

of the time now needlessly employed in these exercises.

Fifth. It will pave the way for our magnificent language, so excellent in other respects, becoming the universal language.

Sixth. It will render the pronunciation of English the same wherever it is spoken, and thus prevent dialects and provincialisms.

Seventh. It will make pronouncing dictionaries unnecessary.

Eighth. By it the pronunciation of every word will be accurately determined at first sight.

Ninth. By its use an education will cost less, and thus the means of obtaining one will be given to the thousands who would otherwise live their life in ignorance.

Tenth. It will virtually lengthen the school days of the child and the life of the man, by saving time.

Eleventh. It will be neither inconsistent, redundant, defective, nor erroneous.

Twelfth. It will aid foreigners in the acquisition of our language.

Thirteenth. It will prove a ready means of educating illiterate adults. They will be able to acquire the art of reading, with a few hours study, and by this means they will be incited to study to master it at least.

Fourteenth. There will be no necessity for learning spelling, because after the alphabet has been thoroughly learned, the pronunciation of a word will immediately and accurately suggest the spelling. An alphabet having all the above advantages would surely be a boon of incalculable advantage to us; still we adhere to the old one, which, like other ancient things, was useful in its day, but that day has undoubtedly passed away; and we want an alphabet fulfilling the above conditions to take the place of one open to so many objections. We must have a reform in our alphabet as well as in other things. Why should we retain our present alphabet?

And what are the arguments against the introduction of a phonetic one? Will they sufficiently outweigh the best of arguments in its favor? Let me see.

First. In a phonetic alphabet the eye will confound such words as *know* and *no*, *sea* and *see*, *sighs* and *size*, *puisne* and *punny*, when written separately as in a vocabulary. This is the only objection worthy of the name, but it cannot be supposed that such words would present more ambiguity in contextual usage, than they now do in utterance, subject to the same confusion to the ear. We cannot see that words thus written would be any more obscure to the eye, than do words which profess two or more distinct meanings as *bar*, *battery*, *beetle*, *board*, *factor*, and many other words that have a number of meanings. These words are used without any fear of ambiguity, for the reason that the context will always enable us to tell with unfailing accuracy which meaning is intended.

Second. It is said, by opponents of the scheme, that it will obscure the etymological history now discoverable in the orthography of a word. The best answer to this is, that the traces of etymology preserved in the present spelling are so imperfect, and inconsistent, as to be of little value compared with the embarrassments they occasion in other respects. Besides, suppose the objections were good, must children to the end of time be subjected to the waste of millions of years and dollars in learning our present barbarous orthography—an orthography for its anomaly—for the simple reason of saving etymologists from the slight trouble of an additional step, a little additional trouble in their researches respecting the origin of words? Surely, no man of common sense will say, that for the sake of saving a few college professors, who design to retain our present orthography, the slight additional trouble the change will impose upon them, millions of children must learn such a monstrous orthography, or go through life as