



The First English Dictionary 1604: Robert Cawdrey's 'A Table Alphabeticall'

By Robert Cawdrey, John Simpson

The Bodleian Library. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The First English Dictionary 1604: Robert Cawdrey's 'A Table Alphabeticall', Robert Cawdrey, John Simpson, Here is a real treat for lovers of English - the very first dictionary in our language. Contrary to popular opinion, this honour goes not to Samuel Johnson, whose definitive tome appeared in 1755, but to Robert Cawdrey, who published his Table Alphabeticall in 1604. Written for the benefit of Ladies, Gentlewomen or any other unskilfull persons, this was not a book for scholars but was aimed squarely at the non-fiction best-seller list of its day. It is a treasure-house of meaning, bristling with arresting and eminently quotable definitions. For example geometrie is the 'art of measuring the earth', and hecticke is 'inflaming the hart, and soundest parts of the bodie', while barbarian is 'a rude person', and a concubine is a 'harlot, or light huswife'. Cawdrey did set out to create an exhaustive catalogue of the language but rather a guide which would unlock the mystery of hard usual English wordes, borrowed from the Hebrew, Greeke, Latine, or French for educated gentlefolk encountering new words which English was then absorbing at a phenomenal rate. Every entry...



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