

adopted in all public schools. Wirtemberg took like cours in 1860, Austria, in 1861; Bavaria, in 1866; but unfortunately different states did not follow the same rules, and various systems of authoritative spelling were growing up. A conference from all German states met in Dresden in 1872. Subsequently, under direction of Prussian Minister of Education, Prof. Von Raumer drew up a scheme, printed privately, sent to the various governments for approval, and submitted to a Ministerial Commission, consisting of Prof. R. and educationalists, a printer, and a publisher. They met in 1876, and approved the proposed scheme, with the modifications. It has not been officially adopted.

"Breitkopf and Hartel with 200 publishers commended Dr. Sanders to propose some rule and a vocabulary of Reformed German. This roused Von Puttkamer, Prussian Minister of Education, who put it into the hands of Dr. Wilmann, and the latter's scheme was made obligatory."

Since 1880 no further official action has been taken, chiefly because Puttkamer's appointment being political he is liable to be ousted on change of ministry, and his successor might undo it if "too radical," so that it is thought better to rest content *pro tem*, with half a loaf rather than have no bread. Besides Bismarck is quite hostile to this as well as the introduction of Roman letters instead of their old Gothic shapes. What has been done has been rather in spite of his opposition—at any rate scarcely with his assent. The indefensible opposition given by senseless prejudice rather helps a good cause ultimately, though it may retard for a time. The further progress has not been sanctioned officially, we need hardly say that there is most active and most scholarly ebullience going on. We hope to give a *resumé* of that in future.

WELSH ORTHOGRAPHY.

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A *Times* commissioner inquiring as to Tithes Agitation in Wales, writing that paper, states that the proportion of literature in the vernacular, published and read by people of Wales, far exceeds the proportion of English literature in demand by English people. This witness is true. The fact has long been known by those acquainted with the Principality, and it has been recognized by Mr. Gladstone in public utterances more than once; but it comes as a revelation to the *Times* and most English readers. For teaching Welsh there is no elaborate machinery of School Boards, aided by local rates and Government grants, with inspection and paraphernalia for teaching English—most imperfectly taught, as is generally admitted, after all. For teaching Welsh there is no organization and no provision, except that for an hour or so on

Sunday voluntary teachers teach children to read. Whence this devouring passion for literature, this universal taste for reading among the Welsh? Various answers may be given, but friends of Spelling Reform will appreciate that it is attributable above all to the phonetic character of Welsh orthography.

Educationists would give almost anything to see this taste for reading universally diffused among the masses in England. To this end efforts of philanthropists have been directed for fifty years, and vast sums expended on elementary education, but, by general consent, the results are far from satisfactory.

In Welsh the name of each letter expresses its sound—how different from English? We hear children taut, "Double you, aitch, eye, see, aitch—which." The Welshman is amused, nay astonished, at such absurdity. Here is the Welsh alphabet with names as taut. Names are identical with sounds as to vowels; sounds of consonants are expressed in the names with a vowel before or after.

Letters.—a, b, c, ch, d, dd, e, f,
Names.—ah, bee, ck, * dee, ed, * eh, ev,*

Letters.—ff, g, ng, h, i, l, ll, m, n,
Names.—ef, eg, eng, hah, ee, el, * em, en,

Letters.—o, p, ph, r, s, t, th, u, w, y.
Names.—oh, pee, fee, er, ess, tee, ith, * oo, uh,

Learning these symbols, which, with very slight exceptions, are invariably associated with the same sounds, is the work of a few hours, and combining letters into syllables and words comes easily with time and practice. The secret is, that attention of both teacher and scholar is released from mechanical art of reading, and, at a very early stage, the child's curiosity is excited as to meaning in what he reads; interest is awakened, and with ability to read, comes desire and taste for reading, and thirst for knowledge, now that the key is mastered. This has created an entire nation of thoughtful readers. Various experiments in teaching phonetic reading in early stages of fonetic movement ought to be conclusive as to advantages of the method, but here in Wales is a proof on a far larger scale, for everybody can read. The Welsh child feels no hesitation as to pronunciation of a strange word. He simply puts the letters together, and there is no uncertainty about it. What a contrast to English!

Even to a stranger to the language, mere reading would present little difficulty, most letters having their prevailing sound in English. *Ch* stands for the guttural sound heard in German. I have often heard it distinctly in Scotland and north of England, in such words as *night*; and even in Cheshire, *Broughton* is precisely *Brochton* among country people. To most, the utterance of the sound is difficult, but *k* is near enough to be intelligible. *Ll* is another difficult sound, but *l*