PREFACE ADDRESSED
TO TEACHERS OF LITERATURE
FROM THE
NEW ENGLAND PRIMER
MODIFIED

For the more easy attaining
the true Reading of English
From which is subtracted
The Assembly of Divines
CATECHISM

All religion has by-passed
every schoolhouse, red or glassed.
Bible reading's dead. Conditions
today permit no inhibitions.
Children should be spared the psalms
in an age of atom bombs.
Demons rise and angels go
now that we are in the know.
Man's a creature of the gutter.
Faith is relative and we
flout religiosity.
God, now we've interred him, must
crumble into cosmic dust.
Heaven's a void, and Blake, the mystic,
at best was revolutionistic.
Immortality revealed? . . .
Blake's verse will have to be repealed.
John Donne, prelate, we impeach.
His amorous lines, of course, we'll teach.
Knowledge of our literature?
Well, when print is screened from pure.
Love of reading will be heightened
by the books Sade-sex enlightened.
Milton is the first to banish.
In fact, all puritans must vanish.
Names like Mather, Williams, Cotton
must be properly forgotten.
Odes like Wordsworth's are suspect
and Bryant's endings, moral-decked.
Poetry (we've learned to fear it)
is tainted fatally with spirit.
Questions rise. What works of prose
are obsolete? We list with those.
Religio Medici. Down, down!
His own Urne Buriall for Brown.
Sermons? Andrewes, who misled
Eliot with his Magi? Dead.
Transcendentalism: fated,
with Emerson, to be out-dated.
Utopias of fabled Beauty
scrap, as well as States of Duty.
Vaughn and Herbert (always verse
keeps cropping up) deserve our curse.
Wilde may stay. His satires suit
And Walton, rural of pursuit.
X-out Xmas play and hymn.
(Gift observance? Leave it in.)
Youth, the realist, shuns a story
like Faust's, or Dante's Purgatory.
Zealous literati, learn
tomorrow's here. The past? Burn! Burn!

By Isabel Williams Verry