

very few of his suggestions commended themselves to the masses even in America.

The modern spelling reform movement really began with the labors of Mr. A. *J. Ellis, who is still facile *princeps* amongst English phonologists, and of Mr. Isaac Pitman, the well-known inventor of a phonographic short-hand alphabet which in a more or less modified form is used by nearly all stenographic writers of the English language. Each of these men constructed an enlarged and improved English alphabet, and their example has been followed by dozens of other phonologists, the latest being the one used to indicate the pronunciation of words in the "New English Dictionary" now in process of production under the editorship of Dr. J. A. H. Murray, and the auspices of the Philological Society of England. For many years the labors of Mr. Pitman as a practical philanthropist, and of Mr. Ellis as a scholarly phonologist did apparently very little to promote the cause of spelling reform. The philologists objected on etymological grounds to proposed changes in the forms of words, but at last the Philological Society was induced in 1869 to investigate the matter. Eminent scholars, like Professors Max-Mueller, Skeat, and Sayce, Mr. Sweet, Dr. Morris, Dr. Earle, Dr. Murray, and Dr. Angus, warmly espoused the cause. Committees were appointed from time to time with instructions to prepare schemes, only to find them declined alike by the society and the public. Meanwhile the question of spelling reform was taken up seriously and enthusiastically in the United States, and encouraged by the success of the American philologists, the Philological Society in 1880 resumed consideration of the subject, and in the following year published a pamphlet entitled "Partial Corrections of English spellings approved of by the Philological Society." This little treatise is a most valuable contribution to the literature of spelling reform, as it deals not merely with the general scientific principles on which reform should proceed, but gives a detailed phonological and etymological account of the proposed changes, and adds a list of about 300 special words, the improved forms of which are recommended for immediate introduction.

The American Philological Association took up the question of spelling reform in 1874, and in the following year a committee was appointed with instructions to report on the whole subject, and to prepare and print for general circulation a list of words "in which the spelling might be changed by dropping silent letters and otherwise, so as to make them better conform to the analogies of the language and draw them nearer to our sister languages and to a general alphabet, and yet leave them recognizable by common readers." The report presented by this Committee in 1876, is so complete a statement of the case for spelling reform and is at the same time so brief, that it seems expedient to quote it in its entirety:

1. The true and sole office of alphabetic writing is faithfully and intelligibly to represent spoken speech. So-called "historical" orthography is only a concession to the weakness of prejudice.