

against the rational reconstruction of our spelling. But it is also unfair to Dr. Trench himself, who then stood so well in the front of philology, that we may be perfectly sure that if leisure had been given him to keep pace with the progress of the science, he would now have been second to no one as a spelling reformer. For philology has long since penetrated the mere drapery and grappled with the study of words' not as dead marks, but as living realities, and for these living realities it first of all demands, 'Write them as they are; give us facts and not fictions to handle.'

The late Professor Whitney, of Yale, says: "Of all forms of linguistic conservatism or purism, orthographic purism is the lowest and the easiest. * * The real etymologist, the historic student of language, * * would rejoice above measure to barter every 'historical' item in our spelling during the last 300 years for a strict phonetic picture of the language as spoken at that distance in the past."

Three years required to master English reading and spelling when only a few months would be necessary with a proper spelling! Let our farmers, our laborers and artisans, think of the enormous tax put upon them by this system. Thousands of them cannot find sufficient time to get even a good common school education, a fact largely due to our mode of spelling. Think of the time spent, the sacrifice endured by many of our poorer people, to send their children to school for a short time. But in what are they required to spend their time there? First and foremost, in learning what is not of the smallest sensible value to them—for at least two years of their time—and what, in addition, disgusts tens of thousands with everything associated with school education. What would not those two years allow us to do in our course of study? More language drill—useful in its results: more natural science teaching—attractive in its subjects, perception-strengthening in its influence, reason-training in its effects. Less slavery, more love for study, fewer rebels, more recruits for advanced knowledge. Nothing to lose, everything to gain.

The first names in linguistic scholarship and philology in England and America, have declared in favor of reform, the first names in all ranks.

But it may be urged that language is a natural growth, and that no artificial effort can control it. All right. Then let it grow and remove the artificial and false system of spelling which partly represents the language and partly misrepresents it, leaving no record of its growth when it does grow. Then you may turn around and say, "Oh! it was the spelling I meant. Spelling is a natural growth, and nothing