

## A STANDARD SPEECH.

[TRANSLATION].

Defenders of traditional spelling assert that spelling by sound cannot be systemized because it would be impossible to preserve uniformity of pronunciation with wide difference in speech. They do not consider that every country has a cultivated, a scholarly [standard] language; and this is the language referred to in speaking of writing by sound, and not dialects, nor business talk. The unavoidable, these increasing differences have not been proved insurmountable. The *Fonetic Herald*, published in Port Hope, Canada, in its 19th number (Nov. 1886,) quotes a statement of a fact which decidedly contradicts the aforesaid assertion. It says:

"This is the only great country which has but one language. In England, the Yorkshireman cannot talk with the man from Cornwall. The peasant of the Ligurian Apennines drives his goats home at evening over hills that look down on six provinces, neither of whose dialects he can speak or comprehend. The European railways take the traveler where he hears a score of dialects in a single day. While here, from forests of Maine to the glowing savannas of the great Gulf and far to the Pacific coast, there are a hundred races, but there is only one language."

Australia, too, might be mentioned among them. There we hear the same sounds as in N. America; and this condition will continue for many generations because the general language is more highly valued than the dialects. Probably this will change in course of centuries, but orthography has to take cognizance of the present alone.—Dr. FRICKE, of Wiesbaden, Germany, in *Norden (Prussia) Reform*.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## EXPEDIENTS.

SIR,—In your issue before last you speak of the Jones-Burnz School as "resorting to new expedients;" and you recommend "use of such equivalents as appear common in the old orthography." Now, the Jones-Burnz method of amended spelling has for its basis, and distinguishing characteristic, the principle, that *sounds shall be expressed by the letters and combinations of letters which, in the ordinary spelling, most usually represent those sounds, without any reference to the sounds those characters represent in other languages.* It is this use of Roman letters with reference to English values alone, which keeps the Anglo-American school (as it is termed) separate from most other schemes, and makes it unpopular with linguists; the such use of Roman letters produces a fonetic print which is read without trouble by any person who can read ordinary English. I think Mr. Jones as well as myself would be perfectly willing to admit a few market letters, to take the place of digraphs in certain positions where it might be deemed best.

New York.

ELIZA B. BURNZ.

—Mr. McCulla, Brampton, Ont., very sensibly leaves off the useless *gh* often found at the end of the name.

—Division into syllables to show pronunciation is not the same as division to show etymology.—*Melvil Bell*.

—The difficulty of retaining good ends measures their stability when achieved.—*Zenos Clark*.

—Prof. P. Meyer, director of *l'Ecole des Chartes*, Paris, gives his pupils amusing lectures on the absurdities of French Spelling.—*Paris Teacher*.

—A dictionary of London slang and cant, written in German by Heinrich Bauman, has been published in Berlin. The pronunciation is given in a German fonetic system.

—Last year, the Ont. Teachers' Association appointed a committee to report on Amended Spelling. Their report, made this year, at the annual meeting in August, was received and ordered to be printed in minutes. Its discussion is expected at annual meeting next August.

—The reader should not run away with either the impression or conclusion that we endorse every opinion in these columns. We give each "for what it is worth," unless given special editorial commendation. You are at liberty to combat what is wrong. "Prove all things: hold fast what is good."

—Thoughtful educators have repeatedly called attention to the blighting and stultifying influence which spelling has upon the young mind. It is so unvaryingly the child's nature to infer that a certain result will always follow from a given set of antecedent circumstances, when such a result has once been demonstrated to him, that he proverbially needs but one acquaintance with fire to find out that it burns and to conclude that it will do so every time he comes in contact with it. Just as certainly, when he is taught that *t-h-o-u-g-h* stands for *tho*, does he believe that *t-h-r-o-u-g-h* represents *thro*, until his teacher undecives him—or deceives him into believing that it is *thro*. Reason and experience are set at naught and he is thrown back upon mere dogmatic authority. It is so because it is so, whether it is so or not. Is this a form of mental exercise to which we should wish to subject the unfolding intelligence of future free American citizens?—J. B. Howard at Cincinnati Literary Club.

A young man with very marked ptosis,

Once met a sweet girl who sold ptosis,

Said she, "Will you try

Some flowers for your eye?"

But he answered her pleasantly, "Pno, sis."

—N. Y. *Medical Record*.