

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies
of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down
with costly bales ;
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and
there rained a ghastly dew,
From the nations' airy navies grappling in
the central blue.

Far along the world-wide whisper of the
south wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging
thro' the thunder-storm ;
Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and
the battle-flags were furled,
In the Parliament of man—the Federation
of the world."

THE ETYMOLOGICAL OBJECTION.

BY T. J. GODFREY, HAMILTON.

AMONG objections urged against the spelling reform this seems to be the most important. Men, who are convinced on every other point, fall back on this, confident that it is more than sufficient to condemn any proposition towards a change. It is proposed to examine the objection in the present paper, to see how far it holds good, and wherein it fails. It will be unnecessary to go into a consideration of the original intention of alphabets—that will be sufficiently obvious on a very short examination. I shall, therefore, confine myself closely to the etymological objection, and leave the many other arguments in favour of phonetic spelling for future treatment. I know when phonetic spelling is suggested to many people they pooh-pooh the idea—you can hardly induce them to examine it, they look on it as a good joke and protest it is too ridiculous for serious consideration. When you ask them what they can urge against it, they say: "Oh, it would ruin our language—it would destroy all our etymology." In fact they will grow eloquent with alarm at the frightful consequences of such a revolutionary idea, and instead of examining the proposition, they will bestow upon the proposer of such a

scheme all the choice adjectives of their vocabulary expressive of the assinine qualities of the man who could dream of such a sacrilegious innovation upon our language. This is the general method of meeting arguments favouring a reform. The idea of a page of phonetic spelling instead of the ordinary heterogeneous mixture of letters, fills them with a strange concern for the future of "our good old mother tongue as it was and is" and, as they hope, "will be." They draw up imaginary pictures of the dreadful consequences of such a scheme, and actually shudder at their own visionary creations. Such a class as this always exists—ready to cry down any progressive movement.

It is claimed in support of our present spelling that by it we preserve, to a certain extent, the history of the particular word ; but while this is true to a limited degree it is far from holding generally. However, this historical spelling is not consistently carried out, even if it be a benefit ; and if it be a benefit in its present incomplete usage, it would be much more so if carried out wholly ; hence we should take a retrogressive step and always insert the chief letters of all the roots. How many defenders of our present spelling