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THE CANADIAN PHONETIC PIONEER,

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

William H. 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., SEPTEMBER, 1859.

NUMBER III.

HOZ PREZEZ.—It haz not bekum neseari for us tu publiſ de namz ov de suksesful kom-petitorz for de prizez mensond in sr Jon and Ogust numberz, for de simplg rezon dat dar qr nun. Stranj az it semz, not a sigl atemt at kompetifon woz ma'd bi eniboli, so sgr az de rezults aper.

GRAHAM'S HAND-BOOK.—“Graham's Hand-Book ov Standard Fonografi” taks wel. Everibodi semz tu lyk it for sum fetur or ander, and it iz rapidli kumig intu us az de standarl for bot de Korespondip and Reportip Stijl. Durin de past eleven montz we hav sold widin a sq kopiz ov 100, and de demand iz konstantli on de inkres. We hav bin resev- ip orderz at de rat ov wun per da for sum tijn past, hwig wil dstles bekum dubid az mid- winter and de holidaz aproq, so dat mor tijn ma be fsnd for studi. Notwidstandip sr stand- dip ofer tu refund de muni tu eni person ho ma be disatisfid wid de buk and ho returnz it widin tw weks unsold, not a siggl kopiz haz yet bin resevd.

MARID.—Last munt we had de plezur ov rekordip de marij ov de wurdj Vjs President ov de Britij Amerikan Fonetik Asosijon.— On de prezent okazon it also bekumz sr plez- ip durti tu perform a lyk ofis for sr estimabl friend Mr Weber, de efisjent Sekretari ov de sam Asosijon:

In Toronto, on Turzda de 8d inst., bi de Rev. Jon Borland, Ogustus, yungest sun ov Henri (Webber) Eskwjr, proprijetor ov de ‘Kardif and Westbi Garjian’ nuzpaper, (Cardiff) Ing- land—tu Eljza, eldest doter ov Edmund Morfi, Eskwjr, Richmond stret, Toronto.

At de resent Nafonal Tegez' Asosijon Konvensjon, hwig met at Wofington, U. S., on de 10d ov Ogust last, wun hundred and fifti tegez and odyktorz, ov varius grada wer prezent. De subjekt ov teqip gildren tu red de Roman print bi menz ov de Fonetik alfa- bet, woz brot up and woz wel resevd. A komitti ov tre woz afonted tu report upon it at de nekst meting ov de Asosijon.

Reading, Writing, and Spelling Reform.

From “Young Ideas.”

Are you aware of the existence of a Reading, Writing and Spelling Reform?— This question will not be considered imper- inent, since it is a fact that one-half of the world knows not what the other half does. There are so many objects engrossing the attention of the world, that it is no great wonder if you have never so much as heard of the steady-going, unobtrusive Spelling- Reform, though it is now some nineteen years old. It is by degrees—we may now say rap- idly—becoming more generally known, ap- preciated, and adopted; and, having worked its own way by means of its own merits into public estimation, we have no doubt that it will keep its footing. Firmly believing it to be *truth*, and also firmly believing that truth must *conquer*, we prophesy a trium- phant future for the Spelling Reform, and great and lasting good as the result of it.

But you may have heard of the Reform, and not have had it properly explained to you. In what does it consist? In the ad- option of a *sound* principle of representing words. The theory is simplicity itself. I wish to convey some ideas to my friend in the far distance; how shall I accomplish it? Not like the Egyptians, by means of picture-writing, or by the use of hieroglyph- ics; nor by a system of ideagraphy, as the Chinese would. How then? If I could *talk viva voce*. If I could send some living messenger charged with my mind, the thing might be done without further difficulty—only there ~~was~~ be the chance of a mistake on the part of the messenger. But independ- ently of the risk of a mistake, this plan is, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, impracticable. Cannot I *talk to him in a note*, and send it by the post? Of course

I can; we have an alphabet, every letter of which represents a sound, and all I have to do is to arrange these letters so that they shall represent the sounds I wish my friend to hear, and in their proper order, and it is evident he will then know my ideas as well as if I had conveyed them to his ear in liv- ing words. And this will be making a leg- itimate use of our alphabet, if it is to be used for the purpose for which alphabets were made, for “all original alphabets are essentially phonetic.” Now, this, the *sound* principle of the Spelling Reform,—that to write and print according to sound, is better than any other system of conveying ideas to whom the voice cannot reach; but this can- not be done properly by the twenty-six let- ters of the Roman alphabet, since there are at least thirty-four simple, distinct sounds in our language, and by right every sound should have a sign exclusively to itself. This inef- ficiency has led to inconsistency and con- fusion in the use of those twenty-six letters we have, for each one represents, on an av- erage, four-and-a-half different sounds, and we have no definite rules whereby to decide, in any given case, which of these sounds to fix upon. Hence, then, the need of a reform, appropriating to each single sound a single sign, and requiring each sign to represent only its appropriate sound. This is accom- plished by the Spelling Reform.

There is no doubt that the ignorance of our land is in no small degree attributable to the extreme difficulty and irrationality of our present orthography. The latter is “an ex- ceeding high mountain,” up whose rugged heights our juvenile population have to climb with tears and wailing, and amongst the brambles and briars of whose thorny sides many fall in despair. By it millions are stop- ped at the very threshold of education, not being able to master the necessary elemen- tary art of reading; and additional millions are unable to write it correctly. Even amongst those who have learned to read, there are very many who cannot spell prop- erly, z. e., according to the accepted way. And this is because the accepted orthog- raphy is really not proper, not what it should be. The partially educated people often,

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show more good sense on this subject than the learned and correct; the former trust more to common sense than to memory, and write as well as they are able according to sound. Hence there are *plese, riting, helth, loves*, etc., written in epistles daily. Practical arguments of this kind in favor of a Spelling Reform, come under the notice of every one, and they are, perhaps, the most telling arguments. The present orthography is a departure from the true principle of alphabetic representation, and, as error, must in the course of time become obsolete. It is difficult and irrational; the minds of our youth are stultified by it, and the sooner it is given up for an easy and rational mode of spelling the better. How long will the people abide this evil, and suffer the pathway of education to be obstructed by such a perplexing system! A remedy is at hand. A complete alphabet of thirty-four letters has been formed by the members of the Phonetic Society. It contains a sign for every simple and distinct sound in our language, and no sign or letter represents more than one sound. By means of this alphabet, (in which there are twenty-four of our old letters,) when once committed to memory, a child, or an adult unable to read, has but little difficulty in learning that necessary art, because in phonotypy every word is printed as it would be pronounced, and therefore when the learner looks at any word upon paper, he at once sees its name; the sound is represented by the sign used, and no letter is used that is not pronounced, consequently there could be nothing easier or more straightforward than learning to read correctly. The rationality of the system imparts confidence and encouragement, the pupil acquires the art in one-tenth of the time it takes to learn from books printed in the old alphabet. And having learned to read, correct spelling becomes easy, because it is but a faithful representation of correct speaking, by the letters of a sufficient alphabet, each one of which has a fixed and limited value. The learner knowing the sound he wishes to make, and having the proper letters at his command to make that sound, has nothing more to do than to require the ability of forming words with letters in a strictly rational manner, in order to become a correct speller; and such a system of learning must be admitted to be vastly superior to the present method, both as regards time and discipline.

Phonography in Troy Teachers' Institute.

Charles S. Royce to Longley Brothers:—Last week I attended a Teachers' Institute in Troy, Ohio. I found a very good number in attendance, ninety-eight; and both teachers and taught were doing well.

The Institute was under the superintendence of Rev. Robert Allen, who is to succeed Mr.

Wilbur, as President of the Wesleyan Female College in Cincinnati.

Among other good things which he has done, at Troy, is this: In arranging the classes, he placed Phonography upon the same footing as Orthography, assuming that every teacher needs a knowledge of that branch.

The whole Institute was receiving instruction in Phonography from W. T. Hawthorne, in two classes. The classes were rather large, but such is Mr. Hawthorne's thoroughness, that they will go forth with much practical knowledge of the art. Let Phonographers remember Mr. Allen and the Troy Institute.—*Type of the Times.*

The Press and the Reform.

PHONOTYPY IN CALIFORNIA.—The *Star of the Pacific*, a religious paper published in Petaluma, Cal., of July the 1st, comes to us with a column and a half of genuine phonetic reading. It looks well, and will open the eyes of many to the merits of the reform.

The *Radical Spiritualist*, for September, published at Hopedale, Mass., also contains a column in phonetic spelling, very accurately done. The contents of this paper are "spirited," as well as spirituous.—*Ibid.*

Specimens of English Orthography at Various Periods.

About the year of Christ 700 the Lord's Prayer in English was thus rendered,—

Uren fader thi arth in heofnas, sic gehalgud thu nama: to cymeth thin ric: sic thin willa sue is in heofnas and in eorþho. Uren hlaf ofer-wirtlic sel us to daeg; and forgef us scylda urna, sue we forgesen scyldgum urum; and no inlead usith in costung. Ah gefrig urich from isle. Amen.—*Camden's "Remains."*

About 200 years after, it was changed thus,—

Thu ure fader the eart on heofenum. Si thin nama gehalgod. Cum thin ric. Si thin willa on eorþen swa, swa on heofenum. Syle us to daeg urn daegþanlican hlaf. And forgil us ure gyltas swa, swa we forgyfath tham the with us agyltath. And ne led the us on costung. Ac alys us from ylle. Si it swa.—*Lisle's "Saxon Monuments."*

About the same time it was rendered in the Saxon Gospels, said to have been translated by King Alfred, after this manner,—

Fæder ure thu the earth on heofenum, si thin nama Gehalgod to become thin Rice, Gewurthe thin willa on eorþan swa swa on heofnum, urne ge dagþanlican hlaf syle us to daeg. And forgyf us ure gyltas, swa swa we forgyfath urum gyltendum. And ne gelædde thu us on costung. Ac Alyse us of ylle.

About 200 years after, in the time of King Henry II., it was rendered thus, and sent over by Pope Adrian, an Englishman, turned into meter, that the people might more easily learn and remember it.

Ure fadyr in heavern rich,
Thy name be hallyed ever lich;
Thou bring us thy michell blisse:
Ah hit in heavern y-doe,
Evar in yearth beene it also.
That holy bread that listeth ay,
Thou send it ous this ilke day,
Forgive ous all that we have don,
As we forgivet uth other mon;
Ne let ous fall into no founding,
Ac shield us fro the fowse thing. Amen.

And about a hundred years after, in the time of Henry III., it was rendered thus,—

Fader that art in heavin blisse,
Thou heige nam it worth the blisse,
Cumen and inot thy kingdom,
Thou holy will it be all don,
In heavern and in erdh also.
So it shall bin full well ic tro.
Gif us all bread on this day,
And forgyf us ure sinnes,
As we ure wider winnes:
Let us not in sonding fall,
Eac fro evil thu shyld us all.

About 200 years after this, in the time of Henry VI., (as appears by a large manuscript vellum Bible in the Oxford Library, said to have belonged to this king, and to have been given by him to the Carthusians in London,) it was rendered thus,—

Oure fadir, that art in hevenes, halowid be thi name. thi kingdom come to thee, be thi wil don in eerthe, as in hevene, give to us this dayoure breedoure other substance, and forgive to usoure dettis, as we forgyrenoure dettours, and lede us not into temptation, but delivrer us from ivel. Amen.

In the translation of Wickliffe, 1380, given in Bagster's "English Hexapala," it is rendered thus,—

Oure fadir that art in hevenes halowid be thi name, thi kyngdom come to, be thi wille don in erthe as in hevene, geve to vs this dayoure breedoure other substance, and forgeue to vsoure dettis, as we forgeue to oure dettouris, and lede us not in to temptacioun: but deliyuer vs from yuel amem.

About a hundred and fifty years after this, in the first translation of the New Testament, printed in England, executed by William Tyndale, in 1526 (and reprinted by Bagster,) it was rendered thus,—

Ooure father which arte in beven, halowed be thy name. Let thy kingdom come. Thy wyl be fulfilled, as well in erth, as hit ys in beven. Geve vs this daye oure dayly breade. And forgere vs oure treaspases, even as we

forgive our trespassers. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

In 1537 the whole Bible was printed with the King's license, and in it the Lord's Prayer was rendered thus:—

O ure father which arte in heven halowed be thy name. Let thy kingdome come. Thy will be fulfilled as well in erth, as it is in heven. Give us this dayeoure day'y bred. And forgeve us oure trespasses, even as we forgeve oure trespassers. And lead us not into temptacion, but delivrer us from evyll. Amen.

Authorized version, 1611,—

Our father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen.

From the authorized version, 1859,—

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name: thy kingdom come: thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven: give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors: and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever, Amen.

The Claims of Phonetic Spelling.

It is the object of this paper to present an outline of a subject which might be treated at much greater length; and it is hoped that many may be induced to weigh the considerations here set forth who might turn away from a more extended treatise.

The proposal to revise and amend the system upon which English orthography is constructed, seems at first sight a highly audacious one. But the feeling of indignation which is apt to arise when such a proposal is mentioned will probably subside when it is remembered that the existing system dates as far back as the Norman Conquest,—that perhaps nothing else of so early an origin in the whole range of British affairs, has escaped the scrutiny and the transforming power of modern knowledge, zeal and energy,—that in point of fact, a process of change in spelling has been ever going on, though so gradually as to excite no alarm,—that while the old orthographic basis is retained, such modifications must come far short of what is desirable,—and that therefore there is nothing unreasonable in the opinion that at the present advanced stage of our literary history and attainments as a people, this basis itself should be examined, its defects supplied and its excrescences removed.

As Britons, it can afford us no satisfaction to disparage in any respect our native tongue; but we must remember, on the other hand,

that it has not been by shutting our eyes to our defects that we have reached our present exalted position among the nations. Let us, therefore, look dispassionately at the case. The charges brought against the existing system of spelling are such as the following:

1. That the characters employed are too few. There are twenty-five vowel sounds, to represent which upon paper there are only five letters; hence a is one thing in *mane* and a different thing in *man*, and so with the others. Five consonant sounds are also without characters, namely, that given to *th* in *thin*, that to *th* in *then*, that to *sh* in *shun*, that to *si* in *vision*, and that to *ng* in *ring*.

2. That from the want of single letters to represent such elementary sounds, the expedient of employing digraphs is resorted to, as *ai, ee, oo, oa, etc.*, in the vowel department, and *th, sh, etc.*, in that of the consonants, which occasions a great deal of needless writing, and involves a violation of the proper theory of an alphabet.

3. That there are redundancies as well as deficiencies, inasmuch as in a large proportion of cases, the same sound is represented by a variety of expedients. Thus one vowel sound is heard in the first syllable of *maker*, and in the words *pale, aid, day, veil* and *grey*; but in these cases that sound is expressed by the various forms *a, a-e, ai, ay, ei* and *ey*.

4. That most of the different letters and digraphs thus employed are not confined to one sound each. For example, the letter *y* has three functions in the words *try, hymn, yet*; and *ng* also three in *strange, longer*, (of greater length), and *longer* (one who longs or wishes.)

5. That from the co-existence of the two forms of excess last noticed arises a great deal of confusion,—sounds and characters playing at cross purposes with each other. Thus there is one vowel element which is represented at different times by two letters and five digraphs, but of these seven only three are confined to the task of representing that vowel. The others have from one to four additional functions, amounting to eleven in all,—these eleven being mere duplicate methods of expressing other elements.

6. That though certain rules are formed for the purpose of guiding through the labyrinth occasioned by this state of things, these rules are far from being adequate to the task proposed for them. They are numerous and intricate to such a degree that few even of the well-educated ever master them; and after all it is doubtful if more than half of the materials of the language are reducible to their sway.

7. That as the necessary result, the difficulty of learning to read is at least double what it ought to be—while that of acquiring a knowledge of spelling is increased to an extent which it is not easy to estimate. With

a perfect alphabet the spelling should determine the pronunciation, and the pronunciation the spelling; but instead of this it becomes necessary to put forth a special effort of memory for each of a vast number of words. When we look at the words *paper* and *panic*, we naturally suppose that the first vowel should have the same sound in both; but we find the fact to be, that the second consonant is attached to the latter syllable in the one word, and to the former in the other. They are therefore read *pa-per* and *pan-ic*. But we are not guided to this information by the letters, or by any definite rule. It must be obtained by inquiry and firmly fixed in the memory, ere we can read these words correctly. [The printer would here observe that the compositor who put this article in type,—a youth who has lately left a National School, not being acquainted with the word *panic*, in reading his copy to the proof corrector, pronounced it *pa-nic*, in accordance with the syllabic division of *pa-per, fa-ror, ca-pier, etc.*] Again, if we wish to spell the word *peak*, it may be written *peke, peek, peak, pik, peik, or pique*, and each of these modes has usage in similar cases to plead in its favor. The sound of the word does not therefore lead us to the proper letters, and a special act of memory is required to enable us out of six modes to choose the right one. In short, the never-ending recurrence to the Dictionary on the part of all learners is a standing proof of the difficulty experienced in attaining to accuracy either in spelling or writing.

What is required, therefore, is such a reformation of the orthographic basis of the language as will secure two things.

1. That each distinct elementary sound shall be furnished with its representative letter.
2. That each letter be confined to the duty of representing one sound only.

By the first of these principles the vowel sounds in *bale, bat, ball, balm*, would, for example, be expressed by four characters, instead of one as at present. By the second principle there would be an end of all diversity of methods for accomplishing the same object. By the joint operation of both, all digraphs and silent letters would be removed from the field, and spelling would come to form a consistent, complete, and precise reflection of accurate speech.

One or two examples may be adduced in elucidation of these statements. The vowel sound heard in the word *be* occurs also in *eve, meet, pea, grievè, seize* and *marine*. But the modes of expressing it are as numerous as the words, namely, *e, e-c, ea, ie, ei,* and *i*. By the new method, all these modes are reduced to one; thus, *be, ev, met, pe; grev, sez, margn.*

Again, the consonant sound which comes first in the word *kill*, is expressed by *c* in *can*, by *q* in *quell*, by *ch* in *chord*, by *ck* in *pick*, by *cc* in *accord*, by *cq* in *acquit*, and by *que*

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to *cheque*. Now if *k* be chosen as the uniform representative of that sound, all these forms will be superseded by that letter, and the words will be written, *kil, kan, kwel, kord, yuk, akroit, teak*.

This brief glance at the merits of the case may induce some to whom the subject is new to explore these merits more fully. It may also prepare their minds in some measure for the consideration of the question discussed in the following paragraphs—whether the proposed modification of the orthographic basis or apparatus of the language, and the consequent alterations in the spelling of a considerable proportion of the words are on the whole worthy of adoption.

When a change is proposed in any department of human affairs, opposition may be urged on two grounds; first, that the positive advantages to be gained are small and unimportant; or, second, that though considerable they are counterbalanced or outweighed by new disadvantages which the change must occasion. The agitator can have little hope of success unless he can disprove both assertions. In discussing the question of an improved system of spelling, it is therefore proper to consider first the value of the advantages which are to be obtained by it, and secondly the weight that is due to the objections which may lie against it.

1. The chief and outstanding benefit arising from the use of a complete alphabet would be, the greatly increased facility with which the arts of reading and spelling would be acquired. When the letter *i*, for instance, has five different values in *time, pin, pique, firm* and the second syllable of *pinton*, and when the digraph *ou* has four values in *round, soup, mould, touch*, it becomes a very troublesome task to recollect when one of these values must be used in pronunciation and when another. If short and clear rules could be furnished for distinguishing one from another, the difficulty would be much diminished; but all that can be done in that way leaves a great deal in a state of uncertainty; and for the rest, a strong memory, dealing with each word individually, is the only resource. In spelling, the case is a vast deal worse, as the operation of rules is much more circumscribed. The word *pain*, for example, consists of three elements; but the second, which is a vowel, is represented in so many ways that the word may become *pain, paine, peyn, peyne, pein, paine, payn, payne, or pane*; and if we know which of all these is to be chosen, it can only be through a special exercise of memory. So also when the consonant *s* is to be put on paper it is necessary to remember whether *s, se, ce, ss, or sc* is to be used for the purpose: as witness the words *sin, cell, pulse, force, lass and scent*. All such trouble would be annihilated if each sound was uniformly expressed by its own letter: and it is not going beyond due bounds to assert that by a

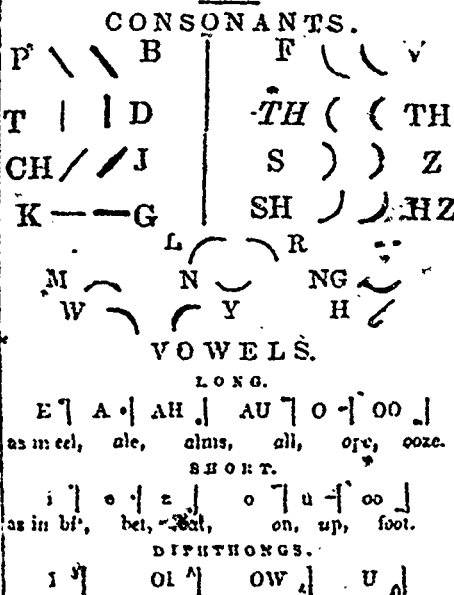
change of system, reading would be acquired in one half, and spelling in one fourth, of the time expended upon them at present. This assertion is warranted by experiments.

(To be continued.)

PHONOGRAPHY.—It is impossible to speak too highly of Pitman's magnificent system of Phonography. Combining in the highest degree the important features of simplicity, terseness and perspicuity, whether considered as a practical art of great utility, or a science which reveals, demonstrates and applies the true principles of articulation, it certainly may be regarded, if not as perfect, at least as incomparably superior to any other known system of chirography. Its use is now chiefly confined to reporters and others connected with the press, and the few professional men and scholars who have had the good sense to see its great advantages, and the patience to study it.

But Phonography is a science that should be as universally understood as language, and, in course of time, when conservative prejudices are conquered, it *must* be. It should be taught in all schools. As it becomes more generally known and understood, the present clumsy and cumbersome longhand system of writing must give way. It cannot stand the test of such a comparison.—*Weekly Tribune, Washington, U. S.*

The Phonographic Alphabet.



It should be observed that the upright strokes under the head of "vowels" are only for the purpose of showing the positions of the dots and dashes which represent the vowels. The dots and dashes are rounded the same in the same position, when placed to any other letter of the alphabet. The true sounds or powers of the vowel characters are shown by the italicised letters in the words beneath.

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