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INTRODUCTION

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FOREWORD

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I recollect a conversation in which the General Editor of this
PLAN OF TEXT said to me: "Speech is the *Logos* of thought"; and xii

thought to myself: how true that is, for unless thought is expressed in
KEY TO PRONUNCIATION how is it to be communicated? The Eng xiii

alphabet consists of twenty-six letters, and out of this seemingly meagre
ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DICTIONARY, writers of fic xiv

and countless numbers of people of whom one has never heard, have
HOW TO CORRECT PRINTERS' PROOFS sentences to express xvi

was in their minds. Bacon and Newton, Milton and Shakespeare, Jane
THE DICTIONARY, A—Z of course their modern counterparts, ha 1

shown us what can be produced by the juxtapositions of wonder-working
COMMON FOREIGN WORDS AND PHRASES of the alphabet are

FROM CLASSICAL AND MODERN LANGUAGES 1206

Nor is it the field of Literature only that causes us to marvel. The
ABBREVIATIONS IN COMMON USE our language pith and vi 1223

When I was a young man the word "fan" had specific and well-defined
CHRISTIAN NAMES OF MEN AND WOMEN fans," "radio 1245

and "television fans," and one conjures up the picture of vast numbers
CEREMONIOUS FORMS OF ADDRESS creations. And this 1255

qualising does not end there. The players, speakers, crooners, and the
RELATIVE RANKS OF BRITISH contribute to the curious amalgam of

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS reason for mentioning this is to 1257

out that a language is not something which can be determined within
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ganism which is for ever growing 1258

expanding, for ever giving birth to new progeny.
MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION 1259

half-a-million words. Few of us between the cradle and the grave make
THE NATURALLY OCCURRING ELEMENTS however, we enc 1262

great many which we never, or rarely, employ ourselves, but of which
FOREIGN ALPHABETS intelligently, a clear and accurate explan 1264

ence in the educated household (a description which applies, or, in view
of the enormous sums now spent on education, should apply to all

households), a good dictionary is essential.

When we first hear or read a strange word, or one which, without
being quite unknown to us, has a somewhat unfamiliar ring, our curiosity

may take one of four forms. We may desire to know what is the correct
telling, its accepted pronunciation, its exact meaning, its origin. If we