

symbol remains in *slaughter*; has found a substitute in *laugh*, and seems to be trying to escape in at least three directions in the proper name *McLaughlin*, in which the *ugh* takes the force of *ck*, *f* or *w*, according to family tradition or individual fancy. He will easily understand that the vowel sounds are even more unstable than those of the consonants, and will learn with interest that some of the vowels in our English alphabet have almost ceased to represent their original sounds.

We have some English words of varied spelling. This means that there are two or more forms equally right—not that there is no right way; and the high school student, when he finds that there were more cases of unsettled orthography in olden times, should not forget that this was, nevertheless, in some measure always true. There always was, as there is now, some one or more than one right way of spelling a word. That was, and that is, according to good usage. It so happened that our earliest printed books were put in type by foreign workmen who did not understand English, and who merely did the best they could with the words of an unknown tongue. The results must have seemed quite as wildly erratic to English scholars of that day as they do to us; though incorrect spelling was more pardonable then than now, as usage was not so well established. Since the work of these men was more or less received as standard authority by later printers, they have been accused of giving us all the irregularities of spelling that belonged to us at that time, and a few more. They are held responsible for some few silent letters which never had any meaning where they stand. From them we get *oz.* for *ounce*, and *viz.* for *videlicet*, because the *z* was much like the abbreviation mark in manuscript; and also, perhaps, because they were accustomed to making use of it in the abbreviation of patronymics in their own language, as *Corsz* for *Corssen*. We have also from them *ye* for *the*, because the peculiar English character nearly resembling *y* in form, but equivalent to *th*, was wanting in the fonts of type which they had brought with them. It is, of course, because of this typographical makeshift that ignorant people to-day, when they see *ye* for *the*, suppose the work should be pronounced as if *y* were the right letter.

But the written word is a word after all, and as such is subject to the changes which words undergo in all living languages. The high school pupil's discovery, that the written word stands for the word spoken, like many another discovery he will make,

is only half right. We have to some extent a double language, of which our silent letters and other irregularities of spelling are sufficient evidence. However firmly we may hold to old forms, we can, in the end, no more successfully resist changes in the written word than in the spoken word. When either a new pronunciation or a new spelling has come to be generally adopted by the best speakers or the best writers, then it is right, and we must so accept it. Shall we, then, listen to the suggestion that we abolish at once all the old and long approved irregularities in the spelling of familiar words—the polite language of books—and hereafter spell by sound; or that we adopt the half-way measures of the advocates of simplified spelling? This is a matter which we cannot settle in the schools. We can only give our pupils the old, safe rule:

Be not the first by whom the new is tried,  
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

For myself, without wishing to urge my opinion upon others, I think we should as much as possible resist the change, except in cases where a simplified spelling means a return to an older form. Then, perhaps, the old is better. But the teacher should in all cases be the judge of what is right, or of what is permissible. Individual liberty does not begin in the high school grades, as pupils are too ready to assume. A standard form, a strict requirement of adherence to that standard, and very frequent reminders of the great importance of knowing how to spell correctly, are the chief requisites in the teaching of spelling in the high school.

#### Punctuality.

The most obvious method of teaching punctuality is sometimes ignored. That is, let the teacher set the example by being punctual herself. We do not mean that she should come to school at the proper time—of course, she does that—but that every recitation begins exactly on time, that change of classes be managed quickly and promptly, that time from one recitation be not stolen from another. When the programme for the day has once been arranged, see that the work begins promptly, not five or six minutes after the schedule time. Let each recitation begin on the minute, insist upon instant obedience to signals, and do not take time from the intermission for recitations or reproofing the class. You will soon find that your pupils are unconsciously growing more prompt and attentive, and also that there is time for everything to the teacher who knows how to economize the minutes. —*Exchange.*