

alized vowels as they do not occur in our speech. I and e are given Italian values, as in our words *machine* and *they*. The vowel corresponding to that in *father* is represented by A, while a is used for a sound between (as we suppose) that in *father* and that in *fat*, but nearer the later. The vowel in *mai re* is denoted by æ. Close o is represented by o, while open o has a turned c (o). For the first vowel in *méchant*, called mixt, an optional sign (E) is used. For the vowel in *peur*, œ is used. This is satisfactory to us. We take the sound to be practically the same as German ö, and probably the same as is said to be given in our words, *corn*, *mercy*, *bird*, etc., by many speakers. To French u, about the same as German ü, but not a cosmopolitan sound, is given good old letter u, thus taking a Roman letter to represent a sound not in Italian nor in general use—a bad affair. We are not surprised to see Dormer, of London, protesting against this in the *Teach r*, and stigmatizing this misuse of u as a parallel heresy to that of using the same sign for vowel in our word *us*, and which has been, or shud be, abandoned for some reason. For peculiar sounds, peculiar shapes shud be found. Let cosmopolitan shapes stand for world-wide sounds. For close u, (as in *nous*, or English *ooze*) u is chosen. If sound assigned u is changed, as it shud be, this will require reconsideration. However, u does harmonize with other letters, and may prove acceptable. Simple unvocalized breth, the so-called "obscure" vowel (which is no vowel tho, but simple breth) is well represented by turned e (e). (') is used as a sign of length, but whether for quantitativ distinction alone, or also to indicate qualitativ differences is not plain. With us, Knudsen uses the apostrophe (') for last mention'd purpos, altho he is quite willing to allow the turned period (') to serve instead.

A TORONTO SOCIETY.—A Toronto Association for united action shud be formed. State associations are impracticable because distance prevents meeting. A printed serial must do state work, going to the individual and not expecting him to come a long journey to a meeting. Town and city associations are quite feasible, and shud be organized all over—especially in centers of activity and tho't, as Toronto may fairly be considered. Unfortunately we can devote no more time to it. It shud be done by some one. Who will move? An association meeting, say, monthly, except during July and August, wud be a center of effort and place for observation and comparison of notes so that a more combined effort cud be made. We hope some one will take trouble to call a meeting which cud be announced in these columns. Now is the time to organize for 1888.

LITERATURE.

SIMPLIFIED GRAMMAR OF JAPANESE, 107 pages, -- mo.

A ROMANIZED JAPANESE READER, 350 pages, 24 mo.

Both of these books were published in 1886 by Trübner & Co., London, and Kelly & Walsh, Yokohama. They were printed in Japan. Both are by B. H. Chamberlain who has taken a prominent part in putting Japanese into Roman dress. They afford us a sample of work done. Such a change of orthography is an entire revolution for the Japanese—a revolution accomplished so fast as to put our slo-coach methods to shame. If the orientals can go so fast, what is the matter with us?

In this application of the Roman alphabet to record a language not hitherto written therein it is of interest to note what values are given different letters. Hitherto, the grandest generalization we have been able to arrive at is:

1. VOWELS AS IN ITALIAN;
2. CONSONANTS AS IN ENGLISH;

so we are glad to find it stated in the *Grammar* that "Vowels are sounded as in Italian; but are always short unless marked with sign of long quantity, thus: do, 'a degree'; dō, 'a hall'; toru, 'to take'; tōru, 'to pass thru'." The only long vowels of common occurrence are o and u." Now, with all due deference to the scholarship displayed in Romanizing Japanese, we regret to see the mistake of using diacritical marks to distinguish these two vowels. It wud have been better to have employed the principle of differentiation, or making a sufficient change in the face of the letter. In other words, in the struggle of diacritics vs. differentiation, the latter shud prevail. Getting new shapes by differentiation is not a novelty. It has gone on in all ages from Cadmus until now. The Cadmean letters were few. They have grown chiefly by differentiation, seldom by diacritics. We believe the principle shud be followed of getting improved shapes by differentiation. In the present case, instead of distinguishing by o and ō, it shud have been by ō and o, ō becoming ø by dropping the breve into the letter. In like manner, distinguish u, as in *voze* by dropping the macron upon u. This avoids the disfigurement produced by diacritics. We hope the Romanization Society (Romaji-Kai) will improve their print by adopting the suggestion. Tōkyō will then become Tokyo; and Kyōtō, Kyoto; (the Tokio and Kioto of our maps).

Another mistake we are very sorry to see is even the sparing introduction of silent letters. They shud be utterly banished. Do not soil the virgin purity of the new language-dress by any such senseless stain, born of traditional derivation, for, as time goes