

The Herald.

DEVOTED TO PRONUNCIATION AND AMENDED SPELLING.

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GOVERNMENT *VERSUS* ACADEMY.

(Amendment in French Spelling cont'd from p. 159.)

Unfortunately the Academy had not been consulted. It was up in arms at once. Jeremiads were heard about ruin impending over the sacred tongue of Boileau and Racine if mere outsiders—politicians at that—were to be allowed to work their wicked will. The minister of Education had his hands strengthened by general approval. The Commission was instructed to arrange a compromise. We shall see if the Academy accepts its report with inevitable grumbling.

Filology has to move with the times. It is vain to attempt by academic bulwarks to oppose natural evolution in a living tongue. Language tends to simplify itself, and succeeds, save in so far as the deliberate act of academic authorities restrains. A general tendency among educated classes withstands this simplification—really due to the deplorable habit of reading, manifested much less in conversation than in writing. We talk simpler, less grammatically, than we write.

In England we have to manage these things for ourselves—printers and schoolmasters follow the crowd. Once it was the same in France. Malherbe, whom the French deify, sent inquirers about French words to the street-porters at Port au Foin, saying they were his masters in language. Since the Academy imposed itself on the nation, simplification has been less easy—else unnecessary complications of genders and eccentricities of spelling would have disappeared long ago. Yet German is not free from these troubles, and needed the masterful Kaiser's authority to sanction reforms.

Alteration in the language of great and beloved writers is a little painful. That is why in these days of the printing press, right languages alter slowly. We can still read Shakespeare and Milton with perfect comprehension, though we might not understand them in the street. "Down hill too fast needs the drag," but this French Government reform quite accords with the natural evolution of language. If the Academy continues to obstruct—well, "So much the worse for the cow."

—This asks *you* to subscribe and so help to reach the circulation aimed at—10,000.

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION.

NATIONAL

The Official Gazette (e of the U. S. Patent Office (800 to 1000 pages weekly) gives abstracts and announcements of 400 to 600 patents granted weekly. Chemic terms appear as recommended by Association for Advancement of Science. Examples from a recent issue: *oxid, sulfid, sulfate, chlorid.*

STATE

In N. Y. state, education is administered by a Commissioner and Board of Regents at Albany. Thrice a year uniform examination papers, covering over fifty subjects including spelling, are sent simultaneously to all public and registered private (mostly shorthand and business) schools of academic grade. Returns go to Albany for final inspection and award. Promotion is based largely on these reports, and Regents certificates are accepted in lieu of examination by nearly all schools and colleges in this and many other states. Mr Melvil Dewey was long secretary of Regents:—then, *program, hight*, and others were mandatory; now, *The Century* dictionary is used, but spellings in any good dictionary [that is, Preferred Spellings] are accepted. So, N. Y. state puts no obstacle to reform. E. T.

NEWS-NOTES AND COMMENTS.

—A Message for 1906: The world will pause to heed too spelling reform until reformers strive to agree on the strict line of natuur rather than too disagree on the endless line of art.—Henry Woollen, Ipswich, England.

—A HERALD Greeting: Wun krowded our ov industrius life iz wurth an aje without a name. With hartiest Greetingz and Best Wishes for a Happy Krismas and a Joyus New Year, from Mr and Mrs H. Drummond, Laburnum Hous, Hetton-le-Hole. Krismas, 1905.

—Mr G. W. Wishard, New York, pays to have two copies of THE HERALD sent during 1906 to all reading-rooms of Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. in N. Y. city and Brooklyn. 28 in number. Who will do likewise? Who will keep an eye on these reading-rooms thruout the year as he does to see that the little mission finds place where it can be seen and do its work? To publish without fulfilment of purpose is Love's Labor Lost—"no money in it."

—The International Congress of Americanists meets biennially (New York, 1902; Stuttgart, 1904), and this year in Quebec city, 10 to 15th Sept. Dr N. E. Dionne, librarian of the legislative assembly at Quebec, is general secretary. Mem-