

There would be some inconveniences in the changing of our orthography: but they would not be at all serious. It would not make the old literature illegible. It would in fact enable our young people to read in our old orthography at an earlier age than they can now, as some of the experiments to which I have referred seem to prove. Within one year the new orthography would look all right to the most fastidious worshipper of our present silent letters. While the present system would look even more forbidding than that in vogue two or three centuries ago does now. Let us briefly review some of the advantages of the proposed reform.

1. Our present alphabet is defective, redundant, and inconsistent; and is not at all used as all alphabets were originally designed to be used, and as they now are practically used.

2. The spelling of English was always changing in its early history although unfortunately not in conformity to the changes in the language itself; and no good reason can ever be assigned why it should be permanently congealed into the rigid, everlasting form of a particular stage of development in the seventeenth century.

3. The spelling of many languages has been reformed by the authority of learned academies or governments, as ours is by similar authority restrained from undergoing reform. It is evident, that all required to reform our spelling is the creation or evolution of a rational authority for the purpose.

4. It would save at least two years of useless, if not injurious effort in our schools, and give so much more time for the cultivation of the useful, which all of us feel the need of.

5. It would shorten all printed and written matter to the extent of perhaps seventeen per cent., thus cheapening all of our literature from the newspaper to the encyclopædia by one-sixth. Every six dollar price would be reduced to five.

6. It would make the written words the everlasting records of the changes taking place in the language, and thus give philology a chance in the future which has to a great extent been lost forever by the false and mischievous conceit of the past.

7. It would tend to make dialects and provincial accent disappear, and to facilitate the growth of a uniform pronunciation, since analogy would not be misleading as at present.

8. It would enable foreigners to learn the English language with infinitely more ease; and with its present potentiality for telegraphic and commercial correspondence over all the world, would rapidly tend to make English the universal language.

9. It would be a great advantage to all English missionary enterprises.

10. In a word: This reform would tend to make school life more happy and moral, school work more useful and extensive, literary products and efforts less expensive, and therefore general learning more advanced and profound. And in the great rivalry of European and Asiatic powers, which is becoming keener and keener from year to year, it would give the English races the critical preponderance, as admitted by Grimm, which would determine the ultimate universality of their language, as well as their supremacy in commerce, adventure and arms.

Next I may be asked: "Why have we not this spelling reform already, when its advantages are so great, and the array of names in its favor so authoritative?" I would answer: For more than one reason. It has not been brought to the notice of

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