

## CORRESPONDENCE.

KNUDSEN'S ORTHOGRAFY.

SIR,—I have receivd Mr. Knudsen's litl Primer (which yu notist four months ago), with his request to send opinion of alfabet and mode of using it.

*Points of Agreement:* (1) I am glad to find A B C order folod in alfabet, p. 73. I see no advantage but evry disadvantage in departing from this order in presenting an amended or enlarged alfabet. (2) I am pleased to see existing consonant digrafs ch, sh, th, in their present values, without a ligature, which is neither necessary nor sightly tho used by some Americans. I don't find ng in alfabet, altho in the text—perhaps an oversight. (3) Dh and zh ar adopted, tho for dh the alternativ th (with t crosst twice) is used. Ther ar many reasons in favor of dh, as distinctnes, suggestivnes, & ease to printers, and so many objections on all these grounds to other symbols, that I wud suport exclusiv use of dh. This, I fancy, is almost the universal view in England. (4) He retains c, k, x, qu, for the same sound—a very large departure from the principl of one symbol for each sound, to preserv closer resemblance of new to old speling. I hav resemgly contended for this importnt and valuabl principl. I am not fully satisfied as to keeping x and qu, but feel that c and k must be kept. X and qu ar used rarely compared with c and k. (5) I entirely agree with pronunciation givn. [A good omen that vesel need not be rekt on rok of cis-Atlantic and trans-Atlantic differences in orthoepy.]

*Points of Diference:* (1) To promote harmony, cud not ei, eu, oi, ou be used as alternatifs for  $\ddot{i}$ ,  $\ddot{u}$ ,  $\ddot{o}$ ,  $\ddot{u}$ . The elements of ei and ou especially ar maters of controversy. With consonants we don't analyze: ch is not c and h, th is not t and h; but ar arbitrary combinations. Why not do the same with vowels? (2) The use of o for vowel in nut, which is then ritn "not," is a delicat point. In shorthand, vowel in nut is paid with that in note—a necessity in shorthand, a fatal mistake in fonetic print. Has Mr. K. not been led astray by desire to make vowels pair? (3) Insted of a', i', o', u', I prefer the mark of length over a, i, o, u (thus,  $\bar{o}$ .) 4. For vowel in moon, oo is wel adapted.

It is more importnt that we agree than that the scheme shud be theoretically perfect. Can we not get closer agreement? For this, ther must be giv and take on both sides

Liverpool, Eng.

E. JONES.

"TUBB BUTTER."

SIR,—The above appears in a grocer's shop on Yong St. The educated laf; but why not "tubb" as wel as "butt"?

How do yu distinguish between *coud* and *cud* (which is *chewd*)? Yu spel the former *cud*. How between *stood*, past participi, and *stud*, a movabl shirt butn?

Toronto.

M. L. Rous.

[Cud, cud; stud, stud.—Ed.]

## AMENDED SPELING &amp; ETYMOLOGY.

[The folowing was ritn by Prof. Skeat, the author of the best Etymologic Dictionary now in the market, one universally referd to and quoted. It appears in the *Christian World* as ordinary correspondence.]

The usual favorit cry about our modern speling being "etymological," is really a delusion. No one who has really studid Tudor-English, Middle-English, Anglo-Saxon, and Anglo-French, maintains such a position any longer. Those who wish to defend our present system of speling can do so logically on one ground only, viz, that great inconvenience will be caused by the change. This is the sole question really before us—Wil the inconvenience be greater than the gain? And the difficulty really resides in the fact that it is imposibl to no the anser til the change has been universally made. Most arguments ar of litl service, because they ar founded upon imaginary results which may, or may not, be tru.

Whether we shal ever get a tru speling reform, is doubtful. If so, it wil come from America. For, if once acomplisht there, it wil not be difficult to adopt the results here. However, my present object is merely to sho that the argument from etymology had far beter be givn up. Those who use this argument weakn their case by ignorant statements, which crumbl when handld. Many, for exampl, ar unware of the fact, that a large number of words hav suferd "speling reform" already. Thus the words *abridge*, *advise*, *advise*, *anneal*, *appeal*, *appear*, *appease*, *appraise*, *apprentice*, *apprize*, *approach*, *arrear*, *astray*, *assail*, *assay*, *assets*, *assize*, *attain*, *avail*, *average*, *avoid*, *avouch*, *avow*, and a very large number of similar words ar spelt precisely as they ar pronounst, tho the varius methods of representing the sounds to the eye ar clumsy and confused; and they ar some of them so far from presenting an obvius etymology that most peopl wud not no from what they ar derived without help. In *assets*, for exampl, the *ts* is the fonetic way of expresing the old French *z*; and such spelings as *abridge*, *anneal*, *apprize*, &c., may be very good English, but they ar also very bad French. Still les do they suggest Latin, *brevis*, *niger*, or *prehendere*. My advice to those who use the "etymological" argument is that they shud first lern fonology and the history of language, that they may at least hav some idea as to what they ar talking about.

WALTER W. SKEAT.