

difference. The existing system in Germany had done excellent work, and no change was considered necessary: even the high opinion of Helmholtz, the great physicist, did not help to give the new system a footing. Recently, however, a change has become visible. Many converts have been made among German musicians, professional and amateur; and the system is now practised in quite a number of high schools throughout the Empire. The last striking step is the formation of a Tonic Sol-Fa League (Tonika-Do Bund) in Hannover for the purpose of instituting courses of instruction, examinations, etc., and generally for spreading information in reference to the "new" method. (From "The Education Gazette", Capetown, Thursday, 29th April, 1909.)

SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.

As mentioned in a former JOURNAL, instruction in spelling should regularly follow the usage of the books prescribed for the pupils' use. It happens, however, that the orthography of the reader and spelling-book is not identical with that of certain other text-books prescribed in the public school. Innovations of spelling have crept in; for example, in the words *center*, *hight*, *labor*, *traveler*, which the teacher will note as variant forms gradually supplanting the more cumbrous spellings. Notwithstanding that these forms are not found in the school readers, the teacher must not mark them as incorrect when used by the pupil; neither should he mark as incorrect any of the forms recommended by the simplified Spelling Board, if the pupil's use of these be not forbidden by his parents or guardians. As these spellings are being used to an increasing extent by scholars and by the more progressive newspapers, it would be gross intolerance on the part of the teacher to penalize their use. They come to us with the highest philological authority, and they further commend themselves to us as the forms best calculated to aid in bringing about a gradual uniformity and consistency in English orthography.

This is exactly the position taken more than a quarter-century ago by the Department of Public Instruction of France, and ever since unwaveringly held. Lately, the scholarly *Academie Francaise*, overcoming its native conservatism, has recognized the validity of the decrees of the Department of Public Instruction and admitted a compromise the effect of which is to give immediately the highest literary sanction to usages hitherto condemned by pedantic scholars, and to provide a powerful stimulus to the work of further reform in the spelling of a language already greatly superior to our own in respect of harmony between the spoken and the written word.

Let it be understood that nothing said here should be taken as an encouragement to reformers to purposelessly irritate those who cling to antiquity. The follower of traditional usage may have no reason to offer for his choice other than that it is ancient custom. He may protest that time and failing energy do not permit his consideration of the proposals of the reformer. He may even urge that it is a good thing for children to have to toil in par-