

Notices of New Books  
*New Englander and Yale Review*, Jan. 1867.

FIRST LESSONS IN READING\* Numerous attempts have been made, at various times, to smooth the way for beginners in reading by the introduction of a phonetic alphabet of some kind. The number of sounds to be expressed by the few letters of the alphabet is so great and the modes of representing these individual sounds are so various as to cause incalculable difficulty and perplexity to a learner. Phonetic characters do indeed render the accurate pronunciation of words written in them a comparatively easy accomplishment. But the pupil who has learned to read words thus written is still obliged to learn the common alphabet; and though by the phonetic system his apprehension of the elements of words may be sharpened, he has made but little actual toward able to read.

Messrs. Soule and Wheeler have endeavored to unite the advantages of phonetic spelling with those of the common method without involving any of the disadvantages of the former. In this little book only the letters of the ordinary alphabet are used, their sounds being indicated where possible by such combinations as admit of no ambiguity, while in other cases diacritical marks are employed. These marks, however, are not only of the simplest description, and few in number, but are such as from their very general use, are nearly as familiar as the letters themselves. The simpler sounds are taught first, these being the vowels in their most common or name sounds. Then come the consonants, in small groups which are associated in reference to the manner of their formation, as first *p, b, f, v*; then *s, z, t, d*; next *k, c, ff, j*; then *m, n, i, r*; and so on. No time or effort of the child is wasted at this early period in learning the order or names of the letters as belonging to the alphabet. He is simply taught the forms of the letters and that these forms stand for certain sounds. As soon as he has become familiar with the vowels and principal consonants, he is shown that when a consonant is placed *before* a vowel the two are pronounced together and may form a word or part of a word, and short sentences are given of words containing but two letters thus combined. He thus comes to know what syllables are. He is next informed that when a vowel stands before consonant, it has a different sound called the short sound and this is likewise illustrated with numerous examples and simple reading lessons. In a similar way, the effect of final *e* in lengthening the vowel before a consonant of a doubled consonant, of position in accented or unaccented syllables, in short, all the various circumstances which influence the pronunciation of letters and syllables are introduced and made familiar by lessons and appropriate exercises. The learner, first becoming acquainted with the normal sounds and relations of the letters is, thus gradually taught the irregular and exceptional sounds, and where these are capable of classification or analogies, such relations are carefully pointed out. Much ingenuity is displayed in the selection and arrangement of the materials for the lessons and exercises. The authors deserve great praise for the manner in which they have succeeded in giving to simple and rudimentary matter suited to the comprehension of a child a form and method truly scientific. They have attained the best results of the various phonetic systems without obliging the child to learn anything that he will ever need to forget; or disuse and no child who studies this book under the direction of a faithful teacher can fail of acquiring a distinct articulation and a correct pronunciation. We cannot forbear expressing the hope that the authors will complete a series of Readers on the same admirable plan.

\**First Lessons in Reading* a new method of teaching the reading of English by which the ear is trained to discriminate the elementary sounds of words and the eye to recognize the signs used for these sounds in the established orthography. By RICHARD SOULE and WILLIAM A WHEELER, Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1866. 12mo. pp. 98.

## John Celivergos Zacos

*Appleton's Encyclopaedia of American Biography*, Vol. VI, (1886), p. 653

ZACHOS, John Celivergos (zak<sup>2</sup>os) educator b in Constantinople, Turkey, 20 Dec. 1820. He is of Greek parentage and came to this country when he was ten years old with Dr. Samuel G. Howe. He was graduated at Kenyon college, Ohio in 1840 and in 1842-5 studied at the medical school of Miami university, but did not take his degree. He was associate principal in Cooper female seminary Dayton, Ohio in 1851-4 and principal of the grammar school of Antioch college, Yellow Springs, Ohio in 1855-7. During the civil war he served in the army as an assistant surgeon, and in 1865 having studied theology, privately he was ordained pastor of the Unitarian church in West Newton, Mass. In 1866-7 he was pastor at Meadville, Pa., and professor of rhetoric in the theological school in that place. Since 1871 he has been curator of the Cooper union New York city. Dr. Zachos invented and patented in 1876 the stenotype, for printing a legible text from the English alphabet at a reporting speed. In this machine the types are fixed on eighteen shuttle-bars, two or more of which may be simultaneously placed in position, and the impression is given by a plunger common to all the bars. Improvements were patented in 1883 and 1886. He edited the "Ohio Journal of Education" in (1852) and is the author of "New American Speaker" (New York 1852); "Analytical Elocution" (1861) "New System of Phonic Reading without changing the Orthography" a pamphlet (Boston 1863) and a "Phonic Primer and Reader" (1864).

J. C. Zachos

### *Biography of Shorthand*

By BY JOHN WESTBY GIBSON LL. D.

LONDON

ISAAC PITMAN & SONS, 1 AMEN CORNER, PATERNOSTER Row, E. C.

BATH:

PHONETIC INSTITUTE

1887

Zachos, J. C. Phonotype Reporter. A type-writing instrument, designed for printing a steno-phonotypy or shorthand print that indicates words, by sounds and signs corresponding by means of which, and by the peculiar arrangements and devices of the types and keys, a performer on this instrument is enabled to execute the imprint of words, and phrases at once as chords are struck on a piano, and by practice may report verbatim. By J. C. Zachos (Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1875, by J. C. Zachos in the office of the librarian of Congress at Washington).

The Phonic Primer and Reader a National Method of teaching Reading by the Sounds of the Letters without altering the Orthography. Designed chiefly for the use of night schools where adults are taught and for the myriads of freed men and women of the South whose first rush from the prison-house of slavery is to the gates of the Temple of Knowledge. By Rev. J. C. Zachos, for 16 months a missionary to the colored people of Paris Island, Port Royal, South Carolina. Boston. Printed by John Wilson & Son, 5 Water street, 1864. [8vo 76].

Note From Internet Publisher: Donald L. Potter  
May 29, 2008

I am publishing the excellent review of the following book in the interest of researchers interested in the history of beginning reading instruction in America.

*First Lessons in Reading* a new method of teaching the reading of English by which the ear is trained to discriminate the elementary sounds of words and the eye to recognize the signs used for these sounds in established orthography. William A. Wheeler, Associate of Webster's Dictionaries, and Richard Soule, Associate Editor of Worcester's Quarto Dictionary. Lee & Shepherd, Boston: 1866.

This book can be found on Google Book at:

[http://books.google.com/books?id=0hVKAAAIAAJ&pg=PR5&dq=john+c.+zachos&lr=&as\\_brr=1#PPR1,M1](http://books.google.com/books?id=0hVKAAAIAAJ&pg=PR5&dq=john+c.+zachos&lr=&as_brr=1#PPR1,M1)

Please visit the Education Page of my web site: [www.donpotter.net](http://www.donpotter.net) for more information on phonics methods for teaching reading from the "sounds" instead of from the "meaning." The book is especially important because of its unique theoretical and pedagogical orientation. It can serve well as a paradigm for contemporary developer's of phonics-first materials for reading instruction.

More information on this method can be found in the third volume of Miss Geraldine Rodgers' *The History of Beginning Reading: from Teaching by "Sounds" to Teaching from "Sounds."*

The information on Rev. John Zachos is included because of his importance in the development phonics method used in Wheeler and Soule' *First Lessons in Reading*. The authors note their indebtedness to Zachos several times in the "Preface:" THIS book has been prepared by the subscribers substantially on the plan proposed by the Rev. John C. Zachos and with his concurrence." Later in the "Preface" they add, "More recently the Rev. John C. Zachos, Professor in the Theological School at Meadville, Pennsylvania, has been laboring in the same direction with very gratifying results. He has not found time, however, to elaborate fully the details of his plan in the preparation of elementary text books; and it was by his desire that the subscribers undertook that task."