

reform, have largely refused to support, or even to countenance, a change. This, of course, may be British conservatism, but it is also English common-sense, and it would be odd if it were otherwise; for if the outcome of our civilization and of centuries of educational effort were to culminate in any such scheme as most of the Spelling reformers have in view, it would be a grim satire upon the past.—EDITOR C.E.M.

SCHOOL-BOOK EDITING AND AUTHORSHIP.

TORONTO, 29th April, 1879.

Editor, Canada Educational Monthly:—

SIR,—My attention has been called to a passage in the April number of the MONTHLY, which is fitted to convey an erroneous impression. You speak of the Chairman of the Central Committee as “contributing to a work which subsequently must have come before him for judicial appraisal, prior to official authorization.” I did not contribute either to this work or to any other on the authorized list. Mr. Kirkland’s statement, that he is indebted to me “for the excellent collection of examination papers in ch. xii,” must not be understood as if I had furnished these papers to Mr. Kirkland. He found them in public documents. I undoubtedly made some suggestions to Mr. Kirkland when he shewed me his manuscript; but, to represent me as having “contributed” to the work, is putting the matter in an entirely false light. I should probably have withheld even my suggestions, had it occurred to me that the work might be submitted to the Central Committee for their opinion. I, of course never had any pecuniary interest in the work.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE PAXTON YOUNG.

—We readily give insertion to the above communication of Prof. Young disclaiming

having “contributed” to Mr. Kirkland’s *Elementary Statics*, and thus, inferentially, freeing himself from the impropriety to which we alluded in his connection with the work, prior to its authorization, in our article of last month on “School Book Editing and Authorship.” It will be seen, however, that the Professor’s disclaimer is more a metaphysical than a practical one, as, though he objects to the word “contributed,” he admits having given the author “suggestions” in the preparation of the work, which, in the relation he was afterwards to stand towards the book, was no less an impropriety than if he had given it the aid of a substantial contribution. That we were wrong in using the term “contributed” was not our fault, but Mr. Kirkland’s, as no one reading that gentleman’s acknowledgment of Prof. Young’s assistance could fail to come to the conclusion that the Professor had really made a contribution to the work. If the “excellent collection of examination papers” was made by Mr. Kirkland, and not contributed by Prof. Young,—and we now know this to have been the case—it is unfortunate that Mr. Kirkland did not put his acknowledgment of Prof. Young’s services in a less ambiguous form. But, as we have said, this Mr. Kirkland is responsible for, and not the present writer; and Prof. Young has had ample time since the publication of the book, to draw the author’s attention to the misleading acknowledgment, and to have had it either altered or withdrawn. Though we are not blamable in the matter which Prof. Young complains of, we much regret the circumstances which called for our censure. The intrigues of the Central Committee with publishing houses, however, have been too much of scandal of late for the critic to deal tenderly with breaches of propriety and acts that discredit officials, with the performance of their duties, though in Prof. Young’s case there would seem to be less to hold him responsible for than in the case of some of his *confreres*.—ED. C.E.M.