

# PHONETIC PIONEER.

them, and is followed, like every transgression of the laws of nature, by punishment, as irrevocable as these laws are permanent.

It is, however, at the very commencement of instruction, of intellectual education, that we find the unnatural, the artificial system in grossest form. The child opens a book and reads. "The letters of the alphabet are signs for certain sounds in speech." Its teacher ask it to spell *house*, aitch-o-you-ess-oo. The child has been taught that sounds are the elementary, component parts of words, but here it uses fourteen letters or representatives of sounds to analyze a word which really has but three, and if it analyzes the first sound it finds H Aitch - A eye tea sea aitch. Now, if the child is taught that the letters of the alphabet are signs for certain sounds in speech and the elements of words, one of two things happens, either it will know what is meant by these terms "sounds" and "elements," or not. If the latter, then instruction is a failure, and if the former, the child is rounded at every "spelling lesson" that it has been taught a *lie*, for the letters of the alphabet, according to this old *unnatural* spelling system, do not represent sounds and are not the elements of words.

The phonetic method, the construction of words by their true elementary sounds, should be commenced with, instead of the mechanical a-bee-see-spelling-system, by which so much valuable time is lost.

We cannot tell what influence upon the intellectual and moral hygiene of children this unnatural system of spelling may have and has had. It continually calls things by their wrong name: nearly every letter of the alphabet is made a cheat, while every word forms a hiding place for nearly as many lies as it has letters. If the child is thus early taught to think one thing and say another, is it not probable that some of that habit will remain always, after a boy has "ess-pea-ee-el-ee-dee" his way through school for six or eight years? At any rate, as the end of all knowledge which education can give is *truth*, would it not be well to start *truthfully* in spirit and form?

## Phonography in the Philadelphia High School.

On Saturday afternoon a meeting of the High School Committee was held at the rooms, Sixth and Adelphi streets, with the object of making some investigation into the propriety of reducing the time now allotted to the study of phonography in the Central High School, out of concerning that study entirely. Messrs. Homage, Smith, Adams, Matcham, and Riche were present. Messrs. Townsend Sharpless, Robert Paterson, T. Cooper, editor of the *Christian Instructor*, John J. McElhone and G. A. Townsend, of *The Press*, and Professor Maguire, were present. The

five last named were present to testify to the importance of the study and the necessity of its continuance. Mr Cooper exhibited copies of two newspapers, the manuscript copy of which was, he stated, written in phonography and set in type from the same by phonographic compositors. Mr Sharpless recapitulated a number of interesting cases wherein penitentiary convicts had learned the art, and gone out into the world to practise it. He had visited Isaac Pitman, the author of the system, whose brother, Benn Pitman, resides at Cincinnati. Isaac Pitman had gone thro' Walker's Dictionary three successive times, with a view to obtaining all the phonetic sounds in the language. His system was philosophic, and calculated in the fullest manner to combine rapidity, comprehensiveness, and elegance. The art needed diffusion to make it a desideratum, and public institutions should be the primary means of making it known.

Mr. McElhone stated that most of the reporters for Congress were High School graduates. In replying to a remark that the art was forgotten as soon as acquired, he said that on one occasion, after traveling abroad for seven months, he returned to Washington, having been without practice in the interim, and followed a fluent speaker with the greatest ease.

Prof. Maguire was anxious to confine Phonography to a term for each High School class, and to teach the same only the last quarter of each hour set apart for it. The matter will be considered by the committee. — *Philadelphia Press*.

## A Rough-and-Ready Reporter.

I was for years prejudiced against Phonography and the Phonetic movement. This prejudice arose from my own indolence and ignorance. I had bungled at stenography for years, and had been taught Templeton's system of shorthand by a gentleman of literary eminence connected with the metropolitan press. It was little utility to me as a commercial or a literary auxiliary. About eighteen months ago, I attended a series of public meetings and lectures in a town in the west of England, and amused myself by taking notes for the press. One evening, a queer looking individual came into the meeting and seated himself beside me near the platform. He took a book out of his pocket and placed it on his knee, and commenced sharpening his pencil. I looked at the man from head to foot. His hat was dingy and shabby, his coat was old and threadbare, and his trousers and shoes appeared as if he had been all his life in a heap of mortar. The lecturer commenced his oration and my companion appeared to catch his words with rapidity and ease. He appeared to me either a farm laborer or a mason's laborer. I felt

convinced that the honest fellow was my superior because he had adopted a perfect and rational system of stenography. I was placed in an invidious position, and the people stared at us in such a manner that I closed my book perfectly disconcerted. He however pursued his task with perfect calmness and indifference. At the close of the lecture, I entered into conversation with the noble fellow. I inquired, "Whose system do you write?" He replied "Isaac Pitman's." I felt perfectly ashamed of myself that I had not acquired the system. I said, "I am resolved to abandon the old bungling system, and to learn your system." He honestly confessed that he was not a very fast writer. He wrote in the reporting style and could not exceed 120 words per minute. He walked away with a verbatim report of a lecture delivered by the talented son of an eminent bishop. I felt that this was a glorious achievement for a laboring man after the toils of the day. When I took a melancholy retrospect of the time I had wasted, I almost wept. I resolved to learn Phonography. It is a pleasing and a glorious system, and I only regret that I had not met with the mason's laborer ten years before. — *From the (English) Phonetic Journal*.

Editor of *The Crisis*, Indiana, says: "This beautiful art appears to be extending itself widely. We have used it entirely for the last six months; every word has been put into type from Phonographic manuscript during this time, and with no increase of blunders in the proof sheet. It is what it claims to be, a perfectly legible system of writing, combining ease and accuracy. The time is fast coming when those unacquainted with Phonography will be behind the age."

## CATALOGUE.

American Manual, 75c. Pitman's Manual 75c. Phonographic Copybook, 25c. Hand Book of Standard Phonography, \$1.50. Pitman's New Phonographic Reader, 30c. The Teacher, \$1.15c. Phonographic Chart, \$1. Phon. Pencils, 15c. Reporting Paper in books of from one to five quires, 15c single, 5 quires, 75c. Phon. Note Paper (small size) per quire, 20 cts. Reporting Covers, with 2 quires of Rep. Paper enclosed, 75c. Phon. Envelopes, per package, 20c. Phon. Magazines, each 10c. Graham's Standard Phonographic Reader, 87½ cts. Graham's Synopsis of Phonography, 25c. Biography of Dr. Stone, in phonography, 25c. Phonographic Numerals, 20c. Graham's Brief Long hand, 50c. Benn. Pitman's new Phonographic Instructor, 30c. Graham's Phonographic Gold Pen, \$2— with silver extension holder, \$3. Graham's Second Standard Phonographic Reader, \$1.15. Pitman's Reporter's Companion, \$1.00.