

The Herald.

DEVOTED TO PRONUNCIATION AND AMENDED SPELLING.

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OPINIONS OF EMINENT MEN.

(Continued from pages 87, 101, 107, 111.)

The reform is inevitable. It is only necessary for its advocates to move slowly and so reassure a timid and conservative public that their designs are [evolutionary] not revolutionary.—CECIL F.P. BANCROFT, PH. D.

Spelling reform is destined to assume larger proportions and to triumph at no distant date. Phonetics has its own laws of historic development, as well as etymology. If orthographic reform is conducted under judicious and scientific guidance our wordforms will have still historic suggestiveness and significance.—THO'S CHASE, LL. D.

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FROM A GENIUS TO A BLOKHED.

Peter Bunsen, born in Germany, went to school there. Spelling being regular, soon he learned to read, and became much interested in little stories about pets and plays. Then his parents brought him to America.

Though he soon learned to talk English, yet he had his troubles. Teachers said he *must get* the spelling. So, time he should have put on reading was spent on crooked orthography. Literature was interesting. Memorizing senseless spelling was to him a dull, stupefying process. He dropped into reasoning from analogy, but that did not work on our absurd collections of letters. Poor Peter! across the Atlantic he was called a genius; on this side, a blockhead.

Teachers many a time told him to "get his lesson over again," scolded and threatened.

So one night Peter took his tattered, tear-stained, time-killing book home, tore it in a thousand pieces, and threw them into the fire. As the blaze leapt up, he shouted: "Now, I've burnt the bridge behind me! I'll never face the teacher again!"

His father put him at the hardest, dirtiest work on the farm, hoping to make him willing to return to school. But Peter declared he would burn his brains out against a stone wall, before he would burn them out against the spelling book. So, like many others, he grew up in ignorance.

Lettervil, N. Y.

Hu Lo.

[We consider this a "short story." Let its riter supply us and other periodicals with like anecdotes till public opinion is aroused.—EDITOR.]

NEWS-NOTES AND COMMENTS.

—This asks *you* to subscribe and so help to reach the circulation aimed at—10,000.

—Our right address is, THE HERALD, 57 Harbord st., Toronto, Canada (no more, no less).

—A question arises, how far should Dr Chase's opinion (in column preceding) as to historic suggestiveness and significance be carried? He was long president and professor of philology at Haverford (Pa.) college, later devoted to literature at Providence, R. I. Has he made statements more definite? What are they?

—On p. 113 is the statement, "forced mismating of the 'no' and 'nut' vowels should be abolished." Unnatural union hardly requires divorce. Shorthand finds such pairing a convenience. Science rejects it.

—In the recent controversy about new high school entrance examinations in Ontario, Principal Reed of Markham High School and D.A. MacKay say: "The weakest point was spelling. These mistakes were found in one paper: cardiac, mucous membrane, digestion, system, incisors, biceps pads, whitish, perpose, teeth, denton, auffle, weakons, artery, ventracle, pharoxn, wrings, tobacco." Is the pupil at fault, or the system?

—Young Germans have four years start of our young men (see p. 111) so long as present spelling retards that long in a university course. The ugly fact pointed out by Pres't Loudon gives an opinion that something is wrong, but no diagnosis is made. Our educators are in the dark as to both cause and cure. Both should be inferred easily from Peter Bunsen's experience as given in column preceding.

—The charge is, every English-speaking person is kept back two years in his public-school course, a third year in high-school, and a fourth in a university course. For Loudon's statements that our young men are four years behind German ones see Univ. of Toronto Monthly for Oct., 1900.

—American cities have an Italian population largely engaged in sale of peanuts, which they pronounce pinots instead of pinets. Yungers (or American-born) ones say nets pretty well, older ones say nets with o their open o (o aperto), much like o in our word 'nor.' To them, the 'no' and 'nor' vowels — both heard in 'Livorno' (Leghorn) — are pairs. Such vowel-pairing is right because found in languages generally. Both Passy and Ellis have the same symbol (o) for open o.

—This pronunciation by foreners has received a notable contribution (in Dialect Notes, vol. ii, p. 257 to 268) in recording the way English is spoken in a settlement of Norwegians begun at Utica, Wis., in 1840. The following words (having A or e in received orthoepy) are given with o in nor: bluff, blunder, buggy, bucket, buckle, buckskin, bundle, butry, drug, front, gum, humbug, hunt, company, country, custard, cover, lunch, money, monkey, mutton, plumber, plush, pumpkin, run, puzzle, rubber, rug, supper, tug, trunk, umbrella, truck, bust, insult, rough, spunky, study, tough.