

language of easy acquisition to foreigners, and to introduce an uniform one for the sake of the natives, amongst whom it is still so notoriously vague and unstable.

But Buchanan was severely criticized, and he and his successors,—Sheridan, Walker, Smart,—have one by one fallen from their pedestals of infallibility.

And so dictionary follows dictionary, each professing to give the correct pronunciation: some recent ones, however, show greater caution, and supply the anxious seeker with two or even three pronunciations of the same word.

What are we to do in such a case? Are we to say "iher" or "eether?" to give "launch" the sound of "aw" or of "ah?" to make the vowel in "off" long or short? to utter the "i" of often and the "d" in "Wednesday?" to pronounce the "l" in *falcon* and "golf?" Again, are we to agree with certain Scotchmen in pronouncing "leisure" so as to rhyme with "seizure," or in stressing "inquiry" on the first syllable? Are we to follow certain Americans in adopting "dooty," "Toosday" "introdoot?" It is no solution of the difficulty to say, pronounce as you please, any more than we can get over the difficulties of our chaotic spelling by saying, spell as you please. Before we can finally establish a spelling that is a guide to the pronunciation, we must determine what is the best form of English speech.

Professor Rippmann admits that to decide upon this "best form" and establish it as a standard is a difficult task, but he believes it can be done by means of phonetics. The usages of the best public speakers should be recorded by the phoneticians, and the records submitted to a representative conference on standard speech, to serve as a basis for their deliberations.

A writer in the current number of "The Journal of English Studies," discussing the best method of securing correct pronunciation in Schools, writes,

Every teacher of English, whether in the primary or secondary school, should be trained in phonetics, and pass an examination in spoken English, something like the oral examination now held in other languages, before he is permitted to teach it. At intervals, the teacher who has thus qualified should be compelled to submit to a further test, and if his pronunciation has deteriorated, to attend a second course in phonetics before his certificate is renewed. His case would be similar to that of the English-born French or German specialist who finds it necessary to make frequent visits abroad to prevent himself from becoming stale. By this means the teacher would possess an ideal by which to correct his own pronunciation and a partial safeguard from infection by his pupils; and by the constant application of phonetics to the reading and recitation of the pupils some improvement in their way of speaking also might, in the course of one or two generations be affected.

But it is hard to see how such a plan could be carried out until a standard English is agreed upon.

To quote Professor Rippmann again:

"In the absence of a standard, the existing differences are bound to become accentuated. Our spelling is useless as a check to changes in the development of English speech, and change is by no means inevitable or desirable. There may be no harm in a dialect changing, and it will doubtless continue to change; but if we once decide what is the best form of English, and set it before our teachers as the ideal, and train them so that they are keenly interested in the sounds of the living language, and learn to discriminate them—then, in these days of compulsory education, change will be much retarded, and may, indeed, be arrested. Then we shall enable every child to possess, in addition to its local dialect, a form of English speech that is clear and musical. That a rational spelling will go hand in hand with it cannot be doubted for a moment.

IN THE WEST.

The following account is taken from an article in "The School," written by J. T. M. Anderson, Inspector of Schools in Saskatchewan. The article is intended as a protest against the bilingual method, but our extracts are chosen to shew the conditions under which some teachers work in the West—the difficulties, the interest, and the rewards.

"Here is an example" writes Mr. Anderson, "of what can be done at school among foreigners by a patient and sympathetic English-speaking teacher." His experience is given in his own words:—

"After leaving Manitoba I took charge of a school in a large foreign settlement in Saskatchewan. I distinctly remember the long dreary drive of twenty-five miles, through hail and slush, behind a patient ox-team, as my secretary escorted me from the little railway siding. Long after the "midnight dreary" we pulled up before a low mud-covered hut which I supposed was his stable, but which I soon learned was to be the joint abode of the man, his wife, four children, and the new teacher. It was one small room, but it served as bedroom, dining room, and kitchen, besides having other uses too numerous to mention. I shall pass over that first night. It is too painful to recall.

Next morning I met my trustees, only one of whom, a Swede, was able to speak to me. Of the other two, one was a Hungarian, the other a Pole. I ascertained that it had been proclaimed throughout the neighborhood that I was to open school that morning, and I further learned that it was a new school, and they had never had a teacher before. I was informed by the Swede, a very genial fellow, that most of the people had never seen a