SPELLING REFORM DISCUSSED BY PORTLAND MEN AND WOMEN

Some Believe It Should Come to Pass, While Others Declare It Is Nonsense.

DIFFERENCE OF OPINION REGARDING ITS EXTENT

Entire Language Could Not Be Changed, Say Some, While School Teachers Generally Declare Spelling Reform Is Utterly Impossible.

The term "spelling reform" has come to spell "noosens" to many since it has been talked of so much by the daily press, and yet each one has his own ideas on the subject. Many wonder what it means and confuse the idea of simplified spelling and spelling reform with phonetic spelling. In reality they are different and one may champion the one and condemn the other; may approve of Roosevelt's plan to simplify the spelling of certain words without accepting the countless would-be funny poems which twist the English language into hideous contortions to make them as much unlike the original as possible.

Educators of Portland have their ideas on the matter, too, and it is interesting to note how widely they vary. Some advocate a mild change; others a radical change; while still others protest against any change at all.

C. E. S. Wood, who usually lines up on the side of reform, presents his approbation of greater freedom in writing the language that there may be more individualism.

"All spelling is intended to be phonetic," he said. "It has to be. Language is to express thought; thought is the soul of it; language is essentially sounds—words are sounds—letters are to indicate sounds, and written words are intended to express the true sound of the words. Therefore, all spelling is meant to be and all true spelling is phonetic. Anything which correctly expresses the spoken sound of the word is good spelling. Before the silly pedantry of the dictionary put its claims upon us men spelled individually as they pleased and were spared the useless waste of time in spelling which curses our school children; and a man was not classed as ignorant because he spelled in his own fashion. Dictionary spelling has been a fetter upon the mind, a waste of time, and has created a false standard of culture and education, for iron-bound spelling is the most shallow and useless knowledge in the world.

What Present Spelling Lacks.

"Spelling does not today indicate the origin of words. If you think so try it with your friends and see. If anything indicates it, it is the sound. Origins are not important anyway. It is today's meaning which counts. What we need to know is the meaning of the living word today. For example: 'Let,' which meant to hinder, now means the reverse; 'prevent,' which by its roots means to go before, means with us to drag back or obstruct.

"The origin of all spelling was phonetic and the soul of all spelling must be phonetic. The uproar made over the few words which it is proposed to accept in that one of several forms of spelling which is simplest shows only the ignorance of press and people. It is silly. Every one can still spell as he chooses and nothing sacred has been attacked. As for myself I agree with Bernard Shaw that as spelling is phonetic and can never be anything else—what we need if anything is more alphabetical characters so that we shall have a character for each sound, and not have to depend on arbitrary knowledge for our pronunciation of such words as dough, cough, sough, slough. Proper spelling would indicate how each of these words is to be pronounced—that is the whole object of spelling. Look into a dictionary. It will give the accepted version of a word and then proceed to spell it phonetically to indicate how it should be pronounced. Why should that phonetic spelling, if valuable, be kept in the sole and exclusive privacy of the dictionary? If it be valuable in the dictionary to indicate the true pronunciation it is more valuable out of the dictionary as the real spelling of the word. However, I do not believe that even more alphabetical characters are really necessary, and I do not believe the spelling reform goes half far enough. To my mind we should be as free in spelling as were Shakespeare, Jonson, Milton and the makers of our language. It never occurred to them that there was any value in spelling except to indicate the sound of the word. They were free to spell as they chose. I believe in free spelling and in removing this cheap sneer of cheap people from the man who spells not according to the dictionary."

What Senator Gearin Says.

Senator John M. Gearin looks at the matter from two standpoints—the personal and the general.

"Anything that will excuse bad spelling I am in favor of," he said, laughing, "but that is purely a personal matter, for I have always been a poor speller. If anyone will do anything that will make it easier for me to spell I will thank him. But seriously speaking, there are, of course, several words in our language that are spelled absurdly, but how are we going to pick them out, who is going to do it and where are we going to draw the line? As the matter stands now I don't know what anyone means by spelling reform or phonetic spelling, for everyone has a different idea. Who can authorize any one change? If we agree to spell by sound why shouldn't it be 'kat' as well as 'cat,' yet we are used to spelling it with a 'c,' and who is going to authorize the change to 'k'? And why should it be 'k' any more than 'c'? The president, who is supposed to be the arbiter of all things, has picked out certain words for change, but why should he pick them? If we admitted anything of that kind, each of us would have a different group of words which we thought should be changed and there would be endless trouble and confusion. Any arbitrary change would result thus and soon there would be no standard. If the prominent educators of the country should get together and settle on a system there might be some method. But if a universal rule is made to spell by sound everyone would be a judge of his own sounds and then there would be no such thing as spelling. The English language would be revolutionized. Truth to tell, I think we are 'butting up' against a question too big for us."

Teachers Are Against It.

Teachers almost as a unit will be found against the proposed reform in spelling. In spite of the trouble they are at to teach the young idea day in and day out that "red" and "read" are the same but that "read" and "read" are different, and in spite of the fact that in high schools, yes, and in college they receive essays from struggling students presenting "there efforts," or "bringing them their," they are distinctly opposed to a change by which the natural speller and the unnatural speller will be put on an equal plane.

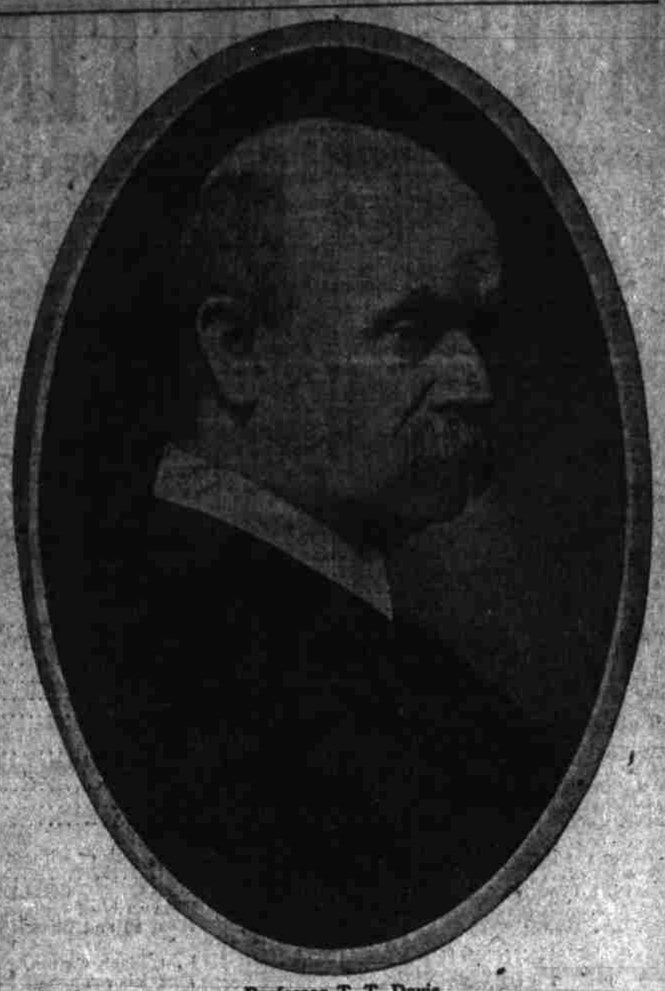
"I line myself emphatically against this idea of spelling reform," said T. T. Davis, principal of the Portland high school. "I am not prepared to give my reasons at length, but I think the present method very satisfactory and can see no necessity for a change. I won't say that they can't improve the present method for that would be putting it a little too strong, but I say I don't believe they will improve it with their meddling."

Dr. J. Whitcomb Brougher of the First Baptist church always has his own ideas on subjects of modern advance, and it is not hard to guess on what side to find this modern preacher who champions the removal of woman's hats in church, the providing of a kindergarten to dispose of the children during services, and making the church a social center Sunday evenings where the young men can bring their young women and sit and hear themselves talked about in a practical way from the pulpit.

Brougher Is for It.

"My whole sentiment is in favor of the new change," said Dr. Brougher accommodatingly coming up to expectations. "If some one who has the time will work out a system it will simplify the language and save a great deal of time in learning it. I am in favor of the Roosevelt recommendation, though of course it will take some time for it to acquire permanence, but I think it is a start in the right direction and the rest of the change will follow naturally in time."

"Spelling reform," said Mrs. Charles E. Sitton of the school board, "to a certain extent might be desirable; but to destroy the beauty and established form of the English language in the main would bring a change and a loss greatly to be deplored."



Professor T. T. Davis.

Senator John M. Gearin.

C. E. S. Wood.

Rev. J. Whitcomb Brougher.

CURE CATARRH NOW

Do Not Wait Until Winter or Disease Will Become Chronic.

Many people in Portland are beginning to cough and hack with the fall symptoms of disagreeable and offensive catarrh. The tongue is coated in the morning, and they do not sleep well at night on account of disagreeable tickling and dropping at the back of the throat as a result of catarrh. Before the disease becomes chronic they should use Hyomei and get complete freedom from their catarrhal troubles.

If you neglect to treat catarrh when it first comes on, the chances are that it will become so firmly rooted and deep-seated that it will bother you all winter and may become chronic and almost incurable.

The first day's use of Hyomei will show a decided improvement in health, and in a short time there will be no further trouble, and you will be free from catarrh, and coughs and colds will not bother you during the winter.

Remember that Hyomei is sold under an absolute guarantee that it costs nothing unless it cures. Woodard, Clarke & Co. have sold a great many Hyomei outfits, every one with their personal guarantee that it costs nothing unless it cures, and they have seen so many remarkable evidences of the curative powers of Hyomei that they are very glad to continue giving this guarantee with every package.

A complete Hyomei outfit costs but $1, extra bottles, if needed, 50 cents.

DATE SET BY COURT FOR SLOANE'S TRIAL

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)

Spokane, Oct. 12.—The trial of Sidney Sloane for the murder of his father was set yesterday in Judge Huneke's department of the district court for November 12. He was seen in jail and informed of the fact.

The youth was found playing solitaire with a well-worn pack of cards and admitted with a smile that the game was a monotonous thing and he would be glad when something happened to break the monotony of the place. It is predicted that two weeks will be required to try the case and it is believed by some, familiar with court methods, that it may take an entire week to secure a jury.

GOHL FOUND GUILTY OF LEADING ATTACK

Aberdeen, Wash., Oct. 12.—The case of William Gohl, formerly agent of the sailors' union, who is on trial on the charge of leading a body of armed men in an attack on the schooner Fearless last summer, was finished in the superior court at Montesano yesterday afternoon, the verdict being guilty. Sentence was not imposed, as the case will be appealed to the supreme court. The penalty is not more than a year in the county jail and $1,000 fine. The attack occurred during the course of the sailors' strike.

EPIDEMIC OF TYPHOID SWEEPING HOQUIAM

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)

Hoquiam, Wash., Oct. 12.—This city is confronted with a serious typhoid fever epidemic, there being about 30 cases in town. The matron of the General hospital reports that the whole third floor of the hospital is now devoted to the care of fever patients and lays the blame of this condition of affairs to the water supply of the city.