# The Oregonian.

Entered at the Postoffice at Portland, Oregon, as second-class matter.
REVISED SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

POSTAGE RATES. United States, Canada and Mexico:

Foreign rates double.

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TODAY'S WEATHER-Occasional rain, with brick to high southerly winds

TESTERDAY'S WEATHER-Maximum tem mum temperature, 39; precipitation, 0.11 inch.

PORTLAND, SUNDAY, MARCH 23.

### THE PRICE OF DEMOCRACY.

The real complaint of General Miles and his partisans, assuming it to be wholly sincere and disinterested, is not against his superiors, but against our system; and his natural and logical discontent must be borne, for it is an inevitable part of the price of democ-

Government in the United States suffers, throughout all its forms, from school district to Nation, from the enthronement of the amateur. Office, with all its responsibility, authority and power, is continually passing from the trained to the untrained, from experience to ignorance, from the skilled and competent to the unskilled and incompetent. Novices are in control of everything, from White House to Road Supervisor. It is unfortunate in many ways-costly, humiliating, and productive of frequent scandals when trusted men develop weakness or venality through new and severe trial; but there is no help for it. The democracy itself must rule. The offices must revert to

the people. The Army is at the mercy of unpro fessionals. The President is at best a volunteer soldier, generally he is not a War is a lawyer. Now, it seems to the Lieutenant-General of the Army, and to the Army as a whole, little short of is the simple fact that members of the trous that the actual direction of in peace, devolves upon civilians, without whatever wisdom and capacity accrue from lifelong study and experience in the profession of arms. So in the Navy Department the entire force of trained Admirals, Commodores and all down the line and staff are to be put under the control of a Mr. Moody, who, up to seven years ago, had been simply

B practicing lawyer of Haverhill, Mass. Yet there is no other way. The responsibility is vested, under our system, with the President, and the authority must be his, to exercise it through subordinates of his own choosing. Therefore, Army and Navy must be unquestionably at his disposal, under the Constitution and the acts of Congress. It is as impossible for Miles to be running the Army on the plans which he outlined to the Senate committee, as it would be for Dewey to be cutting the cables behind him on a cruise about the Pacific in war time. The verdict of a popular election must be reflected in the executive work of the Government, and the permanent establishment of the Army is powerless to compass that reflection. It can only be reached by elective officers, who, as the embodiment of National power, must return to the people at stated-intervals for ap-

proval or rejection. The local campaign now on in Oregon reminds us how closely this principle applies to the lower walks of politics. We shall soon have men without experience running for offices in which lack of experience is a heavy handicap. We shall have men in the Legislature who never sat in the Legislature, never made a speech or drew up a bill. We shall have a State Printer who never was State Printer in his life, and a Sheriff who was never Sheriff, and Councilmen who never saw an ordinance. By the time a man has been in an office long enough to master its details, everybody is down on him as a perpetual office-holder, and out he goes to make room for a novice. Perhaps thon on the subject in the Legislatures the most painful consequence of all is the disturbing influence the chance for office exerts upon men who might be contented and useful behind a counter or holding plow-handles, but become wrecked in the maelstrom of political

Nothing in this world is perfect Every rose has its thorn, and the things we have just been considering are in reality but the briars that surround the fair flower of representative government. The rose of democracy has its | will thorns, but it is worth all its perils and annoyances. We could get a permanent official class and the ripest experience in every office by taking a monarchical form of government, with its privileged classes. We could have deference to officials by establishing lese majeste. We could have a more perfeet Army by adopting Germany's wonderful military organization, with all we do not, and we shall not. And we are far better so. Public life ruins some weak men, but enables others to ornament and elevate the society where they are placed. These young men on our Legislative ticket are preferable every

has become a standing joke. Charlie McDonell had no experience, but he made a good Assessor. Function never West Point, but he captured Aguinaldo. Experience is a good thing, but there are things more important. Honest industry is fit for almost any office to which it may aspire, and mistakes are easily corrected. No political machine can save the discredited Senator. There is no tribunal of expert examiners above the popular vote. Whom the people want they must have; and in the long run they will do well. Every device for reaching more directly and accurately the popular will advances the cause of good government. That is why the Australian ballot and the primary law are measures of true reform. The proof is always in their fruits.

## THE ONLY WAY.

The throes of a Senatorial campaign again remind us how urgent is the necessity for the change in the method of electing Senators. There is no more reason why a United States Senator should not be compelled to go before why a State Senator should not, or a Governor, or the President of the United States. Conservative as well as popular opinion, as voiced in such journals as the New York Financial Chronfele, New York Evening Post, Chicago Tribune, etc., join in the demand. Its opponents are reduced to a single ground, recently outlined by Senator Hoar, which we wish briefly to notice, and from it to infer a conclusion as to the necessary mode of procedure to reach

the reform. The objection to which all opposition to the change seems to have been reduced is that thus we should run coun ter to the Constitution's theory that choice of Senators must be removed from the stress and peril of popular crazes. The theory found expression, not only in the indirect election of Senators, but in the indirect election of | Corelli's "Thelma." Presidents. But, as we all know, the selection of Presidents has long been removed from the indirect method prescribed in the Constitution, and still formally observed in the Electoral Col- popular, quick-selling books. lege. If the President and the whole policy and patronage of the National tion that did not at once obtain and folly to fear danger in invoking that Senator?

Why, then, is it not possible to subtion and popular election used in connection with the Presidential office for the Legislative method of choosing Senators? The answer is that what holds their trust is the fact that the whole perpetuity of their National party organization depends upon it. If the Presidential electors were to exercise their free choice as contemplated in the Constitution and disregard the nominees of their party, the National party organization would fall to the ground. No such penalty attaches to independent action by members of a State Legislature. united action has been able to hold them. The Presidential election, moreover, is a National event consummated at one time, while Senatorial elections divagations of members of State Legislatures on Senatorial choices. We lication. may see from this the reasons why state minations and popular votes of preference for United States Senator, as attempted upon occasion in Illinois. Nebraska and probably other states, have soldier at all; the present Secretary of falled to make any lasting impression on the practices of politics. egisiature are resp Representative or Senatorial districts for their votes, and not at all to the state at large or their party conventions. So long as the law puts the responsibility upon the individual State Senator or Representative he is bound to exercise his own discretion. Neither a bad man wishing to escape from a good nomination nor a good man dissatisfied with a bad nomination will be vention.

bound by the action of his state con-Yet nothing is clearer than that the Senate itself can never or not for a long time be brought to approve the House bill for the Constitutional amendment necessary to bring the change about. So many Senators believe in the legislative machinery as the source of their own power and the means of its perpetuation that they regard the move for popular election as inimical to their own political existence. Whoever would move them must reckon with nothing less potent than the instinct of selfpreservation. The bill is as hopeless as

the reform is necessary. The only alternative left is amendment of the Constitution through the State Legislatures. This can be effected without other than perfunctory action of Congress, which article V of Constitution makes mandatory. Two-thirds of the states through their Legislatures can call for a National convention to propose amendments; it is the duty of Congress to execute the call, and three-fourths of the states can ratify the proposed amendments through Legislature or convention. A concerted action of some sort ought to be undertaken to secure this convention call from two-thirds of the states Violently as some Senators are opposed to the change, there are hardly enough of them to resist successfully this demand in sixteen of the forty-five states. It would be a deserving act of public spirit for some one to start an organized movement, with representatives in the various states, looking to concerted acof 1993.

## AS TO POPULATION.

The Seattle Post-Intelligencer says. "The total registered vote of Portland, at the time the books closed for the recent primaries, was 16,634, almost precisely identical with the registration for the recent city election in Seattle." The books at Portland were not "closed the recent primaries." They not be closed till May 15; and meantime many thousands of additional voters will be registered. Very little of the Democratic vote of Portland was registered before the recent primaries, for there was no contest in that party, and only about 800

Democratic votes were cast But the Scattle paper adds: fact that Portland has registered as many voters as has Seattle does not its paternalism and its iron rule. But indicate that Portland has as large a population as Seattle has at the pres- all Boston is going to hear Griggs, just ent time." registration shall have been completed, in May next. But in fact, if Portland's registration of voters were no greater than that of Seattle, it would still be

greater; for it is families that make population, not a herd of men without families-such herd as fills the streets of Seattle, begging, dead broke, going to or returning from Alaska, living nowhere, but picked up by political bosses and registered for elections. Resident population is made up of families and school children, not "vagrom men."

## AN ABSURD LIMITATION.

Mr. Carnegle recently said that he would bar from libraries fiction less than three years old. This seems to be an absurd limitation. There is a standard of decent merit in fiction which does not need a mere popularity or esteem of three years for a novel to reach. The real worth of a book devoted to historical or scientific investigation could not be so quickly determined as the merit of a work of fiction. Whether a work of fiction has humor, eloquence, imagination, dramatic quality, power of character-drawing and moral decency is promptly settled with its first appearance.

To illustrate, take "Audrey," Mary the people for approval than there is Johnston's latest work. It is easy to criticise it for quite frequent lapses from strict grammatical accuracy, just as it is easy to find fault with Byron's poetry, which is full of grammatical transgressions. But while Byron was guilty of bad grammar, he was so eloquent and powerful a writer that no man of intellect and imagination thinks long about Byron's grammatical looseness of style. He confesses that Byron is not a poet's poet, but he feels that he was a man of powerful mind and noble imagination. So with Mary Johnston's "Audrey." The "split infinitives" are forgotten in the delight we feel in reading what is a most beautiful story. Its tragically sad ending deeply moves you; you feel there is genius in it; that the imaginative quality is of a fine, rare art. It shows greater imagination than even Marie

All the fine novels of modern life made a speedy impression at once as to their intellectual and moral quality, even if they did not at once prove to be We do not remember a standard work of fic-Government may be safely left to the retain an excellent reputation, which verdict of universal suffrage, is it not time only served to confirm. Fielding, Jane Austen, Scott, Bulwer, Dickens, verdict for the less important office of Thackeray, George Eliot, Charles Reade, George Meredith, Charlotte Bronte, Anthony Trollope, Charles Lever, J. M. stitute at once the system of conven- Barrie, Conan Doyle, Anthony Hope, Fenimore Cooper and Hawthorne all secured their public at once and held it. To wait until a novel is three years old before you admit it to a public library the members of the electoral college to may test its popularity, but it does not settle its merit upon any sounder basis than it occupied three months after

publication. "The Crisis" is a popular novel; it is entirely decent in its tone, but it is no more fit to be compared with "Audrey" in its beauty or its art than is "Thaddeus of Warsaw" with "The Mill on the Floss." "The Crisis" makes the grand historical figure of Abraham Lincoln Consequently no programme of the tail to the kite of a very cheap love story, but there is no such "blacksmith" work in "Audrey," and this conclusion would be reached at once by any intelligent reader. But under Mr. Carnegie's are isolated in time and place. The absurd limitation the public library party as a whole is unaffected by the would be without either "Audrey" or "The Crisis" for three years after pub

## TUB-THUMPERS ON THE PLATFORM.

Fifty years ago the lecture platform was among the popular forms of public entertainment, and sometimes, when the boards were trod by a really able, solid more potent than any of these reasons | man, of public instruction, every coun-00 inhabitants had a lecture ciation. Railways did not then so completely cobweb the country; great metropolitan newspapers were not so widely circulated in the rural districts: magazines were not nearly so numerous nor so cheap, so the dull country towns were eager to hear lectures from men reputed to be wise or eloquent. Horace Greeley told what he "knew about farming," which did not take him very long, and what he knew about protection, with him an exhaustless theme. Emerson, Theodore Parker, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Rev. Dr. E. H. Chapin, the famous Universalist preacher; Thomas Starr King, Henry Ward Beecher, John G. Saxe and Wendell Phillips were some of the best drawing cards of the country lecture field.

> From about 1850 to 1875 the public lecture was in good demand. Theodore Parker, who was not an eloquent man at all, was in great demand East and West because of his extraordinary capacity for weighting his thoughts with a vast variety of facts drawn from political history and the world's literature, both sacred and profane; his antislavery argument was not sentimental, but industrial and economic. Emerson was not an eloquent man, but was an admirable speaker because of his distinct, simple, natural method of speech he had 'a certain Yankee dry wit and humor, and he was in great demand East and West, Oliver Wendell Holmes was a very attractive speaker, but was in no sense a man of eloquence; his bright wit and humor gave to his utterances their charm. Beecher was a powerful speaker; but not a noble orator in any high sense, like Rev. Dr. Chapin and Wendell Phillips. After the war the lecture field gradually declined, although Phillips and Beecher continued to hold the platform successfully as late as 1880. Since their passing away the lecture field has not been in large popular favor outside of some man like Robert G. Ingersoll, who was an attractive speaker to many who cared little for the subject-matter of his discourse. With the exception of men like John Fiske, whose historical lectures always commanded a good audience, the lecture field has been comparatively worthless to home speakers discoursing on literature, morals and manners, compared with its productiveness

between 1850 and 1875. Today, however, there seems to be a revival of popular interest in the lecture platform, if we may judge from the extraordinary success obtained by the Englishman, Professor Edward Howard Griggs, who recently lectured on "Carlyle" at the Tremont Temple. Boston. This Englishman has packed Tremont Temple in a forenoon lecture which was not free, as are the Lowell Institute lectures. The report of the ecture on "Carlyle" published in the Boston Herald tells nothing of the great Scotchman's career and quality that is not perfectly familiar to any reading man of fair intelligence. Nevertheless, Just wait till Portland's as it did Henry Drummond a few years ago. Griggs is about 32 years of age, is an English college professor, and his popularity is probably due to the fact that he has become a kind of literary

the Twentieth Century Club. It is easy carried from the transmitter to the reto understand how in a country village or town far from the great centers one can be eager to hear lectures. But it is not easy to understand how, unless people have plenty of time to spare, they care to go to lectures in a great city when they have opportunities to see art, hear music, witness a good play and read a good book. It is worth while to hear a fine orator-or to see a man who is really remarkable, a great light in his generation-or to attend a course of lectures on art, architecture, history or travel, illustrated with pictures, for that gives us something we could not get in books. It was worth while to hear Thackeray, Dickens, Herbert Spencer, Froude, Huxley, Tyndail and Matthew Arnold when they lectured in America, because they were among the famous men of the nineteenth century; but unless a man is a fine orator, or a memorable man in some way, it is not worth while to put out time, strength or money to hear him lecture on religion, philosophy or literature. Unless the lecturer is something wonderful, it is hard to understand how vigorous, young or middle-aged people should want to do it if they are per-

sons of fair education. Of course, for hard-working people of limited opportunity and time for reading it is a fine thing to have a lecturer give them in a clear and entertaining form things that are new to them, but this is not the kind of audience that goes forth at 11 A. M. to hear Griggs lecture. If he were a man worth seeing, like John Bright or Gladstone, or our was a pleasure to see Phillips Brooks and despite the fact that his utterance was too rapid and too monotonous. It was a pleasure to see and hear Emerson, Theodore Parker and Wendell Phillips, and it was worth while even to have heard Robert G. Ingersoll, for, while he was not a great man, he had a certain gift of public speech in a remarkable degree. But why Griggs? There does not seem to be any sound reason why an educated American should go at 11 A. M. to hear Griggs talk about Carlyle, or Tennyson, or some other of England's stars that set in the nineteenth century. The only explanation of the Griggs fad in Boston would seem to be that his lectures are probably like those which Andrew Lang describes when he says "they are vast popular preachments, rich in the tawdry rhetoric of the tub-thumper. know why popular preachers are popular. These novelist pulpiteers have their gospelling to do, and do it with foolish noise. They have a vogue, as Tupper and Montgomery had a vogue, and great are the uses of advertisement, whether applied to soap or pills or works of fiction. There is no mystery about the causes of such successful appeals to the emotional mental middle

classes.

"INSIDE CIRCLE" ADMINISTRATION. events past are suggesting to many minds the desirability of such general overhauling of both the Army and about rings and cliques. That there is an "inside circle" in both these departments is to state gently the popular be-lief. Everybody familiar with the situation knows that the nominal heads of the Army and Navy are mere figureheads, and that the real powers of the two departments are and long have been in the hands of men who have little or no nominal responsibility. Events of the past few days plainly demonstrate a bad situation in the War Oftry town at the East or Middle West fice; and the conditions in the Navy Office are, if anything, worse,

The intrigue against Schley is only one of many incidents which go to illustrate the general arbitrariness of the naval administration. For example, Congress, acting in line with the wish of the people, gave to Admiral Dewey the headship of the Navy. He is the highest officer on the list, and he is nominally in active service. It is believed by the public generally that Admiral Dewey's position in the Naval Department is one of real importance that he has something to do and something to say about the administration of the Navy. This is the theory, but it is very far from the fact. Upon his return from the Orient, Admiral Dewey was something of an embarrassment to the little ring which runs the Navy. At first there seemed no way to get out of it, and there was some disposition to accept the inevitable and make a place for him in some sort corresponding with his rank and reputation. But when it was found that he was not a man who asserts himself and fights for his rights an easy way was found to dispose of him and to reduce him to a position of no actual authority.

Today Admiral Dewey has not even a personal office in the Navy building, for it was not desired to have him too close at hand. His office is across a wide street from the department building, above a cheap-John shirt storeclean out of range of everything in the way of department administration. Admiral Dewey has absolutely no say about the disposition of the Naval forces, no part in the administration of the service of which he is presuma bly the head. He is, in truth, the disregarded fifth' wheel of the Navy Department, with less real authority than many a junior Lieutenant. Intrigue, red tape and the malice of the inside clique have practically retired him from the post to which a grateful country acting through Congress assigned

# ELECTRICAL PROGRESS.

The old observation that scientific discovery proceeds along parallel lines and that its results come in groups finds interesting illustration in connection with the development of wireless telegraphy. Marconi, it appears, is by no means the only experimenter along wireless lines. The Scientific American announces that Ducretet, the wellknown French electrician, has recently made some remarkable experiments in telephonic transmission by using the earth as a conductor instead of the socalled Hertz waves of ether employed in the aerial system of Marconi. transmitter, as it is described in detail by the American, consists of a microphone and a few battery cells "connected directly to two earth plates of considerable surface and buried six feet below the ground." For the receiver the inventor uses a well sixty feet deep. "An insular conductor descends into the vertical well and brings a metal sphere three inches in diameter in contact with the soll at the bottom. This wire, on coming out of the ground, is fixed to one end of an ordinary telephone receiver." It is claimed that by use of these deway to graybeards whose experience true that Portland's population was fad with the social circle represented by vices all the vibrations of the voice are torial.

ceiver with surprising distincta

The spirit of incredulity rises in connection with these reports dealing with matters so far beyond ordinary comprehension, but in view of the wonders of the past few years it is the part of discretion to reserve one's doubts. Nothing that is suggested by the experiments either of Marconi or of Ducretet is less believable than the familiar marvels of the long-distance telephone. It is true beyond question that signals can be carried immense distances both by employing the earth and the air as media, and, the principle being thus established, there is every reason to hope for such development of means and methods as will make it practically serviceable. A high authority has recently declared that in his belief the time will soon come when any man may with such a "plant" as he may easily carry in his vest pocket call up the ends of the earth and talk as freely as we now do over the telephone. This, of course, is a thing beyond comprehension, but intrinsically it is scarcely more marvelous than that a signal should be transmitted through the air across the Atlantic Ocean.

An interesting minor fact in connection with these recent discoveries is that they are the work of very young men, and most commonly men without formal education. A certain ideality, which belongs only to youth; a certain boldness of conception, which comes only to those without the limitations of formal schooling, appear to be the essentials of successful effort in the own Phillips Brooks, his drawing higher departments of electrical work. power would need no explanation. It All the great discoveries have been made by persons scarcely out of boybecause of the expression of his face. hood. Edison seems to be the exception to this rule, but in truth he is scarcely an exception, for his work for many years has been more in the line of applying to commercial operations principles already demonstrated than the discovery of new principles. Who can recall anything wholly new discovered by Edison during the past ten years? Mr. Edison has become, in fact, a man of business, and in doing this he has practically ceased to be a discoverer of electrical secrets. Tesla, whose brilliant discoveries a few years back in connection with the alternating current revolutionized long-distance transmission of power, is still a very young man, but already a "back number" in his profession. His work now, in so far as it is maintained, is in connection with commercial applications of electricity. He has abandoned the field of discovery to younger men.

It is not likely that the President will undertake seriously to retire General Miles from the Army in punishment for his unrestrained speech before a Congressional committee. General Corbin may urge it, but surely the President is not so lacking in justice or diplomacy as to urge a proceeding so unusual and cruel. It is certain that the public would not approve it, and it is doubtful if it could be done. General Miles is not greatly loved by the people of Current events in connection with the United States, but he is respected as a soldier, and there has been a good deal of sympathy for him in connection with the ungenerous treatment he has Navy Departments as will stop the talk | found at the hands of the War Department during the past five years. General Corbin, who is presumed to be at the bottom of all the trouble, is not himself a likable man. He is a concelted, arbitrary, self-seeking politician, and has made headway in the military service not because of high personal merit, but through a cheap capacity for intrigue. He has not, like Miles, a brilliant record as a soldier to back up his pretensions, and is distinctly an unpleasant figure in connection with War Office gossip. The public will regard any effort to deal harshly with Miles as inspired by Corbin, and will resent it in a way that may make surprise at Washington-even in the White House. The President ought, unquestionably, to have at the head of the Army a man in reasonable sympathy with himself, but there are ways of accomplishing this without dealing harshly with a soldier whose service has at least made him deserving of considerate treatment,

The acquittal of Stewart Fife, who was arrested in North Yakima some weeks ago and returned to Savannah, Mo., for complicity in the Richardson murder that took place there Christmas eve, ends a most sensational prosecution, supplemental to a mysterious crime. The case is one of those in which domestic infelicity and possible infidelity contribute to make murder of more significance than attaches to the simple fact that a human life has fallen a prey to violence. The trial of the wife in this case preceded that of the young man, and both were acquitted without hesitation. The only fact that remains after this legal sifting of evidence is that Frank W. Richardson, going unexpectedly to his home on Christmas eve. was shot and killed upop entering his bedchamber by a peron unknown. The man, being of dissipated habits, made the conditions that sursounded him, whatever they were, and it can only be said of him, pityingly, in passing, that he "died as the fool whether by his own hand or that of another.

The appointment of a committee of Congress to inquire into the disfranchisement of negroes in the South is useless and silly. It can produce no other result than partisan strife. The South will not be ruled by the negro. and where the negroes are very numerous their votes will be nullified. this subject there has been a mighty lot of experience during the past thirtyfive years, and it is useless to challenge

Mr. Carnegie is spending his millions chiefly to afford a lot of trifling minds a chance to revel in fiction. Few persons use public libraries for works of real value, and those few could easily borrow them of professional men who would be glad to lend them.

Returns from primaries all over the state this morning indicate that somebody will be nominated for Governor and somebody else for Representative in the Second District. Anything more specific readers will have to figure out for themselves.

Judging from the press reports, politics in Venezuela is thoroughly Bryanic. There is no consent among the governed and everybody is agin' the gov-Four men have declined the post of Assistant Postmaster-General. The

Presidential ax will have to take a rest soon for want of substituting material. Mr. Dillon's manners are almost !

The

A VANITY OF VANITIES.

"A long while ago the world began," sings somebody in Shakespeare. Likewise, a long while ago reform began. Reform in English spelling has been going on from very early times. They who rail against modern spelling, therefore, see they are in a business that is heary with the frosts of ages.

"What a dust do I raise," said the fabled fly, on the axle of the charlot, "What a dust do we raise," say the spelling reformers. This genus homo is a strenuous, vociferous lot. Its members stamp up and down, raising a dust around themselves, which they imagine covers all the plain. They are really very cock-ahoop. They bawl at our system of spelling as a device of the devil, made to torture us from the cradle to the grave.

The grammar reformers are their close kin. Both have set about to free the language from its "burthens." Silent let-ters and the subjunctive mood are, by mutual effort, castigated as fiendish and satanic. And all this, although a stranger from another world would hardly believe that the English language for hundreds of years has been a failure,

Semi-occasionally the spelling reformers pass resolutions. This is what the cook ladies of Chicago did some time ago. But, although the two purposes are analogous. they have no further parallel. The cook ladies want a reform in wages and working hours. They may succeed. But no person or body of persons has ever successfully laid down arbitrary laws to regulate language, or any part of it, either spelling or pronunciation, not even if the lawmakers were the wisest that ever drew vital air.

In the past quarter of a century "specialists" have been strenuous in their de mand for reform. But of late years radical proposals have fallen into disrepute. It is recognized that a system advocated as pre-eminently simple may not be so simple as advocated. The old way has not been excelled by any plan yet consciously designed. A few words have been simplified to advantage. Among the ones commonly reformed are: "Tho," "hypo-crit," "fonetic," "thoro," "thru," "thruout," "program," "esthetic" and "cata-log." But the agitation for reform has gone so far short of its object that, in comparison with its aim, it has made hardly any progress at all. The present agitation for reform gets its

The reason is that pronunciation is the most whimsical of human phenomena. It has no law save that of its own caprice. sounds of vowels follow the individuality of a community or family. Persons differ on such frequent words as "won't," "people," "spoken," "evil," nor has the accent of many words a common authority. The rhymes of the poets show the caprice of words as to their sounds. Falstaff makes it appear that "gravity" and "gravy" once had the same vowel sound. Dr. Johnson made the vowel sound of "great" like that of "meet." Chesterfield gave it English authors "either" was "ayther" or "eeither." And today we do not agree upon the first word of our being, "God." These random examples are used only to indicate the impossibility of setting up an established sound for words, and therefore, of "fonctic" spelling. Yet bevies of "specialists" have attempted to fly over usage on the wings of science, They have laid down certain "laws" of pronunciation. They have, for example, fixed the accent of "exquisite," but many

people are exquisitely oblivious of it. The so-called sovereignty of science is language belongs to usage, in writing and in speaking. And, whether usage is consistent or inconsistent, legitimate or illegitimate, it is the might that makes

Nor is there a real connection between written words and their signs. The signs are arbitrary, not scientific, just as were the ideograms of the ancients who used picture of a crow or a horse to repre sent an idea.

Therefore, the good people who set up a principle of pronunciation or spelling prey upon their own credulity. They do so for the very good reason that there is no such principle. They are under the fallacy that language is a combination of signs. On the contrary, larguage is a combination of sounds. Signs are meant to suggest the sounds, not to express To be sure, speech is modified by signs, but, in relation to the purpose of spelling reformers, language is independnt of signs.

Nothing is more absurd than the pr posal to conform speech to writing. Yet this is what some "reformers" offer to do. Writing might be conformed to speech, but it would serve only today and part of tomorrow. Writing ceases to be an exact sign of sounds the moment after word is reduced to letters.

MEMBERS of Oregon Assembly, No. 1, Unit-

Science, therefore, does not make good reformers, after all. The logic of analogy evidently serves a poor pur-"In the vulgar eye of logic," Ruskin, "what is man? An omnivorous by ped that wears breeches." Wearing o Wearing of breeches has made spelling reformers. They fret themselves how certain letters shall be pronounced, instead of how certain signs shall be expressed.

The greatest argument of reformers is the travell that English spelling imp upon the youth. Learning to spell is easy, but it is as easy as, and easier than, many other branches of knowledge study belongs to childhood, and requires nemory and small exercise of reason. There is no reason why spelling should be learned with little effort. Many people go to their graves unable to speak grammatically. People probably make more errors in grammar and the logic of expression than they do in spelling. Some persons never learn to speak readily or to pronounce certain sounds. Can we expect to get universal proficiency in spellarithmetic, each sign has a more constant value than any letter would have in any of the "reformed" alphabets. But is it not just as hard to learn the multiplication table, or-"figuring," as spelling? If spelling is so hard, how are grammar and

arithmetic so simple? It may be put down safely that spelling will always have to be learned. And it will always be the first travall of the youth, because it will be the first school lesson to learn. This may be said confi-dently, in spite of that eminent gentlenan Dogberry, who said: "To write and read comes by nature."

Undoubtedly, spelling will be simplified as time goes on. It is admitted that there is room for improvement. But as for elaborately devised systems of spelling, are recognized as doomed to failure There are always three generations living at once, and they so merge into each other that a sudden change is not possible. The "specialists" who vociferate for improvement have spent their voices in improvement have spent their voices in vain, for the humble people, who use language as an organism, have refused to make it an instrument, and lo! our speilling plods on as before. As a suggestion, spelling reform is good. As a proposal, it is a vanity of vanities,

## SLINGS AND ARROWS.

The Story of a Kicker.

Morton Montmorency Melton Monteith, On the earth, up above or the waters be Could simply find nothing to est or to drink, To wear or to ride in, to talk or to think, To buy or to have, or to hold or to do, To know or admire, possess or pursue Which seemed to his mind to be quite up to

snuff.
The whole world for him was not half good enough.

He boarded awhile at a high-priced hotel, But found it, he said, not sufficiently swell. His neckwear was joyous, his raiment was

giad, His kicks and his tile were the best to be had, But he'd gaze at them sadly, and mournfully

Because they seemed shockingly lacking in And he'd say: "It strikes me that it's all-fired tough, That one can't purchase clothes that are half

good enough. He married a wife who was charming and fair, But complained at her eyes, and her voice, and

her hair: Found fault with her clothes and growled at grouned at her hats when they flashed on

his gaze. His children, were handsome, and folly and bright,

But son how they never impressed him just right. Their manners were bad and their conduct was rough, In fact, they to him were not half good

enough.

He worried considerably through his career, ections on paradise filled him with fear, He said: "They will hand me a halo that's old, And I don't think the streets will be 14-k. gold."
But this sort of fretting was all thrown away.

He journeyed from earth by a different way But he calmly continued his long-practiced

And complained that the sulphur was not hot enough.

### A Campaign Speech. Ladies and Gentlemen: I stand before

you tonight to speak for our glorious party. Never in the history of our proud country has there been a time when the eternal principles which we so well represent have been so widely diffused, so broadly scattered, so enthusiastically received throughout this grand country, From the rock-ribbed coast of Maine, where the hardy fisherman embarks in his frail smack and breasts the elements, to the sunny shores of San Diego, where the iridescent flying fish leap from the waves of the blue Pacific; from the coral keys of Florida, where the gently undulating billows of the balmy Gulf stream. animus from the scientific spirit of the lap the free and independent shores of time. Science predicates certain positive emancipated Cuba, to the fir-clad hills that or probable facts. It is granted to be cs- rise like silent sentinels above placid Putablished on defined or established get Sound, the name of the party is principles. Now, this is just what known, honored, respected, halled with spoken or written speech is not. There the cheers of the enthusiastic multitude is no science of pronunciation, and con- and blessed in the fervent prayers of sequently none of spelling. There is, of thanksgiving that rise like the smoke course, a general science of language, but is not a basis for spelling reform. perous, a happy and a reunited people, Today the glorious bird of freedom, soaring far into the amethyst clouds, through Everybody knows the variety of pronun-clations given to the common words of life. Indeed, the accent of words and guinds of vowels follow the buildinglish mortal man, today that glorious bird, looking down from those dizzy heightsheights unreached and unknown save by the stars themselves-today that mighty symbol of a great and grand Nation, that strong-winged, piercing-eyed bird, whose wings sweep the air like the rushing of the cataracts, whose scream resounds through those vast and unbroken silences, the sound of "state." The "gh" in aloft almost in the ether of heaven, where "daughter" and "laughter" once had the sume gutteral sound. Among the greatest been heard save the song of the spheres, where the clouds themselves seem to sink to the low-lying earth, where the planets seem but distant as the day is distant to the night, where every star twinkles down its reverence and respect for the liberty that has been conferred by the blood of our grandfathers and the toll of our fathers on a great, a glorious and a powerful people-today that bird, up there-\*

\*With the kind permission of our readers, his eloquent address will not be continued. We thought we were going to be able to get that bird down again, but the fact is that he flow rather higher than we had anticipated, and when we began to feel around for the string we had on him, we found he had got away.

### Some of the Signs. Now an' then a sunbeam

Drops from out the sky, Lightin' up the hillside Where the road goes by: Sniffs o' Spring are blowin' Up the canyon trail; lere an' there you see Flyin' cotton tall. All of which 'll tell you 'Thout the need o' rhyme, That it's gettin' mighty Close to fishin' time.

Just a Suggestion Several sizes of our little folks having

say competition of the Oregon Humane Society we submit the following list of subjects, prizes to be awarded by the so-For children from 3 to 5 years old-"The Correct Mental Attitude for an

apparently been overlooked in the prize

Icthyosaurus "Darwin's View of Corporal Punishment as Applied of Bull Terriers."

"The Effect of Vivisection on the Off Hind Foot of a Pterydactyl." For children from 1 to 2 years-

"How a Pet Crocodile Should Be Fed During Lent." "The Inadvisability of Correcting the Stubbornness of a Mule With Applied Dy-

namite." For children from 6 months to a year-"The Expediency of Using Street-Car Horses in Place of Locomotives,"

"The Inhumanity of Flaying Muskrats Allve," "The Code of Ethics of the Clam, and Its Advantages Over That of the Lob-

stor. As Horace Greeley, according to common report, was writing editorials for the New York Tribune at the age of Il

months, we feel that we have not gone beyond the limit of intelligence of the children for whose consideration these suggestions are offered.

Past the green hills the calm river is flowing. Pincidly flowing to meet the sad sea, Zephyrs of springtime are cheerily blowing. Tossing the flowers that bloom on the lea. Out in the meadows the blackbirds are calling, Up in the treetops the glad robins swing.
All through the orchard the pink blossoms fall-

Cover the ground with the carpet of Spring. Children are shouting and cattle are lowing, Sunbeams are dancing the morning away, People are coming, and people are going, Smiling and laughing, light-hearted and gay, And yet in our hearts no chord is responding, No strains to the chorus of Nature attune. We sip bitter beer, distracted, desponding, For Jack, our old pai, will be married in

June. Time was when his judgment was clear and undarkened By counsels of Cupid, that mocker of men.

Time was when he sat at the table and To the wisdom embraced in our limited ken but love such as ours can be never enduring

And Fate, in sheer envy, destroyed them ful soon, He yielded to blandishments, soft and alluring

And Jack, poor old Jack, will be married by June. —J. J. MONTAGUE.