

The Herald.

DEVOTED TO PRONUNCIATION AND AMENDED SPELLING.

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OPINIONS OF EMINENT MEN.

(Continued from pages 87, 101, 107, 111, 115.)

No one who has studied even superficially the English language will stand up for present orthography as a thing creditable in itself. He may accept it as a burden of which he sees no present way of getting rid; but that is something altogether different from taking pride in it as an object worthy of regard. There is certainly nothing more contemptible than our present spelling, unless it be the reasons usually given for clinging to it.—PROF. T. R. LOUNSBURY, in vol. iii, p. 265, of *Studies in Chaucer*.

A curious illustration of American books impinging on the old land is seen in English discussions of and protests against American spelling, or, as we say, American reforms in spelling. So many books are now printed on this side and the supply for Britain struck off from the same plates, for British publishers simply to put covers and imprint on, that American spelling invades the land. Recent spicy correspondence in the London *Times* ended by the British publisher held guilty of this practice saying he thought it improbable that 70 millions of English-speaking people in America were to be ruled by 37 millions in Britain very long, even as to language. He is quite right, fully justified by Horace, who told his generation that custom determined the correct in language. The *Century* dictionary made some valuable changes; one still newer goes farther. It spells *sulfur* s-u-l-f-u-r. Who gets rid of a *ph* performs a service to the English-speaking race. Sulfur let it be, dear old motherland to the contrary notwithstanding. Most dear old mothers have occasion to stand agast with uplifted hands at their daughters, but the world must move on in spite of old ladies' protestations.—ANDREW CARNEGIE in *Triumphant Democracy* (1898, p. 208).

NEWS-NOTES AND COMMENTS.

—Do *port* and *thought* rime? On this, E. Bach (*Saturday Review*, 7 Nov., p. 579) quotes a Mrs Wood who (anent the rimes nursed first | palm arm | morn dawn) says they "fall under the ban of critical rules" adding "a forener wud suppose l in palm and r in arm slightly pronounced, but both are equally silent, merely serving to

broaden the vowel before. In standard modern English r before a consonant is never pronounced and to pretend that it is is a useless fiction."

—The literary world's verdict is that a dropt r still lies "under the ban of critical rules" in rime, the optional in speech. No first-class poet drops r any more than h. Both are tabooed by acknowledged models. Writers of doggerel still afflict us with rimes like this:

O Niagara, Niagara,

You're a stagerer, a stagerer!

and, 25 years ago, when Cetewayo and Lobengula were native chiefs in South Africa, we endured:

Oh, King Lobengula

Is a jolly old ruler!

And a jolly old ruler is he.

—In distributing literature an important consideration is postage. Four years ago, after repeated refusals, THE HERALD was granted postal rates common to quarterlies, namely, a cent a pound. This rate carries to U. S., British Isles, New Zealand and some other colonies, and is likely, in time, to be made general throughout the empire.

—To the U. S. this postal rate has long prevailed. Within a few months only has it been extended to British Isles, etc. Moral: Canada is the best distributing center (for this and other reasons) in the English-speaking world.

—But a limited number of sample copies, however, can be sent so cheaply. Market copies must be prepaid a half cent per ounce. Those who like to prepay subscriptions for persons specified can do so at a liberal rate in larger numbers. Such prepayment is essential to qualify under postal rates. It remains for anyone overflowing with zeal to circulate THE HERALD in greater profusion, not cry out for others to do so. Here is a good opportunity for your dollars. The number of dollars will be a measure of your zeal.

—Prof. Lounsbury's opinion in the column preceding is sufficiently plain and decided. Filologists the world over express opinions of like tenor. Not one with a reputation to lose is opposed to any reasonable proposal for amending our spelling.

—Horace's opinion that custom rules in language is given in column preceding. Custom has parallel power in morals. A recent writer, as quoted below, has shown that this fact is fundamental, "the very heart of Christian theology." Readers are asked to note the market similarity, in this respect, as herein illustrated, between ethical and linguistic questions.

—[Greek] *dikn*, the fundamental word from which we must start, originally signified custom usage, way. Hence arose its meaning of right [or justice] considered as established usage. By a farther suggestion it denotes the process of law or lawsuit, by which legal rights are determined, and then the result of the lawsuit in the form of punishment or satisfaction. . . . *Dikaios* means 'conformity to right,' and carries with it implicitly a reference to a standard. This