

This is a sort of difficulty which has attended the incipient stages of many an important change, and it is one which Britons are accustomed to grapple with. They should consider it therefore not as an *objection*, but merely as a *difficulty*, in order that the best mode of overcoming it may be devised. It is probable that, for a time, the advancement of a projected reform must depend on private effort. By and by the details of the method proposed might be submitted to an assemblage of competent scholars. This process may secure further improvement, or may at least increase the confidence felt in the merits of the project by the public at large; at the same time experiments in teaching should be multiplied, and their results duly attested and recorded. It may then become a question whether the further prosecution of the undertaking should not devolve upon agency of a more public description:—but it is unnecessary to pass the threshold of that question at present.

On the whole, there seems little doubt of the necessity of a reform in our present system of Orthography, if system it can be called.—little doubt of the efficiency of a system phonetically constructed to accomplish such reform;—and little doubt of the practicability of a system so constructed. The only doubtful point relates to the probability of inducing a competent number of the pioneers of improvement to grapple energetically with the requirements of the case. But the love of progress, revealing itself in endless forms at the present day,—the growing spirit of enterprise,—and the generous desire, unfolding more and more among the influential classes, to foster the nascent germs of improvement in art and science,—all warrant the assurance that this doubtful point is only a question of time.

### The Press and Phonetics.

The time was when the Press almost without exception ridiculed and denounced the Orthographic reform which we advocate—now it is very rarely that we meet with an objection urged by a member of the Press. On every hand we find able, vigorous and open enthusiastic allies among our contemporaries. We may now justly infer that in a few years more, and when our method of teaching the art of reading is understood by all, there will be no one connected with the Press who will not give it his warmest approbation.

Apart from that based upon a general interest in Education, there is a special reason why the Press should encourage the adoption of the Phonetic method of teaching the art of reading. Newspapers and periodicals are necessarily dependent upon the public for their circulation. Increase the number of readers and you at once insure their pecuni-

ary success. Then it follows that the means which accomplishes this should receive the approbation of the Press. But the method in general use for manufacturing (an allowable expression) readers is a very imperfect one—in truth, it is an ally of Ignorance, and, if children were solely dependent upon it, we fear its tendency would be to subvert the Press. To what an extent Ignorance prevails among the masses, it only requires an examination of the census and the most casual observation to determine. If the Phonetic method were now used in all our primary schools—both public and private—there would be but little excuse, a quarter of a century hence, for people being ignorant of the art of reading. It follows, therefore, that by assuming a position hostile to this method, the Press would not only be opposing the advancement of Education, but also its own interests.—*Type of the Times.*

### Phonetic Teaching.

From a business letter from Syracuse, N. Y., we take the following extract:

The Phonetic system is thoroughly introduced in our city. It would be difficult to disturb it now. Were it submitted to a vote of the people interested, five to one would say, give us Phonetics. The success is much greater than we anticipated.

In regard to a Second Reader we have used Childhood Hours in some instances; but we experienced no difficulty in taking the classes directly from the 1st Phonetic Reader to Webb's Second. Experience may determine us to use another Reader. But there is no possible use for a Transition Reader. Children will read the common print without any effort in teaching them, and will spell it better than any other classes we have.

Yours very truly,

Geo. L. FARNHAM.

Superintendent.

Teachers will find the success of Phonetic training greater in proportion to the more extended time given to Phonetic reading.—Take a child from the Phonetic First or even Second Reader, and put him into a Romanic Reader of the same grade, and he will do very well; but as he enters more advanced books he finds words he has not seen, nor heard pronounced, and he hesitates over them, or guesses at them, and thus becomes more or less faulty in his reading. His beginning was good, but in a few years he will be found to be little if any better than those taught in the ordinary way.

But, let pupils pursue a course of Phonetic reading until they have become familiar with all the words used in ordinary composition, and they will obviate the difficulties mentioned. After becoming familiar with the use of the letters in the First Reader, no

new words in any subsequent Reader, spelled phonetically, will present any difficulty, and both his time and that of his teacher, will be saved.

We need more Readers, and until we get them, phonetic pupils should read, after the First, Reader Childhood Hours, the Presidents, and Mr. Hill's First Lessons in Geometry.—*Ed. Type.*

### SPELLING.

PROBABLY the worst feature of any composition, be it ever so poor as regards construction and sentiment, is the miss-spelling of common words. And however neatly written, however beautifully constructed, any piece of composition may be, if, here and there, a word may be found incorrectly spelled, it takes all the beauty away from both composition and penmanship. The most glowing language ever used, the most inspiring sentiments ever uttered, "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," if written and incorrectly spelled, lose all their force, all their power to win and control, and make but a feeble impression on the reader.

Spelling we all have to do with, more or less. Whether we read or write, or talk, or think, we must *spell our words*. And it is just as easy to spell correctly as incorrectly. Or, if not as easy, it is certainly far the best way. Attention while reading, close application to the spelling-book, and frequent references to the dictionary, will make any one a good speller. Inattention and carelessness in these respects will generally result in a poor knowledge of spelling.

Spelling should certainly be considered a subject of importance with teachers. It should be their aim to inculcate in their scholars a love of correct spelling. At any rate, they should call their attention to the important words in their reading lessons.—No teacher has done his whole duty toward his scholars, who has suffered even one reading lesson to pass by without having been satisfied that every one in the class could spell every word correctly. This may be ascertained in various ways, according to the capacity and circumstances of the class. It is not the intention here to designate any plan. Each teacher can follow that which best suits his school.

If it be necessary that scholars have thorough training while at school, that they may become good spellers, is it not very important, indeed—it is not an absolute necessity—that the teacher have a thorough practical knowledge, not only of spelling, but of the rules which govern correct spelling, and of the pronunciation of our English words, at least? And yet we often meet with teachers who can not spell some of the simplest words of our language. Such teachers are sorely puzzled by having to re-