

THE TRU CONSERVATIV.

Pruning, trimming and retouching are ever accompaniments of growth and progress. Our language has both grown and drifted since early printers in the Tudor period selected wordforms or spelling from average but variant speech of that remote age. HERALD readers (of Jan. 1899) will recall how perplexed Caxton was by the dialects of his day and his quaint but graphic story showing this, and how in his dilemma he sought counsel of a scholar, "Mayster John Skelton late created poet laureate in the university of Oxenford to oversee and correcte this sayd booke." A century after Caxton our wordforms appear in their first stage of fixation with many a *gh* marking gutturals then general (as in *fought, right, eight, night*) but which have dropped out of standard or received speech, though yet heard in dialect. Many more examples of antiquated usage could be cited, but it is not sufficient to point out this class of dead limbs on our language tree and ask is it not high time for them and other such to be trimmed and pruned out of the way? They belonged to the sixteenth century. This is the twentieth. According to Tennyson

"That man's the true conservative
Who lops the withered branch away."

WHAT WE WANT.

Our German co-laborers have published a brief statement of aims, repeated from time to time, with heading *Was Wir Wollen* (What we wish, What we want, What we're driving at). A like synopsis appears necessary here, especially as their problem is different from ours,

Preliminary to revision, it is requisite to note what variant spellings are in respectable and good common use that the better of two or more wordforms be chosen according to principles stated in our platform—rejected forms to die out by disuse. Wordlists of such are issued from time to time under a self-explanatory heading, *Preferred Spellings*.

Revised (or *Amended*) *Spelling* assumes Preferred Spellings. To such Old Spellings as their use produces it applies these rules:

OMIT useless letters; CHANGE (if sounded so) *d* to *t*, *ph* or *gh* to *f*; let *-er* denote agent-nouns.

The spelling on this page exemplifies the result when the rules are applied.

New Spelling is what its name implies—a new set of wordforms that deserves to come into use concurrent with Revised Spelling and gradually supersede it just as decimal money, weights and measures will supplant old, irregular ways of reckoning. New Spelling is *not* simply continued extended or developed Revised Spelling, but instead is a crystallization about a new orthographic center.

Over fifty years of agitation and trial show that the alphabet must grow in future as in past ages by development. Within recent centuries three differentials (*j, u, w*) have been adopted from two (*i, v*) old letters. Like alphabetic increase by three vowel differentials solves the problem. One of them (*u*) comes from the second (*u*) of two *u*'s (*u, u*) long in use. Two other vowel differentials are on the way, while through revival of Anglo-Saxon study an old consonant (*ð*) is forcing itself in, wanted or not.

WHERE ARE WE AT?

Much New Spelling work is done. The summarizing and harmonizing of half a century's work is now in order. The following loom up to view:

(a) Determining the quality of vowels in weak syllables. Hitherto, this has prevailed: "In unaccented syllables use the vowels of common spelling, unless Webster or Worcester plainly give a different sound." (*Phonetic Teacher, June, 1883, p. 64*). That was but provisional and has served its day.

(b) Choosing the preferable one in variant orthoepy where plank 13 will not apply.

(c) Determining the "linguistic habits" of our language. The chief ones should be stated as definitely as platform planks. By them, Orthoepy and Orthography are mutually deducible for most words.

(d) Propagandism.

(e) Compiling a glossary of approved wordforms, and publishing a body of useful literature that eyes may be accustomed to such standard wordforms.

THE ANNUAL OF NEW SPELLING.

[This is a covered pamphlet of 16 to 40 pages, published every September, at 10 c. each (after 1896) or 60 c. a dozen of assorted numbers. Annuals for 1888, 1889, 1899, are about exhausted, and will be furnished as parts of complete sets only at \$2 per set—300 pages of condensed matter, the archives of alphabetic progress from 1884.]

CONTENTS, 1897.

Greeting for new volume—Orthographic Union—The Case Admitted—Fixed Spelling—Ten-Vowel Orthography—SPECIMENS: Sermon on the Mount; Improvement; A Naturalist's Pockets—First Line of Advance (Revised Spelling)—Grades of Letters—Obituary of Sir I. Pitman—News-Notes—Correspondence—Socrates' Prayer—Notes on Words—Good Beginnings—Medical Terms—Obituary of Lindsley—Cosmopolitan English—News-Notes—Pitman Memorial—Caxton's Spelling—'Case' and 'Plea'—Orthoepy and Orthography—Key—Second Line of Advance (syndrom)—Word-Register—Progress in Dialect Work—Another Advocate—Correspondence—News-Notes—SPECIMEN: Lincoln Entering Richmond—Notes on Words—Key.

THE HERALD is published (with missionary object) in Jan., April, July, Oct., at 57 Harbord St., Toronto, Canada. SUBSCRIBE AND DISTRIBUTE: 1 letters, in schools, privately in a hundred ways; 100 copies to one address 25 cents a year in advance; 500 copies, 50 cents; 450 copies, \$1; 1000 copies, \$2. Prices for a past year, 10 c. Foreign stamps taken. Your influence to extend circulation is solicited.