

FRENCH SPELLING REFORM.

The French Academy has at length given its assent to a scheme for the reform of French spelling (says a *Daily News* telegram). The Duc d'Aumale was in favour of the old spelling, M. Greard (rector of the university) in favour of the new. The new rules of spelling will shortly appear in a booklet issued by the Academy with accompanying commentaries. Among the new alterations submitted to public approval are the suppression of the hyphen in compound words and the reduction to symmetry of regular plurals. The addition of the "s" is to be henceforth the uniform sign of this number. Thus voices will be spelt "vois" instead of "voix." "Paragraph" will become in the plural "alinea" instead of as now "alinea."

JAPANESE METEOROLOGY.

Despite the humid climate of Japan, rheumatism is very rare among the natives, which is probably due to the practice of daily hot bathing.

The meteorology of Japan is exceedingly peculiar and of exceptional interest. As particular influences in the process of acclimatization may be mentioned, lessened, eliminatory activity of the lungs, increased activity of the skin, diminished cardiac circulatory power. A prolonged residence in the Japanese climate is productive of general physical relaxation, with increased susceptibility to cold. After a two years' residence in Japan, Europeans feel the necessity of wearing more substantial winter clothing, as the climate seems to have become harsher since the beginning of their sojourn. Any foreigner who permanently resides there and wishes to feel at ease must resort to the hot bathing of the natives; being in Japan, he must do as Japanese do. Europeans, on their first arrival, are very prone to rheumatism, and even perfected acclimatization does not do away with that propensity. The hot-bath habit is singularly favourable to perfect acclimatization; it and also the customary and frequent hot tea, mitigates the depressive influence of the summer kakké months, the wet season of June, July and August. Strange to say, in their national disease, beriberi, there is an entire absence of perspiration; these patients perspire only in their last agony. One should think, after that, that the Japanese would consider baths as remedial in kakké. Strange to say, it is not so; they consider it only as an essential and, for them, very pleasant part of the toilet.

In kakké the popular verdict is, and has always been, that it is detrimental. The altitudinal is their most efficient treatment. Such a treatment is always, at least in our European and American experience, a dry one; dry air. It is not so in Japan; in their mountains, even as high as 3,000 feet above the sea level, you will find an increase of humidity, due to the precipitation from the volcano peaks. Even in this heavy humidity, where they are endeavouring to cure a disease in which perspiration is suppressed, they do not give to the hot baths which are used there as much, but not more than in other not sanitary places, credit for any good accruing to the patients. And, in fact, if hot bathing contributed to the cure, such an influence would be observed at the sea-level as well as in high altitudes.

Of course, I cannot treat the question expressed here. Let me only say that, in my opinion, humidity has nothing to do, directly at least, with beriberi; it is not a climatic rheumatism. Its cause is the action of a carbonic poison in the blood and that poison cannot be eliminated through the influence of hot-water. Hot bathing, as I said, has nothing to do with it, either directly or indirectly. Indirectly humidity has, because it keeps the carbonic gases together and prevents their dispersion. The oxydizing influence of the pure air of the mountain heights has everything to do with the cure. —Albert S. Ashmead, M.D., in Science.

Duty is one and invariable. It requires no impossibilities, nor can it ever be disregarded with impunity. —Thoreau.

PUBLIC OPINION.

The Montreal Gazette: Mr. Mercier has been on a visit to Washington. According to an interview in the Chicago Herald his visit was not an exclusively private trip. He went upon important business, which may be known some day. He saw President Cleveland and Secretary Gresham and Mr. Gresham's secretary; but he is mysteriously dark as to what transpired between them. Perhaps the ex-premier is looking to Washington for the money to help his friend Laurier in the next election which, last election, he raised by means made public by the various royal commissions which delved into the scandals of his administration.

There were 3,356 evictions in New York city last month. The coming Irish Legislature, the first thing it does, should pass a resolution of sympathy with the victims of this wholesale casting into the street of unfortunates who will not or cannot pay their rent. American Legislatures have passed resolutions of sympathy for the objects of Irish evictions who did not number as many in a year as this one American city provides in a month.

The London Free Press: Rev. J. W. Pedley, in conversation with a Winnipeg Tribune reporter, on his recent arrival there, said the city of Vancouver, commercially, was in a healthy condition. A number of new buildings are in course of erection, and the population is increasing, there being very few empty houses in the place. The corporation is proceeding with considerable improvements, including asphalt pavements, and a new line of railway was being constructed. The past month was good, one commission man having informed him that the volume of business was the best experienced for a lengthened period. The shipping interest of Vancouver is going to be of immense proportions, there being a number of the larger ocean craft constantly at the wharfs loading for the foreign markets. While the passenger traffic to and from China was not as large as anticipated, the development of trade between the two countries was wonderful, and the quantity of freight carried was something enormous. All were now looking to the cultivation of trade relations with Australia and this, it is believed, will be a great factor in the development of the several industries and resources of the province.

The Morning Chronicle, Quebec: Mr. Herbert Gardner, President of the Imperial Board of Agriculture, has notified Sir Charles Tupper's office that the British Government must decline the invitation of the Canadian authorities to institute an independent enquiry respecting the existence of pleuro-pneumonia in Canada. The same cable from which the above is drawn, however, states that Mr. Gardner submits certain suggestions in connection with any further enquiries that the Government of Canada may make in the districts from which the suspected animals came. The fact is simply this, our animals are not deemed healthy. The Imperial authorities have decided against them. The Imperial ports are closed against Canadian cattle, and pig-headed John Bull won't change his mind until he gets ready. In the meantime, Sir John Leng, the member for Dundee, says that he is still not without hope for a cancellation of the schedule for the season of 1894. He regards this as quite probable, if the Canadian cattle landed till the end of the present season prove to be free from the much dreaded disease. Towards this end, he says, the Scottish seaboard interests will continue to agitate. He states, however, that the inland Scotch farmers' clubs are now passing resolutions which are brought to the notice of the Imperial Board of Agriculture, insisting upon that body to keep closed, what these farmers call "the known gateway of the disease."

The prosperity of a country depends, not on the abundance of its revenues, nor on the strength of its fortifications, nor on the beauty of its public buildings; but it consists in the number of its cultivated citizens, in its men of education, enlightenment and character. —Luther.

THE SCREW-PROPELLER.

The invention of the screw-propeller is claimed for several persons, and lately the tenacity of the birth of Joseph Hessel, who is credited by the Austrians with its invention, was celebrated in Austria by the unveiling of a monument at Mariabrunn, where he lived when a student of forestry, by the inauguration of memorial tablets in the various towns in which he stayed, and by a great commemorative festival around his statue in front of the Polytechnic Institute in Vienna. The latter was erected in 1863, six years after he had died, in poverty and neglect, at an inn at Lebach. His claim to priority in the invention of the screw-propeller is disputed in England and elsewhere, but in Vienna it is supposed to be well established by various documents and proofs which have just been published. Hessel is said to have described his idea of using the Archimedian screw for the propulsion of ships as early as 1812. Some Americans assert that the first use of the screw-propeller was by Stevens, of Hoboken, who tried twin-bladed screws in 1804. The use of the screw was, however, suggested by many writers, even by Hooke as early as 1680. —English Mechanic.

MUSICAL DOGS.

A wonderful story of a French musician, is related by persons who profess to have been acquainted with him, and to have seen him in attendance on musical performances. He was a dog, and his name in public was Parade; whether he had a different name at home was never known. At the beginning of the Revolution, he went every day to the military parade in front of the Tuilleries Palace. He marched with the musicians, halted with them, listened knowingly to their performances, and after the parade disappeared, to return promptly at parade time the next day.

Gradually the musicians became attached to this devoted listener. They named him Parade, and one or another of them always invited him to dinner. He accepted the invitations, and was a pleasant guest. It was discovered that after dinner he always attended the theatre, where he seated himself calmly in a corner of the orchestra, and listened calmly to the music.

If a new piece was played, he noticed it instantly, and paid the strictest attention. If the piece had fine, melodious passages, he showed his joy to the pleasure of his doggyish ability; but if the piece was ordinary and uninteresting, he yawned, stared about the theatre, and unobtrusively expressed his disapproval.

Another very curious story of a musician's dog, is told of a London organ grinder's dog. The organ grinder was blind and aged, and the dog used to lead him about. One night, after a hard day's work, the old man and his faithful companion lay down to sleep with the organ beside them. They slept soundly, and when they awoke the organ was gone.

They were in despair. But the dog of earning a living was gone. The dog led the old man through the streets where he had been accustomed to play, and persons who had given him alms before continued to befriend him, so that the loss of the organ proved not so bad after all.

Weeks went by. One day the old man heard a hand organ played a few feet from him. It reminded him of his lost instrument, but he paid no special attention to it. Hand organs were common in London, and he heard them often.

Not so the dog. He showed signs of great excitement, barked violently, and led his master in the direction of the organ.

He sprang at the robber's throat, dragged him away from the stolen organ, and led his master eagerly up to him with expressions of recognition and delight. —Youth's Companion.

Self-made men are most always apt to be a little too proud of the job. —H. W. Shaw.