

THE WORD WHICH IS SPELLED *S E A* IS PRONOUNCED AS IF IT WERE SPELLED *SE* ; BUT IT ALWAYS MUST BE SPELLED WITH AN *A*, ALTHOUGH THE *A* IS SILENT, OR HAS NO SOUND IN THE WORD.

AND THE WORD WHICH WE CALL *DET* IS SPELLED *D E B T* ; BUT THE *B* IS NOT SOUNDED, AND THEREFORE IT IS CALLED A SILENT LETTER.

NOW, IF YOU WILL TRY TO REMEMBER WHAT I HAVE TOLD YOU ABOUT THESE SILENT LETTERS, I THINK YOU WILL BE ABLE TO READ VERY WELL, IN A SHORT TIME; AND I SUPPOSE YOU WILL BE VERY GLAD WHEN YOU ARE ABLE TO READ PRETTY STORIES IN BOOKS.

THE SILENT LETTERS WHICH ARE USED IN SPELLING MANY WORDS ARE VERY PUZZLING TO LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS, WHEN THEY ARE LEARNING TO READ; BUT I HOPE THAT THE GOOD LITTLE BOY OR GIRL WHO IS NOW READING THIS LESSON WILL TRY VERY HARD TO RECOLLECT HOW ALL THE WORDS ARE SPELT; AND THAT THE TEACHER WILL REQUIRE EVERY PUPIL TO BE ABLE TO SPELL EVERY WORD THAT IS READ. BY SO DOING, THE PUPIL WILL LEARN TO READ MUCH FASTER, AND IN A SHORT TIME HARD WORDS WILL CEASE TO TROUBLE HIM.