

thus, "The late financial depression furnished an occasion for a general attack upon High Schools along the whole line;" they will understand its purpose. His statement of the "leading objections" urged against Secondary Education in the United States is of interest to ourselves, seeing the High Schools there are of a similar character to our own. He thus enumerates them:

1. The High School is an excrescence on our School System, which has thus been extended beyond the original design of its founders, hence it should be cut off.

2. It is unjust to support the High School by a general tax, because it is patronized by few, and the majority receive no benefit from it.

3. The State has a right to educate its children only so far as will enable them to understand and perform their duties as citizens.

4. The High School tends to create a distaste for labour and to make the children of the masses discontented with their lot.

5. The support of the High School is communistic in its principle and tendency.

6. The High School tends to disparage the Common School studies, and promotes superficiality in these fundamental branches.

7. It tends to pauperize the people by a sort of almstaking that impairs their manliness and self-respect.

8. High Schools prepare few graduates for College.

Though he very effectively answers most of these objections, his aim would have been better served by replying to them categorically; he would thus have saved the reader the distraction caused by finding out what objection the author is really answering; and would have allowed his attention to be fixed solely on the argument.

WITMER'S PHONETIC ORTHOGRAPHY, by Tobias Witmer. Eggertsville, N.Y., 1880.

NOSTRUMS for the improvement of English Orthography are nearly as numerous as are those for the cure of all "the ills that flesh

is heir to." The last attempt in this direction that has come under our notice is by Mr. Tobias Witmer, of Eggertsville, N.Y. There can hardly be a doubt that the author has implicit faith in the efficacy of what he prescribes, although it is not quite clear to us that he is always consistent in the advice he tenders. In his preface he speaks of "alphabetic equivalents and silent letters" having served their time, to be laid away, like fossils, to be studied by future philologists (!) whilst the body of the manual is full of words containing "alphabetic equivalents" and "silent letters" according to the system of spelling he advocates. For Mr. Witmer or anybody else to attempt a method of expressing the sounds of words phonetically, by making use of the existing letters *only*, without resorting to "equivalents" and silent letters, is but to spend labour for naught. Take the following verse from one of his reading lessons, entitled, "The Mocking Bird in the City:"

"Whail strenj-r-throngz rol bai
Lhai song iz lending
Joi tu dhi happi, sudhings
Tu dhi sad;
O'er mai ful hart it floz
Widh jentl blending,
And I am glad."

We shall say nothing as to the digraph in "whail" because it is open to dispute whether our "i" is a pure element or a compound of "a" (broad) and "i" (short,) but what of "th" in "throngz," "dh" in "dhai," and "pp" in "happi?" Again, is not "e" in "o'er" silent? A simple knowledge of the fact that our alphabet leaves some dozen of elementary English sounds wholly unrepresented, ought to prevent anybody from reaching after the unattainable.

On page 33 is a list of words spelt the old way, preceded by the form *Witmer*. In this list we find *duty*, *tutor*, and *newsman* given with the same *u* sound as *hooter*, *coolly*, and *goose-quill*. A note on this page, too, says "When 'duty' is pronounced to rhyme with beauty, 'constitution' with contribution," it may be well to place *r* before the *u* in order to indicate the diphthongal sound; but very many good speakers give *u* its natural Latin or German sound, which, in these