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THE CANADIAN PHONETIC PIONEER,

A Monthly Journal, Devoted to the Spread of the Writing, Printing, and Spelling Reform.

William E. Orr,

[Had this art (Phonography) been known forty years ago, it would have saved me twenty years hard labor.—Hon. Tho's H. Estlin]

Publisher.

VOLUME II.

OSHAWA, C. W., APRIL, 1860.

NUMBER X.

Phonography Easy to Learn.

The following letter is a fair sample of many which we receive along with the sum of one dollar for a set of instruction books:

"Phonography may be very good provided a person could learn it. You are aware that a person cannot learn from books so well as from a teacher: therefore if a thing is not set forth in a good comprehensible way why the thing becomes useless," etc. etc

A few months after if the student has any fitness for becoming a phonographer, we frequently receive such letters as the following, and here we might say that although we have sold several thousand phonographic instruction books in the course of the past five years, not a single letter, that we can now recollect, have we ever received in condemnation of the system or of our labors toward its more general dissemination among the people. This arises, we think, from the fact that although many persons have not the time or the proper faculties for pursuing the study a sufficient length of time to become expert in its use, yet no person is so dull of comprehension as not to see at a first glance over the introductory pages, that the system is founded on right principles, and that it must be of vast service to humanity to possess a thorough knowledge of it, and to make use of it in correspondence and for almost all the purposes for which long-hand is now used. The brevity, simplicity, and beauty of the alphabet itself, compared to that of the old system is sufficient to draw from even the casual observer, a ready assent to its superiority over every other system which he has ever seen. But those who have learned Phonography—and have become acquainted with its beautiful internal contractions, know that the alphabet is but a beginning of its philosophical beauty, as well as utility, and that the farther the student progresses toward a thorough 200 per minute command of the art, the more he becomes enamored with it. But, here is the letter to which we refer red, written under date of the 21st of March last:—

"DEAR SIR,—I take this opportunity of sending these few lines to you as a sample of my writing in Phonography, and as a proof

of my success in the study of the art. I suppose you remember sending me the 'Hand-Book of Standard Phonography' about the latter end of December last, so you see I am not a very old scholar at Phonography, but I suppose you can see that by my writing, and I hope you will excuse me if there are a few blunders in it. I hope the next time I write to you, I shall be able to do it in a better style. [Our correspondent need make no apologies, for not only is his writing among the very best we ever received for neatness of execution, but after reading it very carefully & critically several times, we have yet to find the first mistake in it. It is written too with all the latest improvement introduced by the *Hand-Book*.] I have not had a very good chance to study the art since I received the *Hand-Book*; on the average I have only been able to look at it about three evenings in a week, but I am as it every chance I can get. I am sure I could never get tired learning it. What little I know of it, gives me much pleasure. I never studied anything in my life that I take so much delight in learning as Phonography. As for the *Hand-Book*, I cannot say enough in its favor. It is a much better book than I expected to find it, and considering the trouble there must have been spent in getting the work up, it is a very cheap one. A person who could not learn Phonography with the aid of it, ought to give up the idea of ever learning anything. Those who want to know how to spend their leisure hours profitably should send for the *Hand-Book*. I thought when I first saw the exercises, that if I could read them in the course of six months, it would be about as much as I could do; but I can now read any of them with about as much ease as the common long-hand."

Mr. Josiah Fennell, of Toronto, the writer of the above, takes the proper steps to extend his knowledge of this beautiful art, by sending for more books, magazines, paper, etc., and connecting himself with the "B. A. Phon. Association." Phonography can be learned to good advantage with only one book, but it pays to purchase and read all the current books and magazines published

on the subject. Every phonographer should subscribe for the three leading monthly magazines printed in the phonographic characters, namely: The *Phonographic Examiner*, published in London, England, price in this country \$1.00, the *Phonographic Magazine*, price 75 cents, and the *Phonog'c Journal*, price \$1.00, both published in Cincinnati, the first by Benn Pitman and the *Journal* by Elias Longley. Orders for these magazines may be sent to this office. The back numbers from January are sent in all cases. We generally have single copies of them on hand, which we send by mail to any address at 10 cents each.

Phonography in the Colleges.

Phonography has been taught in Victoria College, Cobourg, for a number of years past, and as an instance of its present progress in other institutions of learning we might mention that we received an order, a few days since, from the Rev. George Richard Northgraves, Priest, St. Michael's College, Toronto, for two dozen sets of the *Manual and Copy-book*, for the use of students in that Institution. We hope to hear of good progress from that quarter shortly. Our pet is gaining ground in Canada, and we hope soon to be able to chronicle its admission to all the colleges and the more efficient Grammar Schools throughout the country. It must be adopted in these first, before it can be expected to make much head-way in the Common Schools, where it must finally take its place beside the common long-hand, or in advance of it.

☞ We are now getting ready a large quantity of reporting Paper, for pen and for pencil use, in covered books of 1, 2, 3 and 5 quires each. Also, Phonographic Letter Paper in quires. We shall be able to announce terms by the quantity in our next. Single quires will be 15 cents post paid.

☞ A further list of members of the B. A. Phonetic Association will be published in our next.

STENOGRAPHY.—Any person desirous of learning short-hand in an incredibly short space of time can do so by procuring *Carry's Stenographic Chart*. His system is an abbreviation of less than one-eighth of that of common writing, and is practised by more reporters than any other system now in use. After acquiring it, all that is necessary in order to report a sermon is practice. Price of chart, with full instructions only \$1; 10 copies for \$5; 100 copies \$25. Perfect satisfaction guaranteed, or money returned. Address James Quinlan agent, Monticello, Sullivan County, N. Y.

(Any newspaper giving the above [with this paragraph] one insertion among reading matter, will be entitled to a copy).

— We give the above, which we find going the rounds of the press, for what it is worth, but must say that the statement that *Carry's Stenography* "is practiced by more reporters than any other system now in use" is pure moonshine. We shall refer to the subject more at length in a subsequent number.

NEXT PHONETIC CONVENTION.—Since our last issue, we have addressed an Official Circular to the members of the Phonetic Council, and although it did not get all the way around the circle, owing to uncertainty as to the address of several members, yet we have the concurrence of all whom it did reach, in deferring the calling of the next British American Phonetic Convention until after the adjournment of the Legislature, with a view of fixing upon a time as near as possible to that of the next meeting of the "Canadian Press Association" which takes place in Toronto sometime in June or July.

SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION.—A correspondent says he is satisfied of the utter impossibility of children learning a correct pronunciation from books in the common spelling. "I have to-day noted a few words as they were spelled and pronounced by pupils in this school. For example: Substantive—the last syllable as in *river* gratify gray tify; pacify—psek ify; mercury—mer-su-ry; illicit—il liek it; gin—gin. This last word was pronounced by a boy reading in McGuffey's Fourth Reader."—[With Phonetic Readers no pupil would mispronounce a word after having well learned the alphabet.—*Ed. Journal of Progress.*]

A SPELLING MATCH.—There was a spelling match in Trumbull county, Ohio, a few evenings since. The best speller from each district in the county was engaged. The prize for the one up longest was a Webster's Dictionary. There were thirty three champion spellers. McGuffey's Spelling Book was used. All were spelled down in three hours.

The last one got the Dictionary. A correspondent says.— It appears that the short and common words generally conquered the classes, and not the polysyllable words. The word 'razor' shaved one member cleanly off, 'sew' sewed up another, 'travel' traveled out another, 'quiescence' quieted another, 'satire' satirized another, 'varilate' reeled over another, 'scene', 'perennial', 'chirurgery', 'christmas', and 'spoon', were also missed on."

Mr. A. H. Brown, of Tilsonburgh C. W., writes that he is teaching Phonography to a class of about one dozen pupils. It is only six months since Mr. B. commenced to study himself.

A Schoolmaster after having given one of his pupils a sound drubbing for speaking bad grammar, sent him to the other end of the room to inform another boy that he wished to speak to him, promising to repeat the dose if he spoke to him ungrammatically. The youngster being satisfied with what he had got, determined to be exact and thus addressed his fellow pupil:

"A common substantive of the masculine gender, singular number, nominative case, and in an angry mood, that sits perched upon an eminence at the other end of the room, wishes to articulate a few sentences to you in the present tense."

Orthography and Etymology.

In the Introduction to his Dictionary, Mr. Webster says: "That some scheme for expressing the distinct sounds of our letters by visible marks, ought to be adopted, is a point about which there ought to be, and I trust there can be, but one opinion. *That such a scheme is practicable as well as expedient, I should presume to be equally evident.*"

"The mode of ascertaining the proper pronunciation of words by marks, points, and trifling alterations of the present characters, seems to be the only one which can be reduced to practice. This mode I have pursued, to a certain extent, in this work. *The scheme I have invented is not considered as perfect, but it will accomplish some important purposes,*" being "intended to exhibit to my fellow citizens the outline of a scheme for removing the difficulties of our irregular orthography, without the use of new characters."

Probably acting upon Mr. Webster's suggestion, Mr. Pittman and others have extended and improved Mr. Webster's own scheme, by making such "alterations" of the Roman

characters as Mr. Webster considered practicable as well as expedient." They have, by making such alterations of the Roman characters as were necessary, carried their improvements so far that we may now represent each elementary sound of the English language by a distinct letter. Each of the elementary sounds of the English language being thus always represented by a distinct character, the orthography, as a matter of course, is materially changed, but, judging from Mr. Webster's language, one would suppose that even he, jealous as he was of innovation, would not have considered such a change as wholly inexpedient or impracticable.

In treating of the irregularities in our orthography, Mr. Webster remarks: "Such is the state of our written language, that our own citizens never become masters of orthography, without great difficulty and labor; and a great part of them never learn to spell words with correctness. * * * In regard to the acquisition of our language by foreigners, the evil of our irregular orthography is extensive, beyond what is generally known or conceived. While the French and the Italians have the wisdom and the policy to refine and improve their respective languages, and render them almost common languages of all well-bred people in Europe, the English language, clothed in a barbarous orthography, is never learned by a foreigner but from necessity; and the most copious language in Europe, embodying an uncommon mass of science and erudition, is thus very limited in its usefulness. And to complete the mischief, the progress of arts, science and Christianity among the heathen, and other rude or unevangelical nations, is most sensibly retarded by the difficulties of mastering an irregular orthography. * * * The unqualified rule of following the common orthography cannot have place, for it would sanction mistakes and tend to perpetuate them; such a rule would have been as just in the ago of Chancery (A. D. 1350) as it is now, and had it been observed, what would have been the present state of English orthography?"

Where will phoneticians find stronger arguments in favor of the adoption of the phonetic system of spelling than in the language of Mr. Webster just quoted?

The most formidable objection urged against the adoption of the phonetic system of spelling—a system in which each sound is represented by a distinct character, and in which each letter invariably represents but one sound—is, that by doing so, "all our etymologies would be lost, consequently we could not ascertain the meaning of many words;" but with regard to this objection Dr. Franklin very justly observes. "Etymologies are at present very uncertain, but such as they are, the old books would still preserve them, and etymologists would there

find them. Words, in the course of time, change their meaning as well as their spelling and pronunciation, and we do not look to etymology for their present meanings. If I should call a man a knave and a villain, he would hardly be satisfied with my telling him that one of the words originally signified only a lad or servant, and the other an under-plow-man or the inhabitant of a village. It is from present usage only the meaning of words is to be determined."

It is possible that if the phonetic system had been adopted prior to the discovery of the art of printing, the origin of many of our words might have been lost; but it is not admitted that such would be the result of the adoption of the system at the present day.—Our language has already undergone greater changes in orthography than it would undergo by the adoption of the phonetic system. It is true that it took centuries to accomplish these changes, but will this fact justify us in being as slow as our ancestors were in improving our language? Formerly, the word *king* was written *cyning*; the word *lord* was written *houard*; and as late as 1600, the word *air* was written *ayre*. The examples are sufficient to show that there is no more difference between the phonetic system of spelling and the present mode, than there is between the present system and the ancient mode; but even if there were much greater difference, what evil would result from adopting the phonetic system? Is it not evident to any one who will give the subject but a moment's consideration, that if philologists can trace the words of the English language, as they are at present written, to their original elements, or *vice versa*, they could do so with equal facility if they should hereafter be written in accordance with the principles of phonetics?

To illustrate, I will take the word *laugh*, or, as it is written phonetically, and as we are taught to pronounce it, *laf*. Webster thus gives derivations of the word LAUGH, [Saxon, *hlidan*; Goth, *hlahyan*; German, *lachen*; D., *luchgen*; &c.] Now, should the next edition of Webster's Dictionary be printed in phonetics, the derivations of the word laugh could be given thus, LAF, [obsolete English, *laugh*; Saxon, *hlidan*; Goth, *hlahyan*; Ger. *lachen*; D., *luchgen*, &c.] The etymology of every word in the English language could be thus easily preserved; and if so, philologists would have nothing to fear from the adoption of the phonetic system.—Should we not adopt this system, our orthography will continue to be subjected to the same gradual change that has characterized it in the past, so that the eventual adoption of the phonetic system is only a question of time. For instance, within a half century from now, the word *laugh* would perhaps be written *lufg*, or *lafh*; during the next half century it would be changed to *lauf*,

and prior to A. D. 2000, it would be spelled phonetically, *laf*— and similar changes would be made in other words of rude orthography. We are continually trimming our orthography of its redundancies, and this pruning will continue until the phonetic system is finally adopted, then why should we not adopt it without delay, and thereby save future generations years of laborious study in endeavoring to master our "barbarous orthography," while their time might be much more profitably employed in studying other branches of education.

The objection urged by some against the adoption of the phonetic alphabet, on account of its inelegant appearance, might be urged with equal propriety against the use of some of the old letters, the small Roman *g*, for example, the old appearance of which is not noticed, since it has become familiar to us. In like manner the uncouth appearance of the new letters will vanish as soon as we become familiar with them.—*Extract from a Lecture, by a correspondent whose name is forgotten.*

Written and Spoken Language.

[Continued from our last.]

Another marked tendency of the language is to discard superfluous letters (that is, letters representing sounds which do not occur in the words as pronounced,) whether at the beginning, middle, or end of words. The following are a few examples of this tendency.

igreteinge	now	greeting
iscined	"	signed
yebaungide	"	changed
ylefte	"	left
flaith	"	faith
flall	"	fall
gifto	"	gift
hande	"	hand
rusto	"	rust
hemme	"	hem
denne	"	den
drumme	"	drum
tenno	"	ten
perill	"	peril
viall	"	vial
finall	"	final
royall	"	royal
farro	"	far
warro	"	war
combatt	"	combat
fitt	"	fit
frett	"	fret
citty	"	city
pitty	"	pity
discho	"	dish
fische	"	fish
perische	"	perish
horse	"	horse
richess	"	riches
blancket	"	blanket
drinck	"	drink

accompt	"	account
condempn	"	condemn
solempno	"	solemn
fruites	"	fruits
chumbe	"	chimo

A third tendency, which may be traced in a considerable number of words, consists in the change of certain combinations of vowels into others, according to uniform laws, as in the following examples:—

brede	now	bread
clere	"	clear
here	"	hear
nero	"	near
degre	"	degree
fre	"	free
see	"	see
chero	"	cheer
knele	"	kneel
sweto	"	sweet
boſt	"	boast
coſto	"	coast
doro	"	door
poro	"	poor
fote	"	foot
loko	"	look
braunche	"	branch
graunt	"	grant
dawnce	"	dance
flawme	"	flame
bloud	"	blood
souldier	"	soldier
liif	"	life
liik	"	like

There may be observed a corresponding change of certain consonants into others which have some relation to them, as in the following examples:—

hons	now	henco
pens	"	penco
service	"	servico
faoyon	"	fashion
mansion	"	mansion
ſence	"	ſenſo

A fourth principle which has had some influence on modern English orthography, is a regard to etymology. Scholars and grammarians have succeeded, in not a few instances, in bringing the spelling and the etymology into somewhat nearer agreement than they are found in some of our old authors, as in the following examples.—

angle	now	angel
antike	"	antiquo
auter	"	altar
baptyſem	"	baptism
blaſfemye	"	blasphemy
Criſt	"	Christ
cronkyle	"	chronicle
detto	"	debt
dout	"	doubt
fantum	"	phantom
eyre	"	heir
langage	"	language
lyſſetenant	"	lieutenant
trone	"	throne
vehemencie	"	vehemency

PHONETIC PIONEER.

vctayles " victuals
yerarchy " hierarchy
ympnoe " hymn

The question naturally arises, Are the changes in English orthography, which have been going on through successive epochs, likely to continue to the same extent in time to come? It is not difficult to find a satisfactory reply to this question. Our orthography will not change to the same extent in futuro. There are now causes in operation which tend to give greater stability to it.

In this place, it may be mentioned that one fruitful cause of change, which once operated in full force, and transformed not only the orthography, but the whole structure of many of the European languages, has now ceased to be felt. I allude to those vast emigrations, and to those sudden conquests by foreign races, of which we read in history.

But perhaps the cause which now tends more than any other to retard changes in orthography is the introduction of the art of printing. This wonderful art multiplies to an unlimited extent the number of copies of a book, in which each word is spelled exactly in the same manner. Not only may an unlimited number of copies be issued of any one edition, but edition may follow edition, each successive one being an exact reprint of those which preceded it. Shall I add, that by means of printing and the multiplication of books, the forms of words become familiar pictures to the eye, and are impressed indelibly on the memory? The case was very different in times gone by, when books only existed in the form of manuscripts, rarely to be met with and little read; each of which, moreover, was copied separately by scribes, who were constantly liable to err from ignorance or carelessness.

Another cause tending to give uniformity to spelling, and to prevent capricious changes, may be found in standard dictionaries. The compiler of a good dictionary is careful to select that spelling which appears to be sanctioned by the usage of the best writers. He comes before the public, not in his own name only, but supported by the authority of the highest names in literature. His dictionary is regarded as a standard of correct spelling, and is appealed to as a convenient book of reference in all cases of doubt. I am persuaded that Johnson's Dictionary has contributed largely to fix English orthography.—In fact, down to the present day, those who deviate from this standard must be prepared to give good reasons for it, or they will be set down as imperfectly educated.

It may be added, that the learning and critical skill of the grammarian, which act with more and more influence as time flows on, unite with those of the lexicographer in giving uniformity and certainty to orthography. By carefully studying the analogies of the language and the etymology of partic-

ular words, he can sometimes bring the public round to his views, and for ever fix a spelling which was before uncertain.

It is not, however, to be supposed that any, or all of these causes united, can entirely prevent the changes incident to a living language. Notwithstanding the conservative causes now in operation, there is reason to believe that alteration in the spelling of particular words will continue to go on, tho' silently and almost imperceptibly.

Mrs. Grammar's Ball.

Mrs. GRAMMAR once gave a ball
To the Nine different parts of Speech,—
To the big and the tall,
To the short and the small,
There were pies, plums and puddings for each.

And first, little Articles came,
In a hurry to make themselves known—
Fat, A, An and The,
But none of the three
Could stand for a minute alone.

Then Adjective came to announce
That their dear friends the Nouns were at hand.

*Rough, Rougher and Roughest,
Tough, Tougher and Toughest,
Fat, Merry, Good-natured and Grand.*

The Nouns were, indeed, on their way—
Ten thousand and more, I should think;
For each name that we utter—
Shop, Shoulder, and Shutter—
Is a Noun *Lady, Lion, and Link.*

The Pronouns were following fast
To push the Nouns out of their places,—
*I, Thou, You and Me,
We, They, He and She,*
With their merry, good-humored old faces.

Some cried out—"Make way for the Verbs!"
A great crowd is coming in view—
To *Bite* and to *Smite*,
And to *Light* and to *Fight*,
To *Be*, and to *Have*, and to *Do*.

The Adverbs attend on the Verbs,
Behind them as footmen they run
As thus—"To fight *Badly*,
They run away *Gladly*,"
Shows how fighting and running were done.

Prepositions came—*In, By, and Near*,
With Conjunctions, a poor little band,
As—"Either, you *Or* me,
But *Neither* them *Nor* he"—
They had their great friends by the hand:

Then, with a *Hip, Hip, Hurrah!*
Rushed Interjections uproarious—
"O, dear! *Well-a-day!*"
When they saw the display,
"Ha! ha!" they all shouted out, "Glorious!"

But, alas, what misfortunes were nigh,
While the fun and the feasting pleased each,
There pounced in at once
A monster—a *Dunce*,
And confounded the Nine parts of Speech!

Help, friends! to the rescue! on you
For aid Noun and Article call,—
Oh, give your protection
To poor Interjection,
Verb, Adverb, Coujunction and all!

LIST OF BOOKS, &c.

FOR SALE AT THE CANADIAN PHONETIC DEPOT, BINCOC STREET, OSHAWA, C. W.

The Prices named in the following Catalogue, include the delivery of the article at any Post Office in Canada, New Brunswick, or Nova Scotia, free of postage. Ten cent, five cent, or half-penny stamps, taken at full value; and all sums less than \$1, should be sent in stamps of either of the above denominations. All letters must come to hand post-paid.

AMERICAN MANUAL OF PHONOGRAPHY.—An Elementary Instruction Book in Phonography and Phonotypy. A Canadian Edition. By William H. Orr. Price, in cloth binding, 75 cts.

MANUAL OF PHONOGRAPHY.—An Elementary Instruction Book in Phonography, with exercises printed from stone engraving. By Benn Pitman—a brother of the inventor of Phonography.—Price, in Boards, 75 cts.

THE PHONOGRAPHIC READER.—A progressive series of Reading Exercises, printed from stone. Price, 30 cts. The second reader, same price.

THE REPORTER'S COMPANION.—A complete guide to the acquirement of Verbalism Reporting.—Price, \$1.

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THE HAND BOOK OF STANDARD PHONOGRAPHY.—By Andrew J. Graham. A new work of about 400 large pages and the most complete exposition of Pitman's Phonography ever published—commencing with the alphabet and carrying the student to the most rapid style of the art. Price, handsomely bound, \$1 50; with gilt side-title and marble edges, \$1 75.

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