

## Amended Spelling Department.

REVISED SPELLING: 1. OMIT EVERY UNNECESSARY LETTER.  
2. CHANGE *d* to *t*, *ph* to *f*, *gh* to *f*, if sounded so. These rules are justified by Revision of Spelling (now in progress). Such spelling is to be preferred, just as the Revised Translation of the Bible is preferred to that of 1611.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### PAIRED VOWELS.

SIR,—The article in your last on Paired Vowels seems misleading in some particulars. Fonographers will never believe, as there asserted, that the vowels in *ill* and *eel* are natural pairs. Dwell as long as you will on *ill* and you can never make *eel* of it. There is no real short sound of *e* (as in *eel*) used in English, although it is somewhat shorter in *week* and *leek* than in *weak* or *sneak*. By pronouncing the first pair of words somewhat shorter than is proper, the true short sound of *e* (as in *eel*) will be heard, but even then the words will not sound like *wick* and *lick*.

The riter of the article speaks of leaving the vowels "in *at* and *naught* unmated, as they shud be." I believe, with Pitman, that those vowels are paired by those in *father* and *not* respectively, and so truly that no man can put them asunder.

In several other pairs I cannot quite agree with Pitman. The *h* sound, for example, is, to my ear, as clear and distinct in *twine* as the *t* in *twine*. I think his analysis of the diphthong in *aisle* faulty. Still, Major Powell and all of us may take lessons in analysis of English from the old gentleman.

JOHN WATSON.

Catonsville, Md.

[Our correspondent is right, from his stand-point; we are right from ours. Both agree when the fog is cleared away by the wind of explanation. No one of the twelve vowel pairs exactly with any other. What is meant by an exact pair? Two vowels are exact pairs when they differ in *quantity* only and not in *quality*. Our correspondent confounds *quality* and *quantity*. Two vowels are (not exact, but *approximate*) pairs when their *quality* is not too wide apart. Two males or two females shud not mate; but a male and a female may constitute a well-mated pair, if, differing in some respects, they are otherwise adapted, as being of the same race, like age, &c. For a young Caucasian to mate with an old African is not pairing, but is first and unnatural union. Now, if the twelve vowels be left to seek natural affinities, how will they pair? Let preconceived notions be laid aside— notions born of the necessity for brevity in shorthand, as explained last month. We still believe that revision of vowel relations will show that four do not mate, from a fonologic stand-

point, and in strict truth, although necessity (which none no law) may still make it expedient to so pair them as to Shorthand, dots, and dashes. The four unmated are those *pho*, *at*, *up*, or; the four mates are

1. Those in *ill* and *eel*;
2. " *ell* " *ale*;
3. " *not* " *father*;
4. " *pull* " *pool*.—EDITOR.]

#### THE VOWEL IN *her*.

SIR,—I hold that the vowels in *met*, *up*, and *her* differ in quality. Had I your ear for two minutes, you shud hear:

1. *u* in *hurry*, *curry*, &c.
2. *e* in *her*, *clergy*, *cur*, &c.
3. *e* in *heresy*, *clerical*, &c.

and the *r* also clearly as any born Paddy can give it; and then you shud hear the vowels only, the remainder of each word being suprest. It wud be silly and misleading in me to affirm (as you supoz I do in your last issue) that the second vowel above was heard only in the faulty speech of persons who habitually drop *rs*. It is not a difference of *quantity*, *length*, *prolongation*, but of *quality*; and requires a different position and functioning of the vocal mechanism, which I take to be the true test of vowel distinction. If I suspected myself of contending for a fancy vowel, even a shade vowel, or a finicky notion, I wud "dry up" and stay dried on this matr.

J. H. KIDDER.

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### HOW WE SPEAK.

A Filological section has recently been organized in the Canadian Institute. We clip an account of its first meeting from the *Toronto Daily Mail*. We copy less for the matr than for the manner of study inculcated. Rev. Dr. McCurdy was in the Chair.

"The first regular meeting of the Filological Section was held on Monday evening, the lecture room of the Institute being well filled. The subject was the physical basis of speech, the lecturer being Dr. Hamilton, of this city, who, the confining himself merely to the gross anatomy and physiology of the organs of vocal expression, succeeded in giving his audience a very clear idea of the complicated process of speaking. The following is an abstract of this very interesting and instructive lecture:

"This is the age of physical research. Almost all scientific work has now a physical basis. Great advances had been made in natural philosophy by means of experimental physics. Ambrose Paré was considered the father of modern surgery. His chief claim to the title was due to his having introduced the ligature as a means of stopping hemorrhage, whereas before Paré's day the cautery, actual and potential, was used, as the dipping of the bleeding stump after amputation into boiling oil to arrest the bleeding. The ligature is a rational means of stopping bleeding, based on partial knowledge of the circulation of the blood, later fully proclaimed by Harvey, after his studies in Padua.