

ORTHOEPY IN SCHOLLS.—The *Educational Weekly*: “Mispronunciation is so common[!] that it is not looked upon as so glaring a want of education as misspelling, but it is certainly a defect, and is naturally much more easily shown. A man cannot write a letter without showing his education, certainly, but if he has learned his early language faultily he cannot open his mouth without showing his youth; to him, in the matter of speech, evil communications have become bad manners. It is, we presume, with the object of correcting the prevalent provincialisms and dialectic pronunciation that attention is directed to orthoepy in the examinations. Orthoepy cannot be taught like orthography, by written exercises; in the latter, defects arise from not seeing correctly or from not remembering [?why be compelled to remember] what we see, and written exercises remedy this, but in the former, the defects arise from remembering what we hear, and what children have heard a mis can be eradicated only by making them hear what is right. If this is not done, their wrong pronunciation will remain with them throughout life. The requirements of good pronunciation are three—right sounds, their division into syllables, and the proper placing of the accent.”

[Of the statement ‘what children have heard a mis can be eradicated only by making them hear what is right’ we rise to remark that with letters having shapes modified to represent each its own sound correct pronunciation can be learned by sight. Amid ‘cram’ and the general crush of studies this can quietly go on without the tutor’s supervision. What is learned by sight is far more fixed than impression made by the fleeting breath. Hence the general use of black boards in our schools. Horace long ago referred to the faithful eyes (FIDELIBVS OCVLIS) being better than the ears.—Ed]

Even the decidedly conservative *Saturday Review* admits: “We are far from denying the desirableness of some modification of our existing spelling, which is in many respects unsystematic and inconvenient.” Every one will allow that improvement is desirable and readily possible in a few classes of words.

Mr T. R. Vickroy, Ph. D., rites from St. Louis, Mo.: “In the reconstruction of spelling, many things are to be considered and chief among these is to follow the analogy of our present spelling. — What use shall be made of *Aa*? As *a* is the script form, retain it. *a* for Italian *a* as in *awl*. It will make amendment easier to use new letters for uncommon sounds. Our stopt *a*, as in *at*, occurs only in closed accented syllables, as in *cat, fair, care*. It is easier to make ‘*a*’ in accented syllables than to make it in unaccented ones. *Q* is so suitable for *a* in *a/e* that I am astonished that any one should question its place. *E* for *e* in *eel*, *i* for *i* in *isle*, *y* for diphthong *u* when medial, and *o* for broad *a* or *o*, comes so near solving most vowel difficulties, that I see no reason for proposing anything else. *O* for stopt *o* in *not* is good. I am not decided as to *u* which I use for stopt *u* as in *up*. I would prefer *o* for *e, i, or o*, as in *were, fir, work*, but am not decided. I think *au* would fairly represent the diphthong in *ow* or *round*, and *oi* that in *oil*.” [notwithstanding consistency would require *oi* for it?]

Mr Wm H. Orr rites from Toronto: “I have just read your last number through and find every line interesting. I am particularly pleased with the two rules you give. It is wise not to bother the public with too many rules but endeavor to get them familiar with one or two” [and these the short and simple yet searching or far-reaching and ready of application.]

Mr A. J. Pierce rites from Aberdeen Dakota: “I wish the S. R. A. were not so fearfully afraid of new letters. An extended alphabet is what we must have sooner or later. Why keep dodging the issue? I do so dislike this patchwork business.”

[All true enough. But we are not agreed as to what new letter shapes to use. If we were agreed it would be found impracticable to introduce them except gradually. We are compelled to be satisfied with introducing the small end of the wedge. Meantime we can discuss the question and agree further.—Ed.]

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