

PLATFORM.

1. An alphabet intended for use by a vast community need not attempt an exhaustive analysis of elements of utterance, and a representation of the nicest varieties of articulation; it may well leave room for the unavoidable play of individual and local pronunciation.—*S. R. A. Bulletin*.

2. No language has ever had, or is likely to have, a perfect alphabet: and in changing and amending the mode of writing a language already long written, regard must necessarily be had to what is practically possible quite as much as to what is inherently desirable.—*S. R. A. Bulletin*.

3. The Roman alphabet is so widely and firmly established in use among leading civilized nations that it can not be displaced; in adapting it to improved use for English, efforts of scholars should be directed towards its use with uniformity, and in conformity with other nations.—*Ibid.*

4. Preserve, while useful in transition, the traces of order and system already existing.—*New York Home Journal*.

5. Keep in view the co-operation of reforms in pronunciation when desirable to restore breaks and complete the regularity and symmetry of the language.—*Ibid.*

6. Keep in view the adoption of a common standard of values among all nations using the Roman alphabet.—*Ibid.*

7. The right spelling of a word may be said to be that which agrees best with its pronunciation, its etymology, and with the analogy of the particular class of words to which it belongs.—*Philologic Museum, vol. i, 647*. [The three together, namely, pronunciation, analogy, derivation, (PAD), are the tripod on which Orthography rests. Pronunciation is the most important in determining word-forms. Where P. is uncertain, varying, or conflicting, A. or D., or both, will decide usually—especially requisite in a language, like ours, full of weak vowels.]

8. The fonetic party defeat their own object by demanding too much. Their treatment of English is so rough that they have found no general favor. It would be sufficient to change words in which correct pronunciation is manifestly different from spelling, but they would go farther than this and change every word.—*H. B. Wheatly in Transactions of Philologic Society, 1867*.

9. Orthography and orthoepy, though about co-extensive, do not quite coincide. Dr J. A. H. Murray (as president of the Philologic Society, in *Annual Address, 1880*) said: "Spelling will always lag a certain way behind actual speech, especially the careless, lawless speech of familiar conversation. In my opinion, therefore, it is futile to aim at representing this in practical spelling; let us aim at providing a means of spelling what men MEAN to say, AIM at saying, and in measured or formal speech or song DO say, not

at the shortcomings which, though inseparable from speech, are none the less unintentional, and to be discouraged. Every system of writing, except one on a purely physiologic basis, like Bell's Visible Speech, must be not merely conventional, but even to some extent inconsistently conventional; we shall do well if we can arrive at the stage of writing English in a way that shall practically represent the ideal of speech to which all educated Englishmen [and speakers of the language generally] approximate, though none may reach it, and which is as far removed from the slurred or imperfect utterance of the average Londoner (which seems to be the cynosure that attracts some authors of proposed systems), as it is from the archaic or even semi-foreign pronunciation of distant provinces. This bears I think on such matters as the representation of obscure and unaccented vowels riting sounds which educated men aim at producing, not what men in a hurry actually succeed in producing! If the reader aim at the former, he may be trusted always to reach the latter; if he aim only at the latter, he will soon fall short even of them, and want still newer spelling for his still more defective utterance."

10. Orthography is conventional.

11. Orthography reflects "formal speech" (Murray), "vocabulary speech" (Bell), liturgical or solemn speech, not colloquial talk.

12. The distinct speech aimed at is cosmopolitan, free from local or dialect tinge.

13. Where varieties of pronunciation prevail, Orthography should be non-committal.

14. Every language has its own orthography (or literary dress) and literature, which are interwoven. A single symbol may be approximately universal; a set of word-forms, its spelling, is peculiar to each tongue, and reflects its own speech customs. Universal orthography is a dream, a delusion, and a snare. Dr A. J. Ellis (in *Encyclopedia Brit., vol. xxii, p. 390*) says:—

"The modes of combining sounds in these three languages [French, German, Italian] and English are so different that the alphabet has to be differently conceived for each. This is the final breakdown of universal writing. An English, French, German, and Italian reader each requires an alphabet founded on his own linguistic habits, and very insufficiently comprehends any other."

15. The requirements of the printer, as well as of literature, alike demand spelling fixed for almost all words.

16. Language restricts itself for expressing thought . . . to a very limited number of typical vowels and consonants. Of the large number of sounds . . . catalogued from the various English dialects, those only can be recognized as constituent elements of the language which in, and by, their difference from each other convey a difference of meaning. Of such pregnant and thought-conveying vowels, English possesses no more than twelve.—*Mrs Mueller On Spelling*.

17. Make only final changes, such as will not have to be set aside in subsequent revisions.—*Home Journal*.

18. Orthography is the reverse of present Spelling, characterized by Prof. Sayce as:

"A mere series of arbitrary combinations, embodiment of wild guesses, etymologies of a prescientific age, haphazard caprice of ignorant printers."