

—"Rare Ben Jonson" had a very sensible way of spelling his name; no silent, useless letters in it, like other Benns, other Johnsons, and Mr. Thompson-with-a-p.

LONDON SPEECH AND NOISE.—Sound-blindness [better termed tone-deafness] will account for dialectic variations. The ear being, as physiologists tell us, an even more delicate and complex structure than the eye, we can understand that physical conditions in certain localities may produce insensibility to particular variations of sound. Perhaps the interminable rattle of London may account for the awful vowel-system of commercial men in the metropolis.—*London Journal of Education*.

OUGH IN PROPER NAMES.—Everybody has at their tongue-tip many illustrations of the absurd irregularity of ough in ordinary words. There is like irregularity in proper names, which we point out as follows. All the names given appear in Toronto directory for '87. Keough is pronounced as the name of the letter Q. Mr. Wm. Kough, Owen Sound, says his name is pronounced as Kyo. Ough is pronounced as the name of letter O. Bengough is either Bengof or Bengo. Clougher rhymes with Moor. Ugh is silent in *Whattmough and Woolnough*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"KNUDSEN'S ORTHOGRAPHY."

SIR,—In your last issue, Mr. Jones makes several observations on the system of spelling adopted in my Primer. Some of them have been anticipated and answered in Appendix to my Pronouncing and Spelling Dictionary to which I shall refer.

I consider it unnecessary to have a separate sign for ng. Children and foreigners experience very little difficulty in giving the proper sound to ng in words like *finger, hunger*, etc., and *singer, hanger*, etc. See Dict. p. 374, § D.

As to Th th, see p. 379, F, 9. Teachers and educated people are prejudiced against dh, as leaning to Dutch pronunciation. As to retention of c, k, x, qu, see p. 377, F, 8.

Mr. Jones emphasizes the difficulty of obtaining new-formed letters. This has been met by adopting as few new letters as practicable. To provide signs for at least 40 sounds, I have introduced the longus (˘) which besides has the advantage of saving many words from so strange appearance as they would have by new letters. It is easy to teach, easy to transfer to writing in current Sp., and easy to read by present readers.

As for analogy with other languages, it is applied so far only as to assign a, e, i, o, u to sounds they indicate in Italian, Spanish, French, German, Danish, Swedish and many other languages. The importance of this may not be appreciated by Englishmen; but in U. S. there are many foreign-born residents to whom it is a great help to have a, e,

i, o, u represent the same sounds as in their native tongues. Besides, by this, more words remain unaltered than if these letters are given English values.

I appreciate the convenience of alternatives during transition period. The symbols proposed by English reformers are judiciously chosen, and should be agreed on for one of three systems:

1. The English, using ordinary letters only.

2. The Demotic, using few (5) new letters.

3. The Fonic, using 14 to 19 new letters.

If these three systems, with rules and directions for use were matured and put before the public in a concise and practical form, the selection would be made according to purposes and circumstances.

As to use of o for vowel in *nut*, I have not been led astray. It is a necessity in the Demotic; stem. The Am. S. R. A. have adopted i, e, a, o, u, for the six brief vowels, using o in *not*, and u in *full*; therefore we have to use o in *nut*: while Mr. J. of necessity adopts i, e, a, o, u, w, for the same brief vowels, using o in *not*, u in *nut*, and w in *full*. See p. 376, § 4. The reason for using a raised comma for the longus instead of the macron is given, p. 375, § 2.

If we would establish ourselves into three companies, each working for perfection of one of three systems, Sp. Reform would be accomplished sooner.

S. NORWALK, CONN. C. W. KNUDSEN.

INTERNATIONAL ALPHABET—STANDARD SPEECH.

SIR,—I notice a slight mistake* in your otherwise excellent article, 2 months ago, on Amended Sp. in France. You say "there is neither k nor w in the French alphabet." No k, tr, q being chosen instead; but w is used for consonant in *oui*, practically identical with your w. For the rest, I too was sorry to see a national standpoint adopted instead of a broad international one. For our use of c (for sh) and j much can be said, but q for k is unfortunate; and u for French u, with w for international u, is clearly wrong: it ought to be the reverse. The adoption of a national point of view was perhaps a necessity in the circumstances. We shall do better as we grow older.

What you say of orthoepy is interesting. The question has been agitated repeatedly, in the *Teacher*, for English, French and German. In order to have it practically settled we give articles by all members in the *orthoepy of their choice*, whilst "the learners' corner" tries to stick to standard speech. By comparing different pronunciations, a good standard will be evolved at length. At any rate, comparison is interesting and instructive. Neuilly-sur-Seine. P. PASSY.

[*There's no mistake. The existing French alphabet has no w. The proposed enlarged and revised one has—a different thing.]