

The Portfolio.

Published monthly by the Students of the Wesleyan
Female College, Hamilton, Ontario.

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TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:

Per Year, One Dollar. Single Copies, 15 Cents.

FOR SALE AT EASTWOOD'S.

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THE PORTFOLIO, HAMILTON, ONT.

We invite contributions and correspondence from the Alumnae and
former students.

It would seem as though phonetic spelling as a subject of discussion should be about exhausted, to judge from the length of time it has been before the public. The arguments in favor of, and against it are not so numerous as to have wholly occupied the time spent upon it. The inexhaustible part of the subject is probably that which deals with applications and illustrations. We do not speak of it in the hope of bringing some new proof to light, but simply to express an opinion on the subject. To advocate the continuation of the present mode of spelling from principles of conservatism, to cling to it simply because it is old, would be unjust and unwise; but it would be greater folly to adopt the new on account of its novelty. Matters of importance such as this would, were a revolution deemed advisable, demand unbiassed judgment. Supposing a change were necessary, in order to have it consummated within a reasonable space of time—not to have our orthography go limping, lingering, uncertain down the ages, here dropping a useless vowel, there a needless combination of consonants—it should be radical and general.

"If 'twere done when 'tis done, 'twere well
It were done quickly."

Then, having altered the many words

whose sound does not suggest their orthography, we find that we have at the same time disposed of a study among the most interesting to students, particularly students of the classics—that of the growth and development of the English language. More complicated and composite in its structure than perhaps any other tongue, it is interesting, accordingly, to trace its words to their origin, to consider the way in which it has been affected by conquest, climate, commerce, culture, and the innumerable influences which leave an impression upon a nation and a language when in its infancy; and to compare the modern spelling with that in use in the centuries that have intervened since the time when the Saxons established themselves in the British Isles. Would the advantages accruing from the introduction of the new system be adequate to the loss? The acquisition of the language would certainly be made easier to foreigners, and spelling as a study be rendered infinitely less tedious and difficult. It is positively pitiful to see children struggling to acquire the difference in pronunciation of sets of words such as *rough*, *cough*, *sough*, *lough*. If, as some advanced thinkers have predicted, our language will before long be the chief medium of intercourse throughout the world, out of kindness to the many that have yet to master the intricacies of our spelling books, we ought to adopt the simpler system.

It was with sorrow that we learned through the columns of an exchange of the death of an old student—Lizzie Haywood—who died at Arkansas City, Kansas, on the morning of January 1st, 1880.

The following we take from the *Syracuse University Herald*: "In the fall of 1875, Lizzie Haywood entered the Fine Art College of this University. During her four years' course, by hard work, she attained a proficiency in painting never as yet reached by any student in the College. During the fall term of '77, on account of her health she