

## AMERICAN PRONUNCIATION.

A very erroneous impression prevails generally in this country [Britain] as to the manner in which English is spoken in United States. This has arisen in some degree from the circumstance that travelers have dwelt upon and exaggerated such peculiarities of language as have come under observation in various parts of the Union, but also in great measure from the fact that in English novels and dramas in which an American figure—no matter whether the character depicted be represented as a man of good social position and, presumably, fair education, or not—he is made to express himself in a dialect happily combining the peculiarities of speech of every section of the country from Maine to Texas. With the exception of the late Mr. Anthony Trollope's *American Senator*, I cannot recall to mind a single work of fiction in which this is not the case. Take, for instance, those portions of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, the scenes of which are laid in the United States; Richard Fairfield, in Bulwer's *My Novel*; the Colonel, in Sever's *One of Them*; Fällalove, in Chas. Read's *Very Hard Cash*; the younger Fenton in Yates' *Black Sheep*; or the American traveler, in *Mugby Junction*—in each and every instance the result is to convey a most erroneous idea as to the manner in which our common tongue is ordinarily spoken in U. S.

It is the same on the stage. The dialect in which Americans are usually made to express themselves in English Dramas is as incorrect and absurd as was the language put in the mouths of their Irish characters by the playwrights of the 18th century.

As a matter of fact, the speech of educated Americans differs but little from that of the same class in Great Britain; whilst, as regards the great bulk of people in U. S. there can be no question but that they speak purer and more idiomatic English than do the masses here [in Britain.] In every State of the Union the language of the inhabitants can be understood without the slightest difficulty. This is more than can be said of the dialects of the peasantry in various parts of England, these being in many instances unintelligible to a stranger. Again, the fluency of language possessed by Americans, even in the humblest ranks of life, forms a marked contrast to the poverty of speech of the same class in this country, where, as an eminent philologist has declared, a very considerable proportion of the agricultural population habitually make use of a vocabulary not exceeding 300 words.—*Chambers' Journal*.

FRANCE has a S. R. A. form; Treasurer, M. Coudat, 30 rue de Grenelle, Paris. Like the rest of those devoted to a Simplification of Spelling it will move on three lines as we do, viz., 1st. Scientific Study of Speech

Sounds; 2d. Application of a part of the results so obtained for school purposes; 3d. A very slight amelioration of current orthography, or so fast only as it will be accepted. These lines may be called the Scientific, Educational and Popular lines. The following Five Rules are already promulgated as a first instalment for popular use in France:

- 1° Supprimer l'h muette: *onneur, théâtre.*
- 2° Ecrire *f* pour *ph*: *philozofe, féniex.*
- 3° Ecrire *i* pour *y* employé pour un seul *i*: *analize oxijéne.*
- 4° Dans le corps des mots, remplacer *ç*, *c* doux et *t* doux par *s* ou *ss*, *g* doux par *j*, *s* doux par *z*: *masson, acsion, venjanse, maizon.*
- 5° Remplacer *x* par *s* comme marque du pluriel: *chevaus, bestiaus.*

## STUMBLING BLOKS.

The following list of words was "given out" to the applicants for admission into the New York City Normal School, and although apparently not difficult, they proved very "bl" stumbling bloks:

Aberration,	Embarrass,	Oscillation,
Aquiesce,	Felzn,	Parish,
Applaud,	Fresco,	Palace,
Afghanistan,	Gauge,	Panama,
Bosphorus,	Hyacinth,	Pusillanimous,
Balance,	Humilal,	Quincy,
Ballast,	Inseparable,	Rarefy,
Belligerent,	Jocular,	Recollect,
Benjamin,	Lattice,	Reuben,
Cerements,	Lettuce,	Seize,
Correlation,	Militia,	Siege,
Coralline,	Negotiate,	Tyranny,
Defamation,	Omniscient,	Vaccination,
Delegation,		Vacillation.

—There are less than twenty monosyllables in our language, and about 400 words of two or more syllables, some of them of frequent occurrence, that contain a short vowel and yet end in a final silent *e*—the sign of a long vowel. Who would be injured if the final *e* were dropped and these words were thus reduced to order? The monosyllables are "have, are, bade (did bid), sparse, twelve, were, give, live, niche, serve, nerve, terse, verse, gone, shone, solve, bronze." The disyllables, etc., are such words as "active, motive," about 400 ending in *ive*, and a few with other terminations, as "doctrine, hypocrite, opposite," etc. Let these words be printed *hav, ar, giv, liv, activ, doctrin, oposit*, etc., as a small instalment towards a true orthography, and readers will ask for another instalment.—*Pitman*.

—The word *no* might be spelled in the following twenty ways, according to the examples given below:

Noh, nowe, hau, naut, new, nol, non, nough, Oh! owe, hauteur, hautboy, sew, folk, mould, dough, nôt, noô, noe, nock, noa, nos, depôt, brooch, foc, Cockburn, coat, Grosvenor, now, naoh, nwo, neo, neau, nog, know, Pharaoh, sword, yeoman, beau, oglio.

—Why do we omit the *e* from *wholly* (*whole-ly*) and yet retain it in *solely*, a word similarly formed?