Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965

Dedicated to finding the causes of difficulties in learning reading and spelling,

"A closed mind gathers no knowledge; an open mind is the key to wisdom".

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Editor and General Manager,
Newell W. Tune,
5848 Alcove Ave,
No. Hollywood, Calif. 91607

Contributions Editor,
Helen Bowyer,
1212 S. Bonnie Brae St,
Los Angeles 6, Calif.

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1. Late News

Thru the curtesy of the International Language Review we reprint an interesting letter from Africa:

"There is some controversy at present regarding the future world language, but there is little doubt that English is the lingua franca in most of Africa, and is essential to most Africans who desire higher education, and access to Western knowledge and culture. While spoken English is easy to acquire, a major stumbling block to written English is its archaic and unphonetic spelling, which makes it very difficult for the African child, whose parents usually do not speak it at home and are themselves illiterate. Nor has the African child the cultured background of an English child. Also, the average intelligence of African children is lower than that of whites.

"Africa has only recently awakened from its slumbers, and has an enormous leeway to make up. It is estimated that the English child spends an extra two years at school just in learning to spell his own language. The African child simply cannot afford this waste of time, and it is essential that English spelling be simplified to assist the African to take his place in the modern world. Both Britain and the United States take a great interest in Africa, and it would not be difficult for them to solve one of the greatest problems of the African child by establishing a joint language Academy, whose duty it would be to simplify and modernize English spelling. Many countries in Europe have simplified their spelling and only apathy prevents the same being done for English."
C. R. Moore, Salisbury, Rhodesia.

i.t.a. workshops

Three day workshops will be held at Hofstra. Univ. under the direction of Dr. Harold J. Tanyzer, Director i.t.a. workshops, Hemstead, L.I., N.Y. write for costs and application blanks. Dates available are: June 28-30 and August 23-25, 1965.

The Second International i/t/a workshop and Conference will be held at Lehigh Univ, Bethlehem, Penna, August 16-20, 1965 and will be limited to those without prior experience in i/t/a. Arrangements can be made with or without room, board and i.t.a. materials.

The very comprehensive courses will include History and current status of i/t/a, Research reports of British and American projects, 5 Office of Education studies, research with culturally deprived, brain damaged, mentally retarded, aphasics, dyslexics, emotionally disturbed, non-English-speaking, and in speech correction. Other uses, procedures involving i.t.a. in color, remedial, adult illiterates, and in teacher training. Famous names on the faculty include Drs. Mazurkiewiez, Tanyzer, i.t.a. textbook authors, Warren Cutts, R. N. Wright, Robert McCracken, Harry Hahn, Samuel Weintraub, & Edw. J. Meade, Wm. Boutwell, Theodore Dolmatch.

Two-day workshops may come to your city. Write i t.a. New York, N.Y. for information, dates.

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[Spelling Reform Anthology §13.10 pp197–205,180 in the printed version]
[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 pp2–11 in the printed version]

2. The Two Englishes, by William Barkley, M.A.*

Being an Account of some of the Differences between the Spoken and Written English Languages.

*William Barkley, M. A, (honors Latin, English) has been for nearly 40 years chief Parliamentary reporter and editorial writer, for the London Daily Express.
*Pub. by Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1941.

I seek to interest you in a number of topics in which the interests and sympathies of all thoughtful men are already deeply enlisted, but my hope is to illustrate them from a new angle. I will give these topics such head-lines amid *The United Nation; The Future of our Foreign Trade; The Machine of Imperial Government;* [1] *The Education of our Children.* This last is fundamental to all, for everything depends on the education of the rising generation who are going to rise under a staggering burden of debt, for one thing, and who must be equipped with the most efficient tools to enable them to work out their salvation.

Education of our Children
This latter is a topic for a whole booklet. Everything hinges on this when we come to look ahead and size up the opportunities as well as the savage necessities which will govern the period of reconstruction in the world when we have rid it of the Nazi tyranny. In that world the prizes will go to the nations and to the individuals who are alert and efficient. We shall have little room for yokels. The shepherd must be a man who is in touch with the latest scientific research on sheep-rearing, adding this to his own store of native and traditional knowledge. For this sort of purpose – for quickness of mind in the field, the mine, or the factory – our educational system is the worst possible introduction. It is far too bookish. It is far too much devoted to reading and writing. These are accomplishments which if possible we should achieve at the ages of ten or eleven in our children so that we might then segregate them; separating those who seem disposed to follow a literary or a professional career from the great numbers who will go into manual work for which they should be provided with vocational training, accompanied to be sure with ever wider reading.

That is enough in a general way on those four topics – the united nation; the future of our foreign trade; the machine of Imperial Government; the education of our children. These topics are to be regarded as so many beads which it is hoped to string together in an argument; and the string or thread which is to unite and make a necklace of them is the theme of language.

Language
I take language to be, of all, the most powerful influence on the mind and the life of man. Looking round and about, I see *no other single influence* which at all compares in potency with language; not environment, of which indeed language forms a large part; not geographical position or diet or anything else to which scientists turn when they seek to explore the various destinies of different nations. It is language which is foremost in making and distinguishing one nation from another.

I think I can prove that statement to some extent by saying that the English-speaking nations are marked for their alertness, their practical good sense and their progressiveness quite irrespective of their residence. Whatever continent they settle in – whether here at home, in America, in Africa or

in Australia – wherever English is spoken, you find people who are to a very high degree civilized, alert and progressive. I think the English-speaking peoples are far more logical and intelligent than any of the inhabitants of the European Continent, and I hope you will agree with me there, otherwise I am getting into bad company. But if I am right in my argument, I must be able to show to you that the English language differs fundamentally from all other European languages, otherwise I could not argue that it is language which makes the English-speaking nations so distinguished.

I think I can prove that very easily. We enjoy in the English-spoken language the simplest grammatical structure which has ever been used in a major language by the lips of man. Of syntax, we have practically none. Of grammar so little that our grammarians, ashamed that we have so little, are frequently driven in self-esteem to inventing it. You will see pieces of English grammar in school books which are pure invention, imposed because our grammarians seem to think that English speech should correspond to Latin or Continental usage. But the whole thing is different. The first difference between English and the European languages is the extreme simplicity of the endings of words, verbs and nouns. These are reduced to a minimum of practical speech and yet where distinction is required, they are absolutely distinguished. We add *s* to form the plural of nouns. What is more, we pronounce the *s*. In French, they add *s* but they frequently do not pronounce it. The *s* in French at the end of a word is only pronounced if by accident it is followed by another word beginning with a vowel. In the same way, our verbs are conjugated on a system so logical and yet so simple that we are easily capable of expressing subtleties of meaning which are beyond the compass even of the elaborate verbal system of ancient Greek. At every turn we have the continuative tense: *I am speaking, I should have spoken, I should have been speaking,* In what language on the lips of man will you anywhere else find distinctions so simple and yet so expressive?

But that is the least of it. What makes for fundamental simplicity in the spoken English language above all is the fact that we in English are completely clear of a very odd Continental conception. We have no sex in the English nouns. Yet sex is universal in all the Continental languages. The languages of the Continent are sex-ridden. As the lady novelist might say, sex rears its ugly head at every turn in every Continental language, be it Greek, Latin, French, German or Russian. This is one of the queerest things in the history of mankind, and yet it is so accepted that I have rarely seen any comment made on it. To our English minds it is completely baffling. I am perfectly well aware that the grammarians do not call it sex. They call it gender. They even try to pretend that we have gender in the English language. They say that the word *boy* is masculine. This is transparent and arrant nonsense. It is the boy that is masculine, not the word *boy*. Then they say that most of our words are 'neuter.' That too is absurd. Our words are so far removed from any conception of grammatical sex or gender that the association just does not arise.

Here is a table. In French, that table is female. Yes, a Frenchman refers to that table as *she* or *her*, just as we by way of a joke or out of sentiment might refer to a ship or a motor-car as *she.* But it is no joke with the Frenchman. It is a matter of hard and invariable rule that a Frenchman shall refer to a table at all times and on all occasions in precisely the same terms as he would refer to a woman or to his wife. *She stands on the floor; I strike her with my fist,* (What a way to treat a lady!)

A witty woman once said to me, "I could understand a table being female in France if it were capable of producing a nest of little tables. But that is a job for a carpenter in France as in England."

This sex-distinction in all the Continental languages does not proceed on any recognizable basis of logic or thought. A table is female. So is a window. So is a door. But the ceiling – the floor – in French these are males. Is it not odd? But it goes much further than this. In French a sentinel is a female. He is a soldier but he is a woman – *la sentinelle.* On all occasions a French sentinel is spoken of in exactly the same terms as a woman. You say he is a *bonne sentinelle* just as you would say she is a *bonne femme*. And I am told that French is a logical language! Why do we so belittle ourselves? Surely the English is alone the logical language which has got rid of this queer sex complex.

I know very little German, but I know that this sex business is even worse in German. There they have not only male and female words but unfortunately little neuter words. As in French, so in German, when a German adjective accompanies a German noun, its behaviour is entirely different, as you may imagine, according as it goes along with a male noun, a female noun, or one of the little neuters. Take the German for the definite article, the. In the nominative case alone it takes three different forms according as it accompanies a male, a female, or a little neuter. It is respectively *der, die* and *das.* In the German language, a spoon is male, a fork is female, and a knife is neuter. Before a German child can grammatically eat at table, he has to learn to say *der* spoon but *die* fork and *das* knife. And every adjective that he may apply to any one of those nouns or to any other noun has to change in the same way according to a very complicated and elaborate set of rules of grammatical agreement. Is it not beyond our simple understanding? As for the Russians, I do not know their language, but I am told that not only their nouns but their verbs are also male and female. Is not this at heart the reason why most of us believe that all the inhabitants of the Continent are slightly cuckoo? Is not the further sex affliction of the Russian language in the matter of its verbs one of the reasons for its difficulty of learning?

In short, the basis of my standpoint, the foundation of my remarks, is simply this in one sentence: The grammatical simplicity of the spoken English is the secret of England's greatness. There you are. That is what I am getting at. I don't think I have ever heard that before, but I want to state it with ever-increasing conviction. And I emphasize it again: *The grammatical simplicity of the spoken English language is the secret of England's greatness.*

It was not always so, you know. Our old mother tongue, the Anglo-Saxon language, was as complicated in its grammar as any other European language – quite enough complications to delight the heart of a grammarian. Its verbs were very elaborate. Its nouns had several cases, of which alone we have retained the invaluable possessive case. And in our old language, nouns were also distinguished by their gender or sex.

Walter W. Skeat writes: "One of the greatest gains of modern English is the abandonment of grammatical gender, so that we no longer have to burden our memories with the difference of usage due to this source. In old English, a bear, fish, ghost, hound and wolf were masculine; a crow and fly feminine; and a child, maiden and wife, being apparently things of small significance, were all neuter."

How then did we come to be rid of all this complication? How did we acquire such boons and blessings of simplicity over the inhabitants of all the other Continental nations cursed by their grammatical subtleties? It is one of the strangest stories of the human race. I doubt if there is a parallel to it in all mankind's long story.

The explanation for the simplicity of the grammar of the English language is simply the Norman Conquest. For 300 years after the Norman Conquest our language went underground, This language which later was to be the dominant language of the whole globe, disappeared from polite society for 300 years, During all that period it deserted the courts, it was never heard in the Palace or in the great dining halls of the Norman nobles; it disappeared from the council-chamber and from the institution resembling Parliament. The language of Government and of society was Norman French. And where was English? It was down in the servants' halls or out in the fields or in the workshops – it was serving, working, tending the flocks, tilling the land, making the tools and the weapons. In that long term of servitude, the English language was purified of its grammatical complications. It was reduced in this crucible of slavery and Norman domination to a tongue which served the purpose and did the duty only of practical men. True, it retained in its words the flavour of sweetness. It was to be the language of the poets. But I am speaking of its grammar. And in its grammar, the English language emerged at last into the sunlight, out of the Norman Conquest, in that stark and pure simplicity which is the awe and mystery of all foreigners. It is quite impossible to over estimate the advantage which this simplicity of the spoken language has conferred on the English-speaking peoples, resulting as it did from the enforced subjugation of the Normans.

The brutal Norman set his foot here in the year 1066. It was not until the year 1362 that English was used for the first time by the chancellor in delivering a King's Speech opening a session of Parliament. It was only in that same year 1362 – three centuries all but four years after the Conquest – that English superseded French in the law courts. Until that year, justice for Englishmen was purveyed to them in a foreign language. Only then, in 1362, was an Act passed authorizing the use of English in the law courts, the Act taking the form of an appeal to the King for the use of English in the law courts, "owing to the French language being now much unknown," says its preamble.

These dates are very striking. Norman Conquest 1066; English language re-emerges 1362; Shakespeare born 1564. Five centuries between the Conquest and Shakespeare, and the English language submerged, suppressed, practically unwritten and barred from court and palace for three of these five centuries; English the official language of the country for only two centuries before the infant Shakespeare prattled in it.

The Conquest destroyed English education. Today we automatically regard our language as both the main subject and the chief medium of all our elementary education. But for these three centuries, in fact from 1066 to the year 1385, not only was our language not taught in schools; English was not used in schools. From these dark ages we owe this knowledge to a queer manuscript written by a Cornishman known as John of Trevisa, who was employed in 1385 as a librarian or secretarial tutor to the Lord Berkeley of his day.

His Lordship had a desire to read the earlier chroniclers, whose monkish work was for the most part in Latin. So secretary John translated them for him, in particular the chronicle of Higden, who wrote in the previous century.

For the benefit of the Berkeleys, John embodied a few of his own observations in his manuscript translations. And it is from him that we learn that Latin and French were until his day the languages of the schools, and that education for English children consisted of translating from Latin into French. We in turn, have to translate John's words because they are written in Old English. But, to Modernize him: "The English people" – says John of Trevisa, writing in 1385 – "speak their birth-tongue badly for two reasons: One is because children in school against the usage and manner of all

other nations are compelled to leave their own language and to construe their lessons in French, and have done so ever since the Normans came first to England. Also gentlemen's children are taught to speak French from the time they are rocked in the cradle; and country folk likening themselves to the gentlemen, try with great diligence to speak French, in order to be held in higher esteem. This predilection for French was common before the first pestilence of 1349 but was afterwards somewhat changed. For John Cornwall, a master of grammar, changed the mode of teaching in his grammar school and substituted English for French construing; and Richard Pencrich learnt this kind of teaching from him and other men from Pencrich; so that now in 1385 in all the grammar-schools of England the children leave French and construe and learn in English."

So when we look back and cast the accounts of the Norman Conquest, we observe that it was due to it that our speech, our spoken language, has come down to us in a form simplified and purified in the blood and agony of serfdom.

How did this all come about? Well, previously I told you of the gender of some things in the Old Anglo-Saxon. In French today, the moon is a female and the sun is male. In German, as if to demonstrate that the Rhine is an eternal frontier in men's minds, the moon is a male and the sun is female. Now the English language, deriving from the same Gothic source as German, used to agree in this with the German. In Anglo-Saxon the moon was masculine and the sun was feminine. So absurd was this gender in Anglo-Saxon proceeding on no discernible basis of logic in our old language any more than in any other, that it was impossible to reconcile the genders of many things in the two languages. Consequently, the English, rather than be confused on the gender of many things, gradually came to call things they were not sure of by the neuter gender. Because this was so much easier than remembering which, all things gradually acquired the neuter gender.

But the gods were jealous of their Englishmen. For him alone of all men to have the key to simple speaking-it was too great a boon. So with the boon, the gods sent a curse. It, too, has the same historical origin. For during the 300 years after the Norman Conquest, the English language, when it was written, was written largely by Frenchmen. Now they wrote their French language on quite different principles from the way in which the English wrote their Anglo-Saxon. So that what the Frenchmen did was to write many words of their own system into the English language, with the result that the written language was confused and confounded to its very roots. Out of this evil marriage there emerged another language, not simple and logical like the spoken English, but illogical,, inconceivably complicated, based upon no recognizable principle of logic, no rule or regulation, a matter of accident and harsh convention which can only be grasped by memorizing – an entirely different language from the spoken English tongue, namely the written English language. Never was a nation so shamefully treated as in this ill-written form of our simple speech,

One-half of the written language is spelled on Anglo-Saxon principles and the other half on Latin-French principles. As the Normans and the French wars and later intercourse with France and Italy continually supplied new words of Latin origin for use here at home, these words too were adopted into the language, sometimes on the native principles, sometimes on the Latin principles. Then our grammarians in the sixteenth century, *men of besotted ignorance,* set to work to impose here and there what they imagined to the classical form. In addition, pronunciation underwent changes. The result is that today we have a written language which bears little or no resemblance to the spoken tongue, which is a patchwork of misplaced erudition and of besotted ignorance, a spelling system based upon no system, a *conglomeration of illogical confusion which makes us the laughing stock of all foreigners* and which inflicts never-ending torture upon ourselves.

We are often told that to systematize our spelling would destroy the origin of our words. There is some little justification for this view, but most of it is silly patter repeated parrot-wise by succeeding generations of obstructionists who have never really examined the question. To begin with, it affects only the Latin keyboard of our double-keyboard English speech. It pays no regard to the native words in which there is no attempt to spell according to the language brought here by the original Angles, This original language is an older language than the German. It is so much nearer than German to the paternal Gothic that the closest students of English in the last century were Germans, who found in English a great deal from which German derived.

The classical tradition has meant for centuries, and still too often means, that only the Latin-French side of our language is regarded as being of good and noble ancestry and this branch of linguistics was always studied in our schools and colleges to the total exclusion of Anglo-Saxon and Gothic until under the influence of Ellis and Skeat, these native studies made progress only seventy years ago. So to begin with, our present spelling does nothing at all for the native and original side of our language, the old English. "Queen," for example, in Anglo-Saxon was spelled *cwen*, the *q* coming in only with the Norman conqueror. But those who defend the existing spelling on the ground of etymology, should object on the same grounds to the disappearance of *cwen.*

As for the Latin or classical side of the language, a great deal of the spelling reveals merely a bastard erudition. Take such words as *debt* and *doubt*. I say we should spell them *det* and *dout.* Up rise the protesters with shouts of "Vandal!" exclaiming that I am destroying the derivation of the word debt from the Latin word *debitum*. But it is not so. The English word *debt* reached us not from Latin but from French – from the French word *dette.* If you say that the word *dette* derives in turn from the Latin *debitum*, I retort: Why should we put a *b* in it when the French do not? Why should we be more Latin than the French? This *b* was inserted in *debt* by a sixteenth-century grammarian anxious to show off his pretended knowledge.

If I were to say we should respell the Lord's prayer in the form: "Forgiv us our dets as we forgiv our deterz," some people would accuse me almost of blasphemy. If I were to advocate writing: "Giv us our daily *bred*" there might be cries of horror. But the Lord's prayer was not used in the present written form of the English language. If you wish to see how it was written in the early sixteenth century, here is the passage from Mathew in the great Coverdale Bible of 1535:

> "O oure father which art in heaven, halowed be thy name, thy kyngdome come, thy wyll be fulfilled vpon earth as it is in heaven. Geue vs this daye oure dayly bred. And forgeue vs oure *dettes* as we also forgeue oure *detters."*

It is clear therefore that I have the authority of Holy Writ if I declare that we should spell *debt* without a *b*; should spell *bred* instead of *bread*. And in the Wycliffe Bible of 1360, we find *leed(e)* instead of *lead; heven* instead of *heaven*, and I might add, that Wycliffe spelled *Crist* and not *Christ.*

This bastard erudition of our present spelling is capable of such wide illustration that, at the risk of getting things out of proportion, I will proceed some steps further.

The word *reign* is of course unpronounceable and never was pronounced. The *g* was imported to demonstrate the knowledge of a sixteenth century grammarian who knew that it is from the Latin

word *regnare*. Every time we write our National Anthem we pay that tribute to Caesar. It happens that this spelling serves to distinguish the word from rain, so for the moment we will let it be. But we have the word *foren*, an old word derived from the Latin *foris*, meaning abroad or out of doors. Ha! cried the sixteenth century grammarian: "*Foren*? That is far too simple. Our children might learn it too easily. Clearly *foren* means territory over which our King does not reign; so it shall be spelled *foreign*." Then we have the old word *soveran*, derived from the Latin *soveranus*, meaning the boss or fuehrer of the day, spelled *soveran* by Milton. But the grammarian cried: "*Soveran*? Too easy. Obviously, a *soveran* is one who reigns over us, so it shall be spelled *sovereign."* Was there ever such mumbo-jumbo?

The word *delite* (Latin *delitium*) is spelled *delight* because the grammarian confused it with *light* (compare the German *licht*). But indeed these *gh*'s are sprinkled meaninglessly in the language. *Haughty* should be hauty – it is French, like *hauteur*. Look at *sprightly*. We have a word *sprite* which is a contraction of *spirit.* But when we want to describe a spirited fellow like a *sprite*, we do not spell it *spritely*, but *sprightly*. 'Why? *Arraign* never had a *g* till a fool put it in there. It is an old word *arraisner.* The *c* is kept in *scissors* to demonstrate the great wisdom of a grammarian who relates it to the Latin word *scindere* (which they pronounced *skindarey*). Thereafter he sprinkled *c*'s liberally to put a cutting edge on *scythe,* which in Anglo-Saxon is *sythe*, and to sharpen *scimitar*. The word *scent* is originally *sent*, since it is nothing more than one of the senses – the sense of smell. The only explanation I can offer is that the grammarian, living before the days of plumbing, had his nostrils assailed by a *sent* which he could cut with a *scythe* or *scimitar,* or a pair of *scissors,* so he put a cutting edge on *sent* as well by spelling it *scent.*

There is misspelling in a whole range of words which have a *t* in Latin. The Latin *auctor* was respelled *author*, although it was pronounced *autor*, as it still is in Ireland. Bad spelling has of course frequently caused an alteration in pronunciation due to our bookish habits.

But to return to the spelling of Greek and Latin *t* as *th;* that is why you get *th* in *Thomas* but never in Tom. Some inept people have been misled to pronounce the *th* in *Anthony*, which is from *Antonius*, but nobody writes or pronounces it short as anything but *Tony*. In the same way *Tamesis* became *Thames*, but nobody mispronounces it, 'What, nobody? I am told that, in Connecticut there is a River Thames, named in honour of ours, which the good people of Connecticut pronounce as they spell, with a *th* as in *thick,* and to rhyme with *flames*. You see pronunciation sometimes tries to follow the spelling.

A whole booklet could be made of these absurdities. There never should be an *s* in *island,* it is a confusion with the *s* in *isle*, which is justified as deriving from the Latin *insula*; if so, why not spell it *insle*? Most people do not realize how deep these blunders go. And many people think that our spelling chaos is a mere matter of such grotesqueries as *enough*, *plough, though, thought,* etc. But these crazy spellings are not the most troublesome. What causes trouble is the ingrained duplicity and confusion in our spelling. Not a letter can be trusted, as you can see from pairs of words, the first that come in my mind by way of illustration:

> love, move; move, rove; anger, danger; lie, chief; chief, leaf; leaf, head; head, red; nasty, hasty; ague, rogue; toe, shoe; eight, height; account, accent; liar, familiar; grower, flower; rally, ally; brilliant, defiant; though, thought; should, shoulder; do, no; know, now; knowledge, college; and on through the night, knight, nite.

In the face of thousands of such examples, I lose patience with those who blatantly say that spelling never gave them a moment's thought. This literary litter in our heads is the product of months and years of concentration. Any spelling book gives you 5000 words commonly mis-spelt. Yet there is no need for a spelling book in Italy. There is no spelling book in Germany. Who can tell how far these people are advancing at our expense because of their freedom from such complications in days when the written word assumes ever greater importance? The foreigners cannot shake off their chains of grammar, which retards them, but which we are fortunately freed. No structural change occurs nowadays in the grammar of a language. But we who are so largely free of grammatical complications can easily shake off the spelling chains which afflict us. It is perfectly feasible because, if for no other reason, it was done at one time or another in Germany, France, Holland, Sweden and Norway. Spain established the Academy which purified its spelling a century and a half ago. Most modern countries inherited jumbles and blunders almost as bad as ours, but they have removed the litter.

It is this spelling problem which is at the root of much distrust of our present educational methods. The question did not really matter until seventy years ago when education became compulsory and universal. Until that era there were two classes in the nation and the distinction between them was accepted as an act of God. There was the literate class and the illiterate class. Do you imagine that the sailors of Nelson were troubled with this spelling problem? No. Or the soldiers of Wellington? No. For the simple reason that they were never subjected to compulsory education. This written form of the English language, grotesque as it is, served well enough when English literature was an affair of the literati and not of the common people, an affair of the polite salon of the 18th century, the circle of Dr. Johnson. In fact, *for them*, this spelling had a *great advantage.* It kept the working man and the working boy in the humble station to which God had called him. It stopped the working boy from setting his dirty boot on their carpet. But all this was changed last century when the educational reformers got in their work.

I think the greatest of them all was Isaac Pitman. When he started his active career about 1850 he found the poor utterly illiterate and steeped in ignorance. Education then, says Trevelyan, was at a lower ebb than at any time in England since the reign of King Alfred. He saw at once that the difficulty of teaching them lay in the absurd written form of the language. So at the age of 25 as an educational reformer he invented a system of phonetic writing which is now called shorthand. It happens to be a speedy system. But that is partly accidental. What Pitman set out to do was to provide a *logical and easily written form for the English* language which would make *its written form as simple as its spoken form,* and spread the benefits of reading and culture through all the masses. His whole long life was devoted to education and to the simplification of the written language. When his shorthand did not catch on universally, he turned to the modification of the existing Roman alphabet and laboured all his life courageously and honestly in the simplification of English writing as the quickest and best method of abolishing illiteracy. But all his ideas were too complicated for general use. He spent forty years inventing new letters of the alphabet. At the close of his life he confessed that he had worked on wrong lines and that reformers should proceed on *the basis of the existing alphabet.* Now in only recent days a combination of these letters has been recommended by scholars, which to my mind fills the bill and enables this great reform to begin.

Because great and important this reform will be. Have no doubt of that:, It is the necessary complement of the decision taken in 1870 to make education universal and compulsory. Indeed, Pitman was right. Reform of the written language was really a condition precedent to the adoption of universal education. We have no right to inflict on all our children, of all classes and

environments and backgrounds. an elaborate system of alphabetic notation developed in semi-feudal times, corrupted by successive generations of blundering printers and exhibitionist pedants, and only to be acquired in part – never completely – by a labour comparable with that to which Chinese mandarins devote some twenty years of their lives.

So when our grandfathers in 1870 decreed that education should be universal and when the Tory Government in 1892 decided that it should be free, they did not open the door to the working boy. They only unlocked the door. It is still a heavy door and annually even in peace-time, when the routine of schooling is not disturbed by bombs and requisitioning of school property, many scores of thousands of our children never really pass through that door because it is jammed by the spelling-book of Dr. Johnson.

It is convenient rather than accurate to blame the celebrated doctor. In truth the spellings had become stereotyped or frozen in the hundred years preceding the publication of his dictionary. But that dictionary was until the middle of last century accepted as canon law, inviolable, sacred, unerring and unalterable, to a degree which is a high tribute to the Great Bear's force of character if it be but little recommendation of his or his admirers' sense of exact scholarship. It was Johnson who explained that *sirloin* is so called because a joint was knighted by an English king in good humour. But we know that *sirloin* is merely French *surlogne* – the upper part of the loin. In his dictionary he defined the pastern (which is the instep) as the knee of a horse; when questioned by a doubting lady how he came to do that, he replied: "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance. So we find him respelling the word *ake* as *ache,* believing it to be from the Greek word *achos;* whereas it is Anglo-Saxon, and properly spelled with a *k* – a spelling which he denounced as primitive and only adopted by versifiers for the sake of rhyme.

The truth, of course, is that Johnson was widely read in the classics but that he and all other scholars until the middle of last century *were in utter ignorance of the Anglo-Saxon* and Old English manuscripts mouldering in the University libraries, so ignorant that the childish fabrications of Thomas Chatterton imposed on them all. But his dictionary had immense weight in maintaining the style of spelling which he accepted for the most part without question and indeed with positive approval. His dictionary was the basis of elementary teaching throughout last century. An abridgement of it was the handbook of the spelling-bees which sprang up in the eighties and nineties to enable the illiterate parents to keep pace with the newfangled system under which all their children without exception were compelled at school to learn their letters.

When I first wrote ten years ago on this subject of spelling, I thought I had made an irritating gibe by saying that the English and the Chinese alone of all the nations, with the partial exception of the French, write for the eye and not for the ear. I had pictured the English stung to action at being likened to the Chinese. Perhaps I under estimated the value of the work which the Chinese are performing, under their feudal war-lords, in the cause of democracy. Possibly I misjudged my fellow countrymen in thinking that they would seek to alter a habit which, carried out to a greater degree, has perpetuated deeper ignorance in the vast territories of the former Tartar Dynasties. Whatever be the reason, when I advocated that we should cease to write like Chinamen, it was regarded as a joke, and some of my friends in Fleet Street doubted my intelligence.

But now I find it is no jest at all. It is an accepted fact that we alone of all Western peoples conform to the Chinese practice of writing word-pictures instead of sound-images. The difference is that whereas it takes a Chinese student seven years to learn the mere rudiments of his spelling – thus

securing a *vested interest* in literacy – it takes our children eighteen months or two years to acquire an imperfect working knowledge of an art which could easily be achieved in three months if it were on a systematic basis. The further difference is that whereas the Chinaman draws a different picture for almost every word, we are content to represent the forty sounds of the English language by a variation of only 600 combinations of letters. So we have not gone quite all the way with the Chinese, although we have followed them faithfully some distance along the path of literary exclusiveness. The proof of this resemblance will be found in a remarkable passage of Dr. Johnson's *Tour of the Western Islands.* In the course of that journey, he arrived in Edinburgh and took occasion to visit a "philosophical curiosity which no other city has to show." This was a school for the deaf and dumb kept by Mr. Braidwood, a pioneer in this branch of welfare work. Dr. Johnson observes:

> "It will readily be supposed by those that consider this subject, that Mr. Braidwood's scholars spell accurately. Orthography is vitiated, among such as learn first to speak and then to write, by imperfect notions of the relation between letters and vocal utterances. But to those students *every character is of equal* importance. For letters are to them not symbols of names but of things. When they write *they do not represent a sound but delineate a form.*"

There you have the root of the whole matter. "The deaf and dumb spell English accurately because when they write, they do not represent a sound."

With this passage the learned doctor concludes his account of his tour. I may picture him pondering at that conclusion, raising the mighty pen to add a final note, but shrinking from straining too far the allegiance of his devoted readers, "Dare I?" we may imagine him soliloquising. "My conscience urges me forward; my good sense holds me back." For the conclusion which I imagine that he itched to pen was simply this: "For the easy and proper assimilation of the words in my Dictionary, it would be advantageous for the whole nation to become deaf and dumb."

For my part, I bemoan the fact that events so frequently do not occur in their proper order or relationship. The Germans have burned the house in London in which Dr. Johnson compiled his dictionary. Now I would keep the house as a monument to that robust character and trenchant writer; but I would burn his Dictionary.

It is surely a very odd thing that amid the vast changes of life and opinion which have occurred since the Doctor's day, this question of the written language has never once been the subject of Government inquiry. Odd surely that, amid so much that is shifting, this spelling rock and obstruction should alone remain unmoved and immutable. It is futile to calculate the time and money which this petrified practice has consumed. If a million children attend our schools, then in learning to spell in every decade a million children waste a million years. Yet see what has happened in the interim. When Johnson's biographer Boswell was once in London, he received word that his wife was dying at Auchinleck in Ayrshire. He went home with his sons post-haste. That is to say, he took a light coach and changed to fresh horses every ten or fifteen miles from London to Auchinleck. He accomplished the journey in 64 and ¼ hours. That may be taken as a record speed in the 18th century for a journey which was performed in the reverse direction just before the war in one hour by the pilot of a Hurricane. With all this enormous change and development of communication, is it not odd that the written language – the vehicle of intellectual communication – should alone undergo no change and should not even once be subjected to the scrutiny of a Government inquiry?

Is it not odd that we have made no inquiry to see if our spelling cannot be brought more into conformity with modern requirements ever since the days of Dr. Johnson who petrified and stereotyped the spelling and who most vigorously in the pages of Boswell defends the system under which the House of Commons was then hand-picked by the House of Lords?

Now I have in this booklet more elbow-room to develop and to illustrate this strenuous argument than I had in the pamphlet called "Fulmination" which I circulated to many Members of Parliament, public officials and journalists last November. But it must be understood that the point of departure of this booklet and of that pamphlet are one and the same, namely that the disruption of a large part of our elementary schooling by the activities of the war, if we do not systematize the spelling of our language, must result either in the most illiterate generation or – if at the end of the war we drop other studies to concentrate on spelling – the most generally ignorant generation of school children which we have seen since the universal spelling-book was instituted in the year 1870. A reform necessary and desirable in itself is rendered urgent and inevitable by the compelling march of events, if we are to do our best by the new generation. This point of view has proved a happy venture in placing at my disposal a novel cross-section of political opinion on this question.

Several members of both parties have written me plain letters of support and encouragement. From Lord Beaverbrook most generous of men, this:

> "My dear Bill,
> "You and I come from a reforming race. We are never content to leave the shortcomings of our neighbors alone. Up into our pulpits we climb in our black Genevan gowns and bang the Bible for righteousness' sake. That is why we are so useful in an easy-going community. Now with this reform I ought to be most sympathetic. I should be your first disciple. I cannot spell at all. I ask (Malcom) Thomson to tell me. Thomson cannot spell, either. And so I have anticipated you. I have a simplified spelling of my own. This propaganda of yours is most effective. It will certainly make an impression. And I admire the earnestness and energy with which you pursue your objective. You deserve success. And, I hope you get what you deserve."

Now if success should not be achieved, what I foresee is a complete breakdown of our educational system. For this reason, that in many parts of the country the children are either not learning or are not being taught to spell any more. Now that puts me in a dilemma in my argument, because what I have been saying is that we spend needlessly in each decade a twelve months' expenditure on education, say £120,000,000, on the teaching of spelling. But if spelling is not taught, then just the same we spend £120,000,000 a year and the result is widespread illiteracy. Numbers of my correspondents assure me that teachers no longer spend any time on this subject. This confirms the view that spelling is rapidly deteriorating, except among literary hacks (among whom Johnson included the compilers of dictionaries), shorthand typists, and compositors, for all of whom spelling is a stock in trade. One explanation is offered to me by Mr. Buchan, a *Daily Express* compositor, who points out that infants are taught today to read and write by phonetic sounds. On this phonetic basis of reading our board of Education then imposes a non-phonetic style of spelling. Clearly Dr. Johnson was more logical than the Board of Education in his enthusiasm for the orthographic proficiency of the deaf and dumb.

In confirmation of the fact of deterioration, I quote a letter from Mr. Malcolm McCorquodale, the

Conservative Member, director of one of the largest printing firms in the country: "I assert as a printer that the modern highly educated 15 year-old apprentice compositor (and we take only the best) spells as badly as if not worse than his father did when he came into the trade at ten or twelve years old 30 years ago. So I wish you well with your campaign."

How long are we going to spend public money in vast sums for such poor results? All I will add on this educational aspect is a comment from Mr. B. J. Tams, head of the Engineering Department L.C.C. Paddington Technical Inst. that *he could teach mechanical science twice as fast to apprentices if they could properly read and write in their own language*. I do not blame the boys entirely. Certainly they could learn better if they applied themselves. All credit to those who study hard and succeed. But for the most part they do not learn. It is too difficult. We cannot change the boys; but we can change the spelling, and so we should, since our effort must be to put no unnecessary obstruction in the way of learning, to smooth the path and make easy the road. Nor do I think any Member of Parliament, responsible for our vast outlay on education, could hear with any satisfaction the recent appeal of Sir Archibald Sinclair for recruits to his Air Cadet Corps: "It does not matter if you can't do sums or write English."

From Mr. Amery I received this note: "Everything except habit is in favour of simplified spelling, and some day perhaps even habit will be overcome. Meanwhile I am not sure that for foreigners, Basic English is not even more immediately helpful, though of course the two could be combined."

Mr. Amery's words go to the root of the matter. Habit; that is the stumbling block; and I am bound to admit that I see no partial cure which would break the habit gently. The problem does not admit of a partial solution, since to respell any word requires a systematic basis and the adoption of system *in part* is a self-contradiction. The appearance of a few new and more logical spellings is merely an eyesore in the morass of our unsystematic style.

A number of people think that our dialects would cause a difficulty. I think that is a mistaken view. The existence of dialects does not prevent agreement on the present style of writing. Indeed, the only compelling necessity for a standardized spelling at all is fundamentally the need to get things printed – to supply a standardized Author's and Printer's Guide. Otherwise, there would be chaos in the composing rooms. If we were aiming at a phonetic spelling of the language in the scientific sense, with a complete notation for every sound, then you would get dialectic difficulties. But except for one difficulty which I foresee with Scotsmen in the representation of the vowel preceding the letter *r*, I predict no dialectic difficulty at all, and none that cannot be surmounted in a scheme which proposes only a reasonable approximation of the sound to the spelling.

While I feel competent to destroy any of the arguments which these critics have advanced against me, I have long had doubts over one difficulty which none of them has raised. This is the question of homonyms; that is to say, words which in the new spelling would be spelled alike, although today they have different meanings for different spellings. Words of the type: would-wood, wear-ware, plain-plane, and so forth. I calculate that there are 300 pairs of words of that nature in which the distinction would vanish. The spelling reformers dismiss the question with the statement that the context will always make the meaning clear. And it is easy to see that this would be true when the two words are different parts of speech, as a noun and verb or adverb, such as the case of would-wood. But we have an instinctive knowledge of these differences and we guard against confusion. *Bay* is half a dozen different words. Suppose we write: "I hear the dog barking at the chestnut coloured horse beside the laurel-tree on the edge of the inlet of the sea."' In theory we might write:

"I hear the dog baying at the bay beside the bay on the edge of the bay." But we instinctively avoid that sort of thing. Sometime these homonyms have precisely opposite meanings. You may be sailing on a ship and remark to a fellow passenger: "This ship is fast." Then you run on a sandbank and you say: "This ship is fast." *Fast* can mean either speedy or stationary, and the only clue to your meaning would seem to be the expression on your face. But instinctively for *fast* in the sense of stationary, what you would say would be: *stuck fast* or *fast aground*.

If we add to the number of homophones people will be required to write with a little more care. But good writing should be a reflection of good speech; and since none of these written distinctions is conveyed in speech, we shall get on very well with a few more of them. However, at the same time there will be another larger group of words called homographs because they are spelt the same but pronounced differently, in which the meaning will then become clear. These homographs such as *read*, pronounced both *reed* and *red*, will be spelt differently – as they are pronounced. So the advantages of having the distinction in the latter will far outweigh the loss of distinction in the former.

At present if the child asked "Why must I write c-o-u-g-h for k-o-f?" the teacher's only reply is: "Learn it, child, and don't ask embarrassing questions; it is the English language." *The damage done to the child's mind*, the destruction of its powers of reasoning and its hope of any sensible answers to such questions, is something we cannot calculate but must deeply deplore. And. if the child were told to put a *w* in *two* and asked: "Why, when I do not pronounce it?" The teacher replies: "Because that is a word which you might confuse with *too*, and for numbers, we must have separate symbols. Yon sound the *w* in *twin* and in *twice*; your ancestors used to sound it in *two* also; and in Scotland to this day you hear it so pronounced." Do you imagine the child is satisfied?

Now you may recall that I began by giving you four topics which I described as beads, and that I went on to say I would find a thread on which to string them. Well, there you have the thread – *the language*, the value of the spoken language, *its immense impetus to British achievement,* the curse of the written language, *its immense handicap on the natural talents of our people*. What I ask is that you should provide our simply spoken language with a simply written form. So now very briefly, let me string my beads on that thread.

First, the **United Nation**. Adopt a simply written form of the language and you will abolish illiteracy almost overnight. You cannot do this in any other country because of the grammatical complications of the languages. But you can do it here. Any child who is not perfect in reading and writing at the age of ten under a simplified spelling system would be either mentally deficient or totally unsuited for a literary education. Who will deny that if you do this you will at once make an immense contribution to the unity and sense of community of the nation? My spelling-book tells me in its introduction that I will spell much more easily if I know Greek, Latin, and French. Three more languages to learn in order to know how to spell one language. It ought to add if I also know the blunders which our ignorant grammarians made in their reading of these languages and transcribing into English.

If a boy stays in public school or a secondary school until he is 17 or 18 he will be well versed in spelling and will probably have some knowledge of these other languages. But if a boy leaves school at 14 for the mine or the workshop, what chance has he of retaining the spelling he learned, unsupported in his case with a knowledge of foreign languages? What right have we to ask of the vast mass of the young people of this country, who will never learn a word of any foreign language,

that they should write a form of their own native language which requires a knowledge of others? This is what divides the nation into classes, more than money or birth by itself; literacy and illiteracy, the distinction between the letter-free and the letter-bound. This is what results in hardly ever seeing a working man in the House of Commons. That may be all very well. But with a proper spelling, in a clever country like ours and with a grammatically simple language like ours, it should be perfectly feasible for a man to toil at the coal face, and never to see pen or paper for months, and yet immediately and without difficulty set pen to paper and read and write. That is what I want to see. When that is here you will get a new basis of unity and understanding in the nation. That is how you will abolish the last of the class barriers, this illiteracy, which dates really from the exclusive era of the 18th century when such a doctrine as I am enunciating now would have had me clapped in jail right away as a dangerous revolutionary who suggested that Jack should be as good as his master. I want Jack to be given the opportunity to show he is as good as his master provided he has the stuff in him. I don't want Jack any more to be manacled with this letter-handicap or tripped up with this letter-impediment. It is only in modern times that the written language has assumed such importance in comparison with the spoken language, and in modern times we should give it a modern streamlined dress. You do not think it a virtue in a modern Ford motorcar that it should show in its design the rudiments of the original model of 1904. Why then should we preserve in the vivid living English language written memorials to the dead languages of the Greeks and the Romans? That is the Stonehenge Age of communication. Let's have a bit of modern streamlining in our written language. Let us have, not the rudiments of the earliest model or the model-T, but a new model ABC.

So much for that bead on the string. Consider now the next, **The Future of our Foreign Trade**. What enormous advantages we are rejecting in this matter of language. All over the world foreigners in normal times are stretching out their hands to us and we are rejecting their advances. I do not speak of the last ten years as normal, and of course in the modern age the restriction which every Government in self-defence places on the trade of its nationals prevents trade following the flag or the language as simply as it once did, But none would deny that a widespread knowledge abroad of our English speech would tend vigorously to the assimilation of British ideas of life, and would establish free of cost countless ambassadors of goodwill and commercial travellers of understanding. Here is a quotation which will amaze you:

"The idea of establishing an international language which is to be commonly known and used, by the side of the native tongues is coming more and more to the front. It cannot be denied that such a language would be highly profitable to the whole human race. What tends to separate nations more than anything else is the ignorance of one another, which fosters suspicion, fear, hatred – and war. For more than a hundred years there has been no war between Britain and the United States. The common language has been the guardian of peace... No language has a better claim than English, which is spoken by more than 200,000,000 people and is the administrative language of 500,000,000. It is already the chief language of the sea and commerce. It is taught in practically all the secondary schools in most civilized countries, and for this reason, is already the common property of the whole world … For a simplicity of grammar and a cosmopolitan vocabulary, English has no rival. It is the easiest language for the greatest number of people … But English is handicapped by its antiquated spelling, which is rather *a disguise than a guide to the pronunciation.*"

These are not the words of an Englishman but of a Swede, Prof. R. E. Zachrisson, who ten years ago carried out the most striking series of experiments with a simplified form of the written English

language which he called *Anglic*. No person to whom English is the native tongue ever did more for it than did this Swede. To his students at the University of Upsala he gave a course of 20 lessons of 1½ hours each in his simply spelled English. The following reports appeared in the Swedish newspapers: "All the pupils had gained a knowledge of English which was actually startling to a hearer who knew what a short time they had been learning the language." "The proficiency of the pupils was amazing. Their pronunciation was excellent, the translations brilliant, and they were able to converse without any difficulty with their teacher." "To be able after 20 lessons to read, pronounce, translate and converse in English with considerable fluency – the result was indeed amazing."

It may be, if the professor had been allowed to continue his labours in peace, we should now be hearing that Swedish children learn *faster than our own to read and write the English language*. But Prof. Zachrisson died, leaving however to all students of English not only the memory of his enthusiasm but a scholarly plan to which the new proposals in England are on some points indebted. But we should remember that it was our Prof. Daniel Jones, of London University, who advised and instructed Prof. Zachrisson, and I may add that anyone turning to page 312 of the *Transactions of the Philological Society* for the year 1881 will see there three-quarters of the system which became Anglic. But this illustration from Sweden is the best demonstration I could want to prove to ourselves that the foreign interest in English is very great and that to foreigners, a reformed spelling would be quite valuable.

The Machine of Imperial Government. English being the language of administration through India and the far-flung many-tongued colonies, I cannot think that you, Mr. Member of Parliament, you who are the real ruler and dispenser of fate in these vast territories, will for ever tolerate the affliction of your subjects (under the King) in the matter of spelling the language of their rulers. The place of English in Colonial and Indian schools is a subject on which educationists hold strong and divergent views. But all agree that the vernaculars must have their place and all admit to the value of a knowledge of English. A decisive feature common to the whole Empire is the overwhelming desire of these native fellow-subjects to learn the English language.

In the African Colonies the policy is now becoming clearly defined and is thus described by Lord Hailey in his *African Survey* -

> "The vernacular must be used in the first stages of elementary education. English is regarded as a necessity, in all intermediate, secondary and technical schools, and as it is a necessity in these, its inculcation must commence in the higher standards of the elementary schools... An important factor is the desire of the Africans themselves to learn English, which desire is in many cases the incentive to seek education. A knowledge of English is of commercial value. Again, there is the natural desire of the African to learn a language which is that of his rulers. The scarcity of general literature in the vernaculars is not without its influence in this direction among a people to whom reading is a new-found pleasure." (page 1257).

Our scholars labour incessantly to provide a phonetic script for the native vernaculars of Africa. The job has been done completely for Swahili, the major East African dialect. There is no spelling-book in Swahili. The symbols used to write that language have their plain and pre-determined sounds. The only trouble is that when the native, by the white man's magic, has learned to read Swahili, he finds that he has no literature in it worth reading. It is surely odd that the white man should perform for the negro and for the native language this magic which he declines to work for his own children

and for his own language. Moreover, the time comes when the native demands to be taught not Swahili but English. "He has a desire to learn the language of his rulers." Picture him at his task.

He is setting out to learn a foreign language and the spelling-book that (English) language contains a list of 5000 words commonly misspelt by Englishmen who use it every day of their lives. If they can't learn to spell English what a prodigious job it must appear to the native. Further, the introduction to the English spelling-book lays down that nothing but *prolonged memory work* will enable the Englishman to spell his own language, but that a knowledge of Greek, Latin and French will to a considerable degree, reduce that labour, It is obvious, for an example, that a good knowledge of Latin will save you slipping on "acquit" and "aquatic," just as a knowledge of both Greek and Latin will keep you correct on say, "extra" and "ecstasy." Therefore it follows that when a native African sets out to learn to read and write the language of his rulers, he has to acquire an art in which his rulers are apt to slip up 5000 times and in which a prior knowledge of Greek, Latin, and French is said to be an asset.

Is it fair, Mr. ruling Member of Parliament? Is that the best you can do in the discharge of your duties to these subjects? Is that the way to treat the piccaninnies of the Banyoro and the Banyankole? I have read in a Colonial Office publication that at the present rate of progress of education in Africa, illiteracy will be abolished in 600 years. No basis was provided for this interesting calculation.

Now it is not proposed that every African native should become a perfectly accomplished litterateur. On the other hand, I do not think that anyone would get up in the House of Commons nowadays and declare that education is bad for the African native. That being granted, the authorities lay down that English should begin in the elementary classes along with the vernacular and that English is a necessity in all further education. So we proceed to try to educate them in the English language. I have not been able to collect statistics of the result in relation to our own colonies in Africa. But I have before me the report of the former inspector of negro schools in the Union of South Africa. He is Mr. C. T. Loram, a South African, now Prof. of Education at Yale Univ., U.S.A., and his book, *The Education of the South African Native* (Longmans, Green & Co.), is an authoritative work, although it is 20 years old. In the spelling examination for these negro children only 50% was required for a pass. In Standard One out of 395 children, 162 were failed; in Standard Two out of 254 children, 109 were failed; in Standard Three out of 257 children, 135 were failed; and so on through all the standards of the schools which he surveys. Mr. Loram laments with some bitterness "the very heavy mortality caused by English spelling," and he appeals for a more enlightened system of examinations. But why not a more enlightened system of spelling? It is true to say that the methods of examination may be more enlightened today and that, as I am also told by correspondents in England, spelling is not such a fetish as it once was. That argument only means that spelling is not taught. *Why then do we perpetuate a style of spelling which is of no conceivable value unless it is taught and which proves far too difficult when it is taught?* And if this is bad for us here in England, how much *more of an obstacle* is it not to our Colonial development?

With these words I leave the Empire and look homeward.

The Education of our Children. This is the last bead on my string – the education of our children here at home in our own schools. No one will doubt that the language is here of paramount importance because the written language is at one and the same time the main subject and the chief medium of our educational system. It follows that anything we can do to simplify its acquisition

will permit us to make progress in education by leaps and bounds, by geometric progression, because with systematic spelling children will attain at an earlier age mastery of an easier medium. They will therefore be spared time from needless studies and that time newly available will he spent in acquiring knowledge in an easier way.

The prospects offered by this reform really cannot be exaggerated once the cumulative benefit is appreciated. It will be found that reform of the written language is the key to reform of the curriculum. I read an article by a well-known educationist, Mr. Scarr, pleading that more time should be given in schools to the formation of character. I say to him: "Here is your time – the time wasted in learning spelling." I read that Mr. Lockwood, the Headmaster of Gainsborough Grammar School, was anxious to improve the speech of his schoolboys. I wrote to him saying: "Simplify the written language and at once you will find time to improve speech and find a great ally in the systematic spelling as a general guide to better pronunciation." For spelling is both reading and writing – it is two of the three R's, and the foundation of all future learning.

Some people write to me saying that it is a good thing that the children are escaping school, that there is far too much book learning in schools in any case, and that country interests will do more real educational good to the children than they ever gained cooped up in a school-room. This is symptomatic of the widespread distrust of our educational methods, and it has this justification that, much of the time from which children are now playing truant would have been misspent on a barren orthography. Whereas if you systematise the written form of the language, you will open up opportunities of pleasant school-day activities; you will turn out children who are better instructed in all that they learn today and who in addition can roam the countryside on nature studies, can do a bit of gardening with a teacher of gardening or sewing with a sewing teacher, speak better, read better and regard their school days as a happy preliminary to a working life and not merely a period of isolated gloom which is often so depressing that a child's first conscious effort on leaving school is an endeavour to forget everything that he learned in it.

On this present school-time problem, I am warned by a voice of authority, high in the councils of the nation, which voice desires to remain anonymous. The voice says that the project of simplified spelling should stand or fall on its merits as a long-term project irrespective of whether or not it would be a good thing for the children now of school age. With that voice I agree. I have advocated this reform for many years before the war as essential and desirable in itself. The arguments in this little booklet illustrate how wide and universal the case can be made. But I will not therefore omit to say that in its application to our present children of school age, the case finds still another vindication in that here alone by this reform can we offer any palliative at all of the damage that has been done by fire-bomb and by bomb-fear. Here alone can you recover for this generation, as you can provide in new additional time for all other generations, at least one year of the child's school life.

And why should we not make it easier for the child? Will anyone give me any justification for putting stumbling blocks in the infant's path? Sir Patrick Dollan has called my attention to the views of Mr. Winston Churchill on this question of language. Mr. Churchill says that he would make all boys learn English and then he would let the clever boys learn Latin as an honour and Greek as a treat. But, says Mr. Churchill, "the only thing I would whip them for is not learning English. I would whip them hard for that." The purpose of this booklet is to show how the children of the world could learn rather more English with rather less whipping.

There; I have done. My four little beads are on my thread – the united nation, the foreign trade, the machine of Imperial government, the vitalising of our school curricula – all strung together on this topic of language. To complete my necklace all I want is a knot, and here at hand is just what I require. Very happy am I to rescue from illmerited obscurity a powerful demand for an inquiry to be held into this subject. Gentlemen, take the shoes from off your feet, for you are about to tread on holy ground. Hear the counsel of Mr. Gladstone:

> "There is much that might be done with advantage in the reform of spelling as to the English language; but the main thing is that whatever may be proposed should be proposed with the weight of great authority to back it. The best plan if proposed without such a backing will in my opinion only tend to promote confusion. I should advise those who are interested – and very justly interested in this question – to busy themselves not so much with considering what should be done as with considering in what way opinion can be brought to bear on the matter, and some organ framed to inquire what should be proposed. It is not in my power to offer to give any time under the present circumstances to the undertaking which I recommend, and in which I should gladly have found myself able to join."

That is what Mr. Gladstone said in 1874. The scholars did not take his advice. They perversely went ahead considering what should be done. And what immense developments of exact linguistic knowledge there have since been – all the labours of Ellis, Skeat, Sweet, Sir James Murray, *(Philological Society Dictionary),* right down to the Gilbert Murray and Daniel Jones still happily with us. Now again this movement presses for an inquiry, fortified now, for the first time in its long history, with definite and adequate proposals. As an example of the scheme of systematised spelling recommended as a basis of inquiry, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of repeating the words of W. Gladstone, and seeing whether in what Lord Elton and I would call a "utilitarian" garb there falls to be extracted one grain of sense which has been overlooked in the original. Here is what W. Gladstone says in the 1941 model -

> Thaer iz much that miet be dun with advantej in the reform ov speling az to the Ingglish lauggwej; but the maen thing iz that whotever mae be propoezd shood be propoezd *with the waet ov graet authorrity to bak it.* The best plan if propoezd *without such a baking* wil in mie opinyon oenly tend to promoet konfuezhon. I shood adviez thoez huu ar interested – and very justly interested in this kweschon – to bizy themselvz not soe much with konsidering whot shood be dun az with konsidering in whot wae opinyon kan be braut to baer on the mater, and sum organ fraemd to inkwier whot shood be propoezd. It iz not in mie pouer to ofer to giv eny tiem under the prazent surkumstansez to the undertaeking which I rekomend, and in which I shood gladly hav found mieself abl to join.

[1] *The discussion of these three topics will be omitted from the introduction for the sake of brevity.*

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 pp11–12 in the printed version]

3. The Role of Superflous Letters in Limited Spelling Reform Systems, by John E. Chappell

In the Winter, 1964 issue of the SPB, W. Frank du Feu argued that in any spelling system designed primarily for achieving reform with a minimal number of respellings, we should retain the double-duty *c*, serving according to rule for either of the consonants *k* and *s*. Admittedly, we would be forced to do this if we were committed to a certain absolute minimum number of changes, We might also retain silent e as a sign that the preceding syllable contains a long vowel rather than a short one. But I do not think it advisable to compromise with inconsistency so much as to retain either of these present features of English orthography. In short, I prefer not a "minimal", reform but a "limited" one.

Even if we are forced to remain within the present 26 letters in devising a spelling reform, 4 letters come into consideration for possible replacement or reassignment. These are *c, j, q* and *x*. Both *i* and *x* are wasteful because they stand for 2 phonemes rather than one, in combinations which are much rarer in occurance than other single phonemes which have no symbol of their own. For instance, Godfrey Dewey's *Relativ Frequency of English Speech Sounds* shows *j* occuring only 0.45% of the time on the printed page as the complex or double phoneme *dzh*, and only 0.10% of the time as a letter, while *x* occurs only 0.16% of the time as a letter, and that standing for three different phonemes, as *ks*, *gz* ,*z* in *ax, exact, xylophone*. Meanwhile, we have the single phoneme of voiced *th* occuring 2.00% of the time in the word *the*, and 1.50% of the time in other words, and numerous vowels with no distinctive symbol of their own but which occur much more often than *j* or *x*.

If economy of space is to be one of the goals of any spelling reform – and certainly it should be so considered – it appears that we should find a distinctive role for all alphabet symbols, and that this role should preferrably involve the most frequently-occuring phonemes.

Further thought may show it may not he wise to alter the present usage of the symbols *i* and *x*, despite these considerations. For in the concept of either a minimal or a limited reform, we are trying to avoid totally new patterns of association, and there does not appear to be any convenient alternative arraignment for the letters *i* and *x* which would not involve a radical change of habit association. Of course, there is one possibility not entirely remote from present usage *j* might be used as in French, merely for the phoneme *zh*; then our present word *jump* would he spelt *djump*. But the phoneme *zh* occurs only 0.05% of the time, according to Dewey, when it is not a part of the *dzh* pair. Therefore, we would lose both space *and* familiarity by assigning *j* merely to *zh* rather than to *dzh* as currently employed. We would have greater consistency if we did this; but it is conceded that any 26-letter scheme will have to sacrifice much in perfect consistency which an ideal 42-letter scheme could not tolerate.

As for the letter *x*, in order to achieve economy it might be well to attempt to use it for hard *th*, or to modify it slightly for this purpose, so that it would resemble more the old Anglo-Saxon thorn (ð) than the letter now used in Europe for the un-English gutteral *kh*. Still if *x* were retained for *ks*, there would be an abbreviation of two letters into one as at present, and at times of an additional letter *c*, as in excellent-exelent.

One idea to keep in mind is that our new system should be adapted to international concepts and needs as well as those of English speakers only. Therefore, we should not establish new usages for the superflous letters which are totally at odds with the habits of other European speakers, any more than our own habits. For this reason, *x* should not be permanently (after some time for changing present typing machines is elapsed) be used for the hard *th*, without some distinctive modification of the symbol.

Now to proceed to discussing the letters *c* and *the*, the principal purpose of this brief communication. About these letters we can make much more definite statements than about *i* and *x*. We can say without doubt that unless we completely alter the role they now play, we will sacrifice much in economy of space. For neither *c* nor *q* is ever used singly for a phoneme which is not already represented adequately by one of the two symbols *s* and *k*, whereas *j* and *x* at least serve the function of abbreviating two symbols into one.

It is well known that the most frequently-used phonemes, other than hard *th*, which are not associated with a distinctive symbol, are vowel phonemes. For English has at least 9 distinctive vowels, no matter how you try to cut down their number, and only 5 vowel symbols. This does not count diphthongs or semi-diphthongs. Therefore, it would seem wise to try to reassign the symbols *c* and *q* to vowel sounds, in order to achieve maximum economy of space. I would definitely suggest this in the case of *q*, which might be used for one of the phonemes now covered inadequately by the letter *a*. In the course of time, for the same reasons as given for *x*, type faces should be altered to remove the tail of the *q*, leaving us with a symbol like the written a, (*a*), only not italic. The similarity of written *a* to *q* minus the tail would be our excuse for this change in terms of present patterns of association.

Thus would go by the boards one of the oldest problems of handsetters of type: trying to tell apart the p's and q's; and with it might eventually go the old saying deriving from this problem. I submit that it would be preferable to latch on to a new saying representing somewhat less of a problem. Mirror-image letters have never been quite satisfactory in any alphabet.

The letter *c* might also conceivably be used for another vowel, as some reformers have suggested. Fred Wingfield, for instance, would use it for the vowel in l*aw*n. Indeed, *c* does not look much different from *o*, which represents a phoneme adjacent to *aw*.

It might prove better, however, to remain closer to present patterns of association by using *c* for the phoneme *sh*. If we consider our present *ch* in the manner as does the International Phonetic Association, as essentially consisting of the two phonemes *t* and *sh*, which is at worst not far from the truth, then we would be able to respell *ch* more consistently as *tc*. The letter *h* has never been more than a weak choice for this particular digraph anyway, as it has been for the digraph *sh*. This change would involve definite reorientation of habit on the part of the user, but not so great as one might suspect. He is already familiar with words like *machine*, in which *c* is actually used along with *h* in a digraph for the phoneme *s*, which becomes *sh*. He has surely seen the old-fashioned transliteration of the Russian *ch* sound as *tch* or *tsch,* as this is still used in the names of the composer Tchaikovsky, or the chess-master Tchigorin, and of a few others. And there are a few others in which *c* is used precisely for *sh*, as in artificial, aceous, beneficial, cretaceous, chic, crucial, echelon, facial, fallacious, gracious, loquacious, Marcia, racial, social, species, trucial. Such a reassignment of the letter *c* would not be totally inconsistent with its usage in other European

languages, either; and it might pave the way for a similar reassignment in those languages. Finally, it should be noted that the phoneme *sh* occurs 0.84% of the time in English by itself, and in each case there would be a letter saving of one letter – not a bad achievement.

Besides hard *th*, the only more frequently occuring consonant sound which does not have its own letter is the phoneme *ng*, which occurs 0.98% of the time. And in this case, I think it worthwhile to consider seriously adding the obvious 27th letter which can so easily be formed by combining n and g into the symbol ŋ.

For that matter, there are a few other obvious new symbols which could be added at great saving of space, so that in my opinion the wisest course for a spelling reformer is to become a "limited" reformer instead of a "minimal" reformer and to hold out for an alphabet of about 30 or 31 letters, and with a space saving of at least 5%, I consider such a possibility quite feasible in all respects, including the problem of altering the various typesetting machines, which could not so easily be fitted to a completely phonemic scheme involving 40 or more letters. Various experiments with the new elementary teaching alphabets are showing that children adapt readily to the use of logically formed supplementary symbols where digraphs must now be employed. Conservative tendencies may hold the reform to 26 symbols, but the advantages of additional symbols should at least be argued vigorously.

In short, I believe a sound program of reform ought to be somewhat more ambitious than merely performing the obviously needed changes like removing *gh* where it is silent. If we don't ask the language user to think any new thought, we are not being reformers in the true sense of the term.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 p12 in the printed version]

4. The Kan Oepener, by Frank du Feu, M.A
(Transliterated into World English)

Ie feel uneekwal too the task, mie muez must bee soe sutl
Ov teling yoo whot wuns beefel a moest devoeted kupl.

Thae okuepied a modern flat (ther housmaed'z naem woz Yvonne)
And thoe not reeali veri rich, had kwiet enuf too liv on.

Wun dae a pasing travler kauld to maek a startling aufer,
An oepener that wuud puut to shaem the moest embiterd scaufer.

He sed a wel-noen kongresman can-oepend for a hobi,
And eeven pland too sel that brand too memberz in the lobi.

Thae braut a kan and liek a flash hee shoed them whot it had in;
This instrument wuud serv them az the lamp had servd Aladdin.

The oepener thae ov koers akwierd, ther oeld wun nou misdouting,
And felt soe proud that thae aloud the maed an ekstra outing.

A fue daez laeter master sedz "let's have sum fish for tee, deer,
Proedoos the oepener and the kan and leev the rest too mee, deer."

Hee tried in vaen too get that fish, uezd braenz az wel az musel,
And maed a finger bleed befoer abandoning the tusel.

Hiz wief nou sed, "Ie'l doo mie best, it luuks ekstreemli simpl."
Yet after much hard wurk, the kan shoed nuthhing but a dimpl.

Shee perseveerd until at last, reluktant too surender,
Shee uezd a nauti wurd and throo the oepener in the fender.

"Remember, daarling," sed hur spous, "that paeshuns iz a vurtue;
"Whie looz yoor temper with a thhing that hazn't eeven hurt yoo?"

"Just set the taebl, Caroline, and doen't foerget the krooit,
Kum, Yvonne, it's yoor turn too trie, yoor priti shuer too doo it".

The grip in which shee held the kan had krusht a jieant's torsoe;
A mark apeerd an inch in lengthh and raather les than moer so.

"Konfound this tin," sed Yvonne, "Ie kan hardli eeven skrach it;
Indeed, if thaer'z noe uther wae Ie'l braek it with a hachet."

"But waet, supoez Ie stop a bit and studi the instrukshunz,
Foer if Ie spoil the preshus stuf thaer'z sertin too bee rukshunz."

"A chield kuud uez it," red the wurdz, "and never pauz aur stumbl."
"A wiked faulshuud, Ie deklaer, Ie hav a riet too grumbl!"

"Yet az a last rezort, Ie thhink wee miet aproech a niper
Hoo wuud bee glad too urn a koin bie seting free the kiper."

Boethh mum and master thhaut this plan at eni raet wurthh trieing,
Soe too the doer the later toer, and soon a boi espieing,

"Kum heer, mie sun," hee kauld out loud, "Yoo see this briet nue koper,
It's yoorz if yoo kan oepen this." Ie'l bet hee kums a kroper.

"Yoo kant hav tried," the boi replied, "Whie, that's az soft az taufi."
And soon a kuerius sound woz hurd liek faather siping kaufi.

The top woz neerli auf the kan, that boi had shoen hiz paesez,
And nou aksepted hiz rewaurd with sundri wrie grimaesez.

Whiel master, hooz preskriptiv riet too bee konsiderd pieus,
Woz never kweschund, meerli sed, "Such thhingz aar sent too trie us."

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5. How to – Should you – Teach Your Baby to Read, by Glenn Doman, P.T.*

*Condensed from the book by that title published by Random House, New York, 1964. Copyright by Glenn Doman,
*Dr. Glenn Doman, Director of the Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential, Philadelphia, Pa.

Between 9 months and 4 years of ago the ability to absorb information is unparalled and the desire to do so is higher than it will ever be again. Yet during this period we keep the child clean, well fed, safe from the world about him and in a learning vacuum.

Yet learning, we will tell him, is the most important thing in life, and indeed it is. Learning is also the greatest game in life and the most fun. We have assumed that children hate to learn essentially because most children have disliked or even despised school. Again we have mistaken schooling for learning. Not all children in school are learning – just as not all children who are learning are doing so in school.

A recent experience, which climaxed hundreds of similar but less amusing situations, serves as an excellent example of the fact that tiny children want to learn to a degree that they are unable to distinguish learning from fun. They keep this attitude until we adults convince them that learning is *not* fun.

From conception on, the human brain grows at an explosive rate which is continually on a descending scale – explosive then descending. The whole process is essentially complete at the age of 8. At conception the fertile egg is microscopic in size. Twelve days later the embryo is large enough so that the brain can be differentiated. This is long before the mother knows she is pregnant, so phenomically fast is the rate of growth. While the rate of growth is fantastic, this rate is always slower than the day before. The process of brain growth matches the body growth but is on an even more descending rate.

In addition to this basic understanding of how the brain grows, it is important to understand which of its functions are most important to humans.

There are just six neurological functions which are exclusive to man, and these six functions characterize man and set him apart from other creatures. These are the six functions of a layer of the brain known as the human cortex. These exclusively human abilities are present and functioning by 8 years of age. They are worth knowing:

1. Only man is able to walk entirely upright.
2. Only man speaks in abstract, symbolic, devised language.
3. Only man is able to combine his unique manual competence with motor abilities listed above to write his language.

The first three skills listed are of a *motor* nature (expressive) and are based upon the remaining three, which are *sensory* in nature (receptive).

4. Only man understands the abstract, symbolic, devised language which he hears.

5. Only man can identify an object by touch alone.
6. Only man sees in a manner which enables him to read the abstract language when it is in written form.

An 8-year-old child is capable of all of these functions, since he walks, talks, writes, reads, understands spoken language and identifies objects by touch at that age. It is evident that from that time on we are simply talking about a sort of lateral multiplication of these 6 exclusively human abilities, rather than the addition of new ones.

The Period from One to Five

This period of life is *crucial* to the child's whole future. During this period we love him, make sure he doesn't hurt himself, smother, him with toys, and send him to nursery school. And, totally unaware, we are doing our best to prevent learning.

What should happen to him during these crucial years is that we should be satisfying his staggering thirst for knowledge, which he wants to soak up in all possible forms but particularly in terms of language, whether spoken and heard or printed and read.

It is during this period of life that the child should learn to read, thus unlocking the door to the golden treasury of all things written by man in history, the sum of man's knowledge.

The need to learn during this period of life is, for the child, a stark necessity. Isn't it wonderful that an omniscient Nature made the child also love learning? Isn't it awful that we have so terribly misunderstood what a child is, and placed so many roadblocks in Nature's way?

This then is the period of life in which the child's brain is an open door to all information. During this period of life he takes in all information without conscious effort of any sort. This is the period of life in which he can learn to read easily and naturally. He should be given the opportunity to do so.

The acquisition of language in all its forms is one of the prime purposes for the child's play. It is during this period that he can learn to speak a foreign language, even as many as five, which he at present fails to learn thru high school and college. They should be offered to him. He will learn easily now, but with great difficulty later.

It is during this period that he should be exposed to all the basic information about written language, which he now learns with much effort between the ages of 6 and 10. He will learn it more quickly and easily.

It is more than a unique opportunity, it is a sacred duty. We must open the floodgate of all basic knowledge to him.

We shall never again have an equal opportunity.

The period from five to eight is *very important* to the child's whole life. As has been pointed out, with every passing day the child's ability to take in information without effort descends, but it is also true that with each day his ability to make judgement goes up. Eventually that downward curve and the upward curve cross each other.

Prior to the time when the curves meet, the child is in some ways actually superior to the adult. The ability to learn languages is one of them. Let's consider this unique factor of superiority in language acquisition.

The author spent four years trying to learn French as an adolescent and young adult and has twice been in France, but it is perfectly safe to say that he speaks virtually no French. Yet every normal French child and a good many below-average ones, even some mentally retarded, learn to speak French well, using all the basic rules of grammar, before they are six years old.

It's sort of upsetting when you think about it.

One is horrified when one considers the many millions of dollars that are wasted annually in high schools and colleges in the United States in trying vainly to teach languages to young adults who are almost incapable of learning them.

Keeping in mind the child's remarkable ability to learn spoken language, let us stress again the fact that the process by which spoken language and written language is understood is precisely the same. Then doesn't it follow that young children should also have a unique ability to read language? The fact is that, given an opportunity to do so, they do demonstrate such an ability.

We were aware that other people were working in the field of teaching young children. We had a general idea of about what they were doing and saying. While we agreed with much of what was being done, and certainly there was much to do, we believed that the basis of such learning was neurological rather than psychological, emotional or educational.

When we began to study the literature on the subject intensively we were impressed by four facts.

1. The history of teaching little children to read was not new and indeed stretches back for centuries.
2. Often people generations. apart, do the same things, altho for different reasons and different philosophies.
3. Those who had decided to teach young children to read had all used systems which, altho they varied somewhat in technique, had many common factors.
4. Most importantly, in all the cases we were able to find where small children were taught to read in the home, everyone who tried had suceeded, no matter what the method.

In Philadelphia, the Institute for the Achievement of Human Potential have found it possible to teach even brain-injured children to read well. This does not prove that brain-injured children are superior to unhurt children, it simply shows that very young children can learn to read. And we adults really should permit them to do so, if for no other reason than the fact that they enjoy it so much.

A kindergarten teacher had reported that when she prepared to read a book to her 5-year-olds, one of the children had volunteered to read it. The teacher had pointed out that the book was a new one that the 5-year-old had never seen, but he insisted that he could read it anyway. The teacher decided that the easiest way to dissuade the child was to let him try. She did – and *he did*! He read the entire book aloud to his class, accurately and easily.

The supervisor pointed out that for the first 32 years of his life as an educator he had occasionally heard stories about 5-year-olds who could read books, but that in all of those three decades he had

never actually seen one who could. However, he pointed out, in the last three years there had been at least one child in every kindergarten group who could read.

"Do you know who had taught everyone of these children to read?" he asked the child developmentalist who was leading the discussion. "Yes" answered the developmentalist, 'I think I do know the answer is that nobody taught them." The Supervisor agreed that this is the case.

In a sense nobody had taught these children to read, just as in a sense it is true that nobody teaches a child to understand spoken language. Today television is becoming a standard part of the environment of almost all American children. This is a major factor which has been added to the lives of these kindergarten children.

By watching T-V commercials which show big clear words accompanied by loud clear pronunciations, children are unconsciously beginning to learn to read. By asking a few key questions of adults who are unaware of what is taking place, this ability to read has been expanded. By having children's books read to them by parents who are attempting only to amuse them, these children have attained astonishing vocabularies.

At Yale, Dr. O. K. Moore has for many years been doing extensive research in how to teach preschool children to read. Dr. Moore believes that it is easier to teach a 3-year old to read than a 4-year old, a 4-year old than a 5-year old and a 5-year old than a 6-year old. Of course, it's easier, it should be. Yet how many times have we heard it said that children cannot learn to read until they are 6 years old and that they should not?

The first decision will have to be whether or not we *want* 2 and 3 year old children to read. If we decide we *don't* want them to be able to read, there are at least two things we have to do (1) Get rid of television sets or at least forbid words to be shown on T-V. (2) Be careful never to read newspaper headlines aloud or product names to kids. Now on the other hand if we don't want to go to all that trouble, we could take the easy way out and just go ahead and let them read. If we do decide to take the easy way out and permit 3 year olds to read, we certainly should do something about *what* they read.

Whether young children are learning to read or not isn't a theory which we may argue. It is a fact. The only question is what we are going to do about it.

Herbert Spencer said that the brain should not be starved any more than the stomach, Education should begin in the cradle but in an interesting atmosphere,, The man to whom information comes in dreary tasks along with threats of punishment is unlikely to he a student in after years. While those to whom it comes in natural forms at the proper times are likely to continue thru life that self instruction began in youth.

We have already discussed several children who were successfully taught by their mothers and who later developed splendidly but those are not examples from the professional literature.

Terman concludes that there is no evidence to indicate that Millie (an early learner) was in any way harmed by her being taught as a baby, and much evidence to support the view that *her high abilities were due at least in part to her early training*. Her various I.Q. tests averaged to above 140, and she was strong and lively. She suffered no handicaps in social adaptability even tho her classmates were 2 to 3 years her senior. Many studies indicate that a very high number of superior adults and geniuses were able to read long before they went to school. It has always been assumed that these

people could read at such a young age *because* they were superior people. This is a perfectly proper scientific premise and we have always accepted it However, in light of the many instances on record where parents have decided to teach tiny children to read long before it was possible to make a valid test of their intelligence and therefore before there was any reason to assume that a child would be superior, we must now raise some new questions.

Is it not that these children became superior because they were taught to read at an early age? The fact that there are so many superior persons and indeed geniuses who could read before they were of school age supports either the first or second assumptions equally well.

There is however, more evidence to support the second premise than there is to support the first, and it too is a perfectly valid scientific supposition. The assumption that many highly intelligent people could read at a very young age because they are geniuses rests essentially on a genetic basis and presumes that all such people are superior because they are endowed genetically with this potential.

We cannot close our eyes to the considerable evidence which supports the possibility that early reading has a strong influence on performance in later life.

(a) Many children who turned out to be superior were taught to read before there was any evidence that they were in any way unusual. Indeed, some parents had decided before a child was born that they would make the child superior by teaching it to read at an early age and did so.

(b) In many of the recorded cases one child was taught to read and later proved to he superior while other children in the same family with the same parents were not taught to read early and did not become superior. In some cases the child taught to read early was the first child. In other families for various reasons, the child who learned to read early was not the first child.

We have discussed in some detail the six neurological functions which belong exclusively to human beings, and have pointed out that three of these are *receptive* abilities, while the other three are *expressive*.

It seems obvious that man's intelligence is limited to the information he can gain from the world thru his receptive senses. The highest of these receptive abilities is the ability to read. It is equally obvious that if all three of man's receptive abilities were totally cut off, he would be more of a vegetable than a human being.

Man's intelligence, then, is limited by the sum of the 3 uniquely human characteristics of seeing and hearing in a manner that culminates in the ability to read and to understand spoken language, and a special ability to feel that enables him, if necessary, to read language by feeling. Destroy these three receptive abilities and you destroy most of what makes man different from other animals. Limit these three abilities and *you will equally limit a human's intelligence*. Unless one of these three human abilities is high, we will see a human being whose intelligence is low. If one of these abilities is higher than the others, the person will perform to the top level of that ability, *provided every conceivable opportunity is made available to that person to gain information thru that single facility*. No person will rise above the highest receptive ability he has plus the opportunity he is given to use that receptive ability.

The reverse is, of course, equally true. If all three of these abilities in a single human being are low, then that human being will perform at a very low, and indeed, sub-human level.

If the ability to read is reduced or nonexistent, there is no question but that the ability to express intelligence is also markedly diminished, Among the peoples of the earth who do not have a written language, or where the written language is crude, it is not only true that such tribes are uneducated but it is also true that their intelligence and creativity are low, It is a purely academic question to inquire whether the Australian aborigines don't read because they are of low intelligence or whether they are of low intelligence because they do not read. Lack of reading and lack of intelligence go hand in hand both in "individuals and nations." The converse is also true.

Language is a vital tool. One cannot imagine conducting a sophisticated conversation or describing a complicated thought in the language of an Amazon tribe, even if one spoke the language fluently. The ability to express intelligence is therefore related *to the facility of the language* with which one is dealing.

Tommy Lunski was classified as a hopeless idiot at two, *essentially because he could not talk* (and thus express his intelligence), while he was considered to he a superior child at five *because he could read superbly*. It is completely clear that the ability to read, and at an early age, has much to do with the measurement of intelligence. In the end it matters little whether the ability to express intelligence is a valid test of intelligence itself – it *is* the test upon which intelligence is judged.

The earlier a child reads, the more likely he is to read and the better he reads. Some of the reasons, then, that children should learn to read when they are very young are:

a. The hyperactivity of the two and three year olds is, in fact, the result of a boundless thirst for knowledge. If he is given an opportunity to quench that thirst, at least for a small part of the time, he will be far less hyperactive, far easier to protect from harm, and far better able to learn about the world when he is moving about and learning about the physical world, and himself.

b, The child's ability to take in information at two and three years of age will never be equalled again,

c. It is infinitely easier to teach a child to read then than it will ever be again.

d. Children taught to read at a very young age absorb *a great deal more information* than do children whose early attempts to learn are frustrated.

e. Children who learn to read while very young tend to comprehend better than youngsters who do not. It is interesting to listen to the three year old, who reads with inflection and meaning, in contrast to the average seven year old, who reads each word separately and without appreciation of the sentence as a whole.

f. Children who learn to read while very young tend to read much more rapidly and comprehensively than children who do not, This is because young children art much less awed by reading and do not consider it a "subject" full of frightening abstraction. Tiny children view it as just another fascinating thing in a world jammed with fascinating things to be learned. They do not "hang up" on the details but deal with reading in a totally functional sense. They are very right to do so.

g. Finally, and at least as important as the above stated reasons, children love to read at a very early age.

"Won't the child who has learned *too much* be bored in first grade?" The answer to this is that, yes, there is a good chance he'll be bored silly in first grade *just like almost every other kid in first grade*. Ask almost any first grader how long a school day is compared to Saturday or Sunday. Does his answer mean that he doesn't want to learn? Not at all, but when five year olds carry on the sophisticated conversations that they do, can we really expect them to get very pepped up when they read such inane material as: Look Spot. See Spot jump. See the automobile. It is a pretty red auto. – The seven year old who has to read such sentences can tell you the manufacturer, the year, the body type and probably the horsepower. If there is anything else you'd like to know about the pretty red automobile, just ask him. He knows more about it than you do. Children will go right on being bored in school until we give them material worthy of their interest.

To assume that the child who knows the most will be the most bored is to assume that the child who knows the least is the most interested and therefore the least bored. If the class is uninteresting, all will be bored. If it is interesting, only the ones who are not able to understand will be bored.

Children who *can* read don't have reading problems. Those who *can't* read have the problems. Look around and see who are the real problems in school. Look at the 10 top children in each class in school and see what common factor is the most prominent in the group. That's easy – they are the best readers. The *non-reading* children are the greatest problem in American education.

Parent attitude and approach. Learning is the greatest adventure in life. Learning is desirable, vital, unavoidable and, above all, life's greatest and most stimulating game. The child believes this and will always believe this unless we persuade him that it isn't true.

The cardinal rule is that both parent and child must joyously approach learning as the superb game that it is. The parent must never forget that learning is life's most exciting game, it is not work. Learning is a reward, it is not punishment. Learning is a pleasure, it is not a chore. Learning is a privilege, it is not a denial or a duty. The parent must always remember this and he must never do anything to destroy this natural attitude in the child. Only good children should be given the opportunity to play the reading game, badly behaved children should be denied the opportunity.

Both the kids and we are entitled to some joy and that's what teaching them is – a joy. But if the idea of teaching your child to read doesn't appeal to you, don't do it. No one should teach his child to read just for the sake of keeping up with the Jonses. If you feel that way, you'll be a bad teacher. If you want to do it, then do it because you want to. That's a splendid reason.

What a race and what a future might we not produce if we could stop the tragic waste of children's lives when their ability to take in language in all forms is at its peak. Certainly it is no longer a question whether very young children can learn to read or not; it is now only a question of *what* they are going to read.

It was said long ago and said wisely, that the pen is mightier than the sword. We must, I think, accept the belief that knowledge leads to greater understanding and thus to greater good, while ignorance inevitably leads to evil.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 p16 in the printed version]

6. Some Aspects of Teaching Children, by Beatrix Tudor-Hart

Beatrix Tudor-Hart, Ist Class Honours in Psychology, Cambridge, 1925. P.G. study, Vienna, Berlin, Smith College, Mass. Now reading research at London Inst. Of Education.

The *Life* Magazine article of November, 27, 1964, describing the work of Dr. Glenn Doman in *How to Teach Your Baby to Read* gave a very graphic and practical application of the now famous Pavlovian theory of the conditioned reflex. Both Watson with his behaviourism and Pavlov with his reflexes were leading the way to understanding some of the basic mechanisms of the central nervous system which are concerned with learning.

Long before the science of psychology was established, human beings had discovered that animals, as well as humans, could be trained to carry out quite elaborate actions which appeared to require conscious thought, both analytic and synthetic. Yet these actions (we call them tricks) were not consciously understood by the do-er. Pavlov showed very clearly how this kind of learning occurs. Moreover he demonstrated that the 'conditioned reflex' underlies all 'learned' behaviour, as opposed to instinctual behaviour. Learned or acquired behaviour begins in evolutionary, quite primitive species and is often found alongside inherited, prearranged, response patterns. For instance, some 'conditioning' is required for instinctual patterns of behaviour to appear in birds. Konrad Lorenz, a Swiss Zoologist, demonstrated how a newly hatched duckling requires to see his mother moving in order to be able to follow her 'instinctually' when he later goes swimming. If, instead of seeing his mother, he sees another 'object' such as a human experimenter, he will later on follow him and ignore the mother duck.

Most of the 'baby' games we play with little babies and the tricks we teach them, such as 'wave bye-bye', are conditioned behaviour patterns which we create by giving the children 'rewards' in the form of adult attention which they crave and enjoy so much.

All early learning follows much the same pattern. The baby learns anything new by first linking it with something which he already knows. At birth his only organ of knowledge is his mouth, for eating is the activity which brings satisfaction as well as life. It is through his mouth that he comes to know his hand; it is through his hand and his mouth that he comes to know the external world. The difference between the conditioning which occurs through the child's own spontaneous play and exploration and that brought about by an adult's conscious training lies probably, and significantly, in that the first involves true, if primitive and simple, understanding of the situation and the latter need never involve more than parrot-like imitation. For any aspect of a given situation which the child cannot understand, in his own spontaneous activity, will simply either be ignored or will lead to the frustration of failure. The baby who cannot reach a toy either gives up the attempt to get it and turns to another occupation, or else breaks down and throws a tantrum. But if he discovers how to use an implement to reach it, he has consciously learned a new skill.

Now with training carried out by an adult in which the child simply receives a reward when he performs an action dictated by that adult, in this case, says the word printed on a card, it is very difficult to know what the child is really learning. This kind of training is, in general, a very unwise and unsatisfactory way of handling the development of the ability to think. It prevents a child from using his initiative and his capacity for learning from his own experience.

Both psychologically and educationally it is sounder and more effective for adults to plan environments and materials in such a way that children can teach themselves skills, or acquire some bit of knowledge, from their own accumulated fund of experience and the level of mental development which this accumulated experience has made possible.

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[Spelling Reform Anthology § t18.6 p248 in the printed version]
[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 p16 in the printed version]

7. Verbs, (by one perturbed)

A verb's the worst thing in the world
For me to learn aright
I study till I have it all,
I think, all fast and tight.

But when the teacher calls on me,
And I stand up to recite,
I can't make any sense of it,
And never get it right.

You try give the parts of verbs
And say *see*, *saw* and *seen*.
But when you give the parts of *be,*
You can't say *be, baw, been.*

If Johnny gives the parts of *go,*
And says *go, went* and gone,
It doesn't help a bit with *grow.*
You can't say *grow, grent, grown.*

The parts of *take* you're very sure
Are *take, took, taken.*
Yet *bake* seems very wrong, somehow,
As *bake* and *book* and *bacon*.

Now *do, did, done,* sounds very well
And so do *eat, ate, eaten,*
But *moo*, *mid, mun*, is very queer
And so is *cheat, chate, cheaten.*

It's worse than partial payments,
You never get it right,
And then the fellows laugh at you
When it's your turn to recite.

If ever I a grammar make,
There shall be some sense to it.
And if *bit* and *bite* are proper,
So shall these be *fight* and *fit*.

from the *Desk Drawer Anthology's* Port of Missing Authors (authors who couldn't be found)

[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 pp17–19 in the printed version]

8. Some Experiences with "Words in Colour", by E. R. Kidd

In presenting my experiences with "Words in Colour", I must commence with an apology because it was some time ago I undertook to write this account for you. I am indeed sorry for the delay but hope to make it up to you now,

My own school is a junior school taking boys and girls aged seven to eleven. The area is a council estate of mainly semi-skilled and unskilled workers, hence the general cultural level of the home background is fairly low. The neighbouring infants' school uses Janet and John books with a little phonic work added at my request.

I have an annual intake of 100 to 120 children and of these about 20% come in unable to read and about another 40% read not very well. Reading ages are tested on a Schonell Graded Word reading test. For some years I have been lucky enough in staffing to have a 'floating' teacher who has been used to provide a remedial reading department. This has enabled us to take out the worst readers and give them special attention daily in groups of five or six. This has had some success but it has been limited and the retarded children have lost ground again after each school holiday.

During the summer of 1962 1 met Dr. Gattegno on a maths course and he introduced some proof copies of some charts intended for a new way of teaching reading. His whole approach and the material was so new and novel that it intrigued me and I arranged to experiment with it when it became available. I received the first charts in December, 1962 and decided to try them in the two or three weeks available before the end of the term.

For my test group, I selected six children who were considered hopeless and unlikely to learn to read whilst at our school. Teachers had written them off and one was already on the waiting list for a special school for E.S.N. children. I took these children for an hour each morning and the response was immediate. The children were at varying stages of frustration and of course almost all had psychological problems and were not all of low intelligence. In view of the history of the children in the group and my own lack of experience in using the new material, I felt the progress I obtained was nothing less than miraculous.

Attached are some notes on this group which I made in March, 1963 after thirteen weeks.

What is *Words in Colour?* It is a combination of materials and technique, which enables the child to learn rather than be taught and makes it possible for the teacher to withdraw from the customary interference in the learning process.

There are 21 coloured charts which introduce a controlled vocabulary of words whose sounds are distinguished by the use of colours. Each different sound of the English language has a different colour, which is constant despite its variations in spelling.

e.g. The *two* men took *too* much *to* the market.
One sign (*a*) will have various colours according to its sound.
e. g. F*a*ther w*a*s *a*t *a* l*a*ke of w*a*ter.

In this way, English is made phonetic without altering the spelling.

There are eight additional charts called the Fidel. These charts list all the combinations of spelling for each sound. The primer books one, two and three introduce new signs and sounds in parallel progress with the charts but in black and white right from the start. A word building book and individual work sheets provide progressive, written work to consolidate the understanding. Finally, there is a book of stories of progressive difficulty. Oh, yes, there are also word cards for word games. Those cards are printed with black words on a coloured background with each colour denoting a part of speech, adjective, noun, verb, etc. which helps develop an awareness of grammar. Two main criticisms were levelled at me when I later expressed confidence in the scheme. I was told that I ought to be able to get good results with a small group and most children would respond to the headmaster taking a personal interest in them. In September, 1963, therefore I persuaded a new teacher to the school who had not previously taught in a junior school, to use *Words in Colour* with the least able group in the new intake. There were 25 children in a class of 33. The other eight children were kept as a separate group in the same class. The reading ages and quotients are shewn in the accompanying tables.

Of these children, Charnley, Kelly and Bruce were rather slow and needed a continuation of extra help and, as can be seen, Kirby and Seabrook did not respond at all. These two had no confidence in themselves at all and in the classroom just sat and the most we got from them were inane grins. In the past I would have tried to get these two into a special school but from my previous experiment I felt it should be possible for these children to read so I retained them and towards the end of the summer term I took them myself for an hour each morning. Both were nervous of me, but once a little confidence had developed, they responded and now are progressing satisfactorily and I hope, by July to write them off as 'cured.'

In September, 1964, my new intake was smaller so I took the 22 children with the lowest reading ages and using the same teacher as before, started these children in *Words in Colour*.

Having used this scheme for two years, I now have hardly any reservations. I feel sure even educationally subnormal children would benefit a great deal and, with the exception of this group, I feel confident I could guarantee that any other children or adults would be able to read by using *Words in Colour.* The vocabulary is such that older children are not put off because of infantile content, and it would be ideal for illiterate adults.

The reasons for the success of the scheme are fourfold-
(a) The motivation is play and enjoyment,
(b) Confidence is gained right from the beginning,
(e) The pupil undertakes the learning process himself, makes his own discoveries and develops his own skill,
(d) The pupil is never presented with an insurmountable difficulty. There is always something to refer to which is known and which giver, the clue to the unknown.

In this scheme there is never an occasion when the teacher has to tell a pupil the sounds in a word, and therein lies the only difficulty. That is, to persuade the teacher not to interfere. Most teachers 'teach' too much and tell too much. The teacher who has most success in the use of *Words in Colour* is he who can throw away his existing ideas of teaching reading and can discard his previous experience and start with an open mind. Then all he needs is the teacher's background book for guidance and a firm determination not to interfere. The longer one has been teaching, the more difficult it is to consciously prevent oneself from interfering. The children are trained to learn by themselves, and gain confidence and power in the process.

I gather you have been investigating Pitman's initial teaching alphabet. I have not used this method but judging from reports here, it does seem to have advantages over the old look and say method. I do not think it is the complete answer, however, and it does need extra expenditure in providing books in schools printed in the special script. And with my experience with *Words in Colour,* I cannot see any point in proceeding with i.t.a.

It appears to me that *Words in Colour* is quicker, more thorough and assists English generally, not just reading, and does not require a library of books in a specially prepared script. Therefore it must be cheaper. One hears more about i.t.a., of course, because Pitman has a flourishing publishing organization. Dr. Gattegno, who has introduced *Words in Colour,* is not a salesman and relies on teachers to discuss and spread knowledge of it, and he leaves one to use his approach only when one is convinced that it is worth trying.

Additional notes on tests
For Intelligence Quotient, I use the Schonell Test, which is a verbal test, so it gives a false picture in the case of a non-reader or a poor reader. For children in this category, I use a Sleight Test, which is a non-verbal test. The test is in various sections each composed of diagrams or pictures, and all instructions are given verbally so a realistic intelligence quotient can be obtained despite any reading disability.

I have not used the Stanford-Binet Test, but it is in common use by our educational psychologists,., Where I have quoted Stanford-Binet results, they have been obtained by an educational psychologist, This test is also non-verbal.

The Schonell Reading Age Test is a simple graded word reading test which gives an indication of a child's ability in mechanical reading. The examiner records the child's efforts and counts the number of words correctly read.

The correct reading age is found by dividing the number of words read correctly by 10 and adding 5 years.

Hence, one word only, gives 5.1 R.A.
Nineteen words only, give 6.9 R.A.

Unless one knows the chronological age of the child, a reading age can be misleading. A reading age of 8 or 9 sounds satisfactory unless the child is 12, so I use reading quotients.

$$\text{Reading Quotient} = \frac{\text{Reading age x 100}}{\text{Chronological age}}$$

$$\text{Hence R.Q.} = \frac{8 \times 100}{12} = 67 \text{ and R.Q.} = \frac{9 \times 100}{12} = 75$$

On the other hand, a good reader may have a reading age of 10 but be only 7 years of age.

$$\text{Hence, R.Q.} = \frac{10 \times 100}{7} = 143$$

Notes on special group in March, 1963,

Richard I.Q. *Sleight 82. Schonell R.A. 5 – 8.*
Fourth year junior eleven years old – unable to read after 2 years in infants' school and over 3 years here.
Responded immediately and can now deal with words on first 14 charts, has read book 2 and completed work sheets 1 to 6.
He was slow at first because he was unable to repeat simple sounds correctly. He now hears sounds satisfactorily and the words he knows he can recognize in colour, or black and white and written in long hand.

Stephen. I.Q. *Stanford-Binet 90. Schonell R. A. 5* – 8.
Fourth year boy nearly eleven years old – unable to read after 2 years in infants school and over 3 years here,
Had shewn no inclination to read but had spent his time looking at pictures and guessing the words of the text with power of concentration limited to a few minutes.
Responded immediately to colour and can deal with words on first 14 charts. Has completed book 2 and has commenced book 3 in smaller type. Completed work-sheets 1 to 5.

Brian. I.Q. *Stanford-Binet 88. Schonell R. A. 5 – 3.*
Third year boy nearly 10 years old – unable to read after 2 years in infants' school and over 2 years here – psychological barrier – mother hates boys – all previous efforts and methods of teaching have failed to gain any contact with the boy.
He responded immediately to colour. His progress has been dramatic but not so rapid as with Richard and Stephen. This is partly because of absences and partly because he is taking longer to develop self-confidence. He has a little more difficulty too in hearing the sounds he utters.
He has used the first 12 charts, completed work sheets 1 to 4 and is 3/4 of the way through book 2.

David S. I.Q. *Stanford-Binet 81. Schonell R. A. <5.*
This boy is a very special case who is in the third year but he should be a fourth year boy because he is nearly 11.
He remained an extra year in the infants school because he was so retarded. During the 3 years he attended school very little. He was born in his family after an interval of 12 to 15 years and his

mother had a possessive complex with the result that the child became entirely dependent upon her and neither could bear to be away from the other. School attendance was not fairly regular until he came here in Sept. 1960.
After 3 years in infants school and over 2 years here he was unable to read. His powers of concentration were almost non-existent and any written work, even copying, was unintelligible. I considered recommending him for a special E.S.N. school because he was so retarded and in looks and speech appeared to be a probable mongoloid. The educational psychologist asked me to keep the boy because he was progressing, in so far as he attended school and was happy. He responded immediately to games in colour but concentration was poor, partly because of absences, partly because he has concentrated (even on games) only when he has had my attention.
During the past two weeks he has shewn a considerable change and has suddenly realized he can read words and make words without assistance. He is now progressing more rapidly, concentrates more, and is enjoying the various activities. He has completed work sheets 1 – 4 and is 3/4 of the way through book 2. He writes intelligibly and can read what he has written.

Peter. I.Q. *Sleight 88. Schonell R. A. 5 – 3.*
Second year boy almost 9 years of age – unable to read after 2 years in infants' school and shewing the least response to our efforts during the first year here. Responded immediately to colour but did not progress rapidly owing to complete absence of self-confidence.
He has shewn considerable improvement during the last few weeks – has gained confidence – enjoys visual dictation on charts. He is nearing the end of book 2, has completed work sheets 1-4 and can read most of the words on the first 14 charts.

Paul. I.Q. *Sleight 122. Schonell R. A. < 5.*
This boy is nearly 9 years old and has spent 2 years in infants school and over one year here. His attendance record has been and still is poor – he is a small physically weak boy who spends most of his time day-dreaming. Even individual attention cannot secure his concentration for more than a few minutes, and some days not even that long,
He was absent when I introduced the scheme to the other boys and he started some 3 weeks later. His response was very limited and I began to feel he would be one of my failures. He was unable to remember the blue e. He could repeat a, u, i and o on the first chart but not e. I eliminated visual confusion with o and colour blindness. I had no success until Dr. Gattegno visited me and I asked him to try Paul. He gained a response from the boy and got him over the hurdle of using a word with e. Profiting from the experience of watching a good teacher, I varied my own approach on subsequent occasions and the boy has progressed although very slowly. Some days he insists on dreaming and his response is very limited; on other days he co-operates and surprises himself but written work is slow. He has completed work sheet 1, has read book 1 and can read sentences from the first four charts.

David H. I.Q. *Stanford-Binet 72. Schonell R. A. <5.* This boy is my one failure. He is 9½ years old and has been waiting for some months for a place in a special school for E.S.N. children.
His attainments in reading and writing are nil. He can copy words only if a teacher sits with him all the time. Otherwise he merely fills in the page with repetitions of letters, some correct, some written backwards.
Even with this boy I think I could possibly achieve something if I could have him on his own each day. Unfortunately he will be leaving here in three weeks.

SUMMARY (after 13 weeks)
David H. cannot read. Paul can read a few words, and the other five can read with varying degrees of speed and, of course, are limited in vocabulary.

The results, on the main, have exceeded my expectations, and are quite gratifying.

Mr. E. R. Kidd is Headmaster of Cowley Hill Junior School, Boreham Wood, Hertshire, England.

TABLE I
Group 2 Class I (ii) September, 1963
Reading Ages and Reading Quotients

Name, boys	Chron. Age	R.A. Sep.63	R.Q. Sep.63	R.A. Dec.63	R.Q. Dec.63	R.A. Mar.64	R.Q. Mar.64
Backman	7-4 mo.	6-2	74	7-11	104	8-10	113
Beer	7-4	6-5	87	7-10	103	8-10	112
Charlton	7-11	6-1	77	7-1	90	8-0	96
Charnley	7-5	6-5	87	7-0	90	7-5	93
Clews	7-5	6-2	83	7-5	96	8-6	106
Delaney	7-3	5-6	76	6-6	87	7-7	98
Downs	7-5	5-5	73	6-2	80	7-5	94
Graham	7-8	5-0	65	left	--	--	--
Graves	7-5	5-4	72	6-8	86	8-0	101
Greening	7-7	6-1	80	7-6	96	8-6	104
Harwood	7-3	5-7	77	7-2	96	8-1	104
Holtum	7-9	5-8	73	6-7	82	8-7	104
Kelly	7-5	5-6	74	6-1	79	6-10	86
Newman	7-8	absent	--	6-4	80	7-10	96
Paine	7-3	6-1	84	7-6	100	8-2	105
Pales	7-6	5-4	71	6-8	86	7-8	96
Roche	7-10	6-6	83	7-4	90	8-4	89
Sankar	7-4	6-6	89	9-1	120	10-7	135
girls							
Brooks	7-3	5-10	80	6-8	89	7-10	101
Bruce	7-4	5-6	75	5-11	78	6-11	88
Crossland	7-7	5-11	78	6-7	84	8-7	106
Docker	7-4	6-7	90	7-10	102	9-0	114
Green	7-7	5-11	78	7-1	90	8-7	106
Kirby	7-10	5-1	65	5-2	65	5-2	65
Seabrook	7-10	5-2	65	5-1	65	5-2	65
Waterman	7-3	5-10	81	6-4	84	7-10	101
totals	194-9		1937		2222		2488
averages	7-10	5-10	77.15	6-10	88.9	8-3	99.5

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 pp20–23 in the printed version]

Book reviews:
9. i.t.a. in Oldham, by Helen Bowyer

A resumé of parts of *The Story of The Initial Teaching Alphabet* a book of 213 engrossing pages by Maurice Harrison, M.A., M.Ed., B.Sc., Director of Education in the County Borough of Oldham, England. The parts selected deal primarily with the story as it developed in his own schools. The book is published by the Pitman Publishing Company, New York, Toronto, London. Its title in England is *Instant Reading.*

Few of the world's great centers of learning have served mankind more realistically than has London University. And it may well prove that of its many services, none have been more realistic than that of June, 1960, when its Institute of Education published a pamphlet, giving "some reasons why we are initiating an investigation into the early stages of learning to read when the matter to be read is printed in a special form which is alleged to be easy to learn and leads easily to full reading skill."

A cautious approach to a new teaching tool? Yes. A commitment, indeed, to nothing more than an investigation of the workings of such an innovation. But it had taken the Simpler Spelling Society long years to bring the Institute to even that much action. And almost as difficult had it been to line up the National Foundation for Educational Research to join the Institute in the publication of the pamphlet. And to get supporting letters from the Ministry of Education, from the Association of Educational Committees (i.e. of local school boards) and from the National Union of Teachers. For what such an investigation might betoken was the unthinkable denaturing of the spelling into which their members had been born and which hallowed the tombstones of their fathers for generations back, But now that time and the deplorable state of reading in the schools had brought the Institute into action, the Society set out to find education committees who would offer one or more of their infant schools for scientifically controlled experimentation with such a 'special form' and infant school teachers willing to conduct it.

Among other things, it sought to publicize the fact that what the Institute was proposing was not exactly new. For more than a century there had been schools in both England and across the Pond in America which had taught beginning reading "in a form easy to learn and leading easily to full reading skill." And done it with spectacular results. It seems to have mattered little just what "form" (i.e. alphabet) they used as long as it was wun-simbl-wun-sound, or a close approximation thereto. Invariably the beginners learned to read much sooner, much better and much more happily than their agemates who started their education in conventional print. And why wouldn't they? Look at this page from the Ferst Reeder of one such an experimental school.

GON OUT
A man went too hiz naibor'z hous and rang the bel. The maidservant oepnd the dor.
"I wish too speek too yoor master," hee sed,
"Hee'z gon out," shee anserd.
"Then I wil speek too yoor mis-tris," hee sed.
"Shee'z gon out, too."
"That's a piti, but per-haps thai'l kum bak soon. I wil kum in and sit by the fyer and wait for them."
"I'm sori, ser," the maid sed, "but the fyer'z gon out, too."

You didn't even need a key to decipher it, did you? You took it in almost at a glance. Well naturally, the four and five-year-olds for whom it was written took a little longer. But by the end of their first

year they had finished three other readers, each with a larger vocabulary than the one before, and made the transition to traditional orthography on a level much higher than their T.O. counterparts.

Then why, you may ask, had those gallant attempts at order and consistency petered out? – the last of them in the mid 1920's. Mr. Harrison offers an explanation which may go a long way to account for it. Those ferst, sekond., therd and forth reederz just didn't provide enough reading. Today in Oldham and the other experimental schools there's a book corner in each classroom kept constantly fresh with new titles from the hundreds of them written or transliterated these last three years, in which the small experimentees can revel as their vocabularies grow and emotions expand. But in most of the earlier phonemic attempts there were only the readers and what additional material the teachers could handprint or type. And how long could even the most devoted teacher keep on with the laborious production of that? So now the S.S.S., of which Sir James Pitman and W, Harrison were outstanding members, vowed that no lack of free reading matter should beset the new investigation. Thus began that veritable library of little i.t.a. books – myths, folk tales, fairy stories, bits of geography, history, science, travel, adventure, child poetry – now at the disposal of the i.t.a. infants in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and of the kindergartners and first graders here.

The S.S.S. collected all the reliable data still obtainable about these earlier experiments and published them in a brochure which it distributed widely to the local Committees to their Directors of Education and the Headteachers of their schools. And both through the local press and through local lectures, it assisted the Institute of Education in its preparation for that September, 1961 when, as Mr. Harrison puts it, "The experiment enters the school." To head up its investigation, the Institute selected John Downing, Research Officer of its Reading Research Unit. For its "special form" it chose the "Initial Teaching Alphabet" (then known as the Augmented Roman Alphabet) invented in 1959 by Sir James Pitman, with just such a development as this in mind. As for the primerz and reederz in which this alfabet was to embody itself, the most immediately practical move seemed to be to select *Janet and John,* the series most widely used throughout the infant schools of the land. There was good scientific reason, also, for this choice. Even when transliterated into i.t.a. [1] the same sentence structure, the same stories, the same pictures as the T.O. version, and thus the comparison of results would be more trustworthy than if a different series were used. So the work of transliteration and publication went forward and by September, 1961 there were enough *Janets and Johns* in the new medium to start work in the 21 local schools offered for the investigation.

Oldham is a town of some 130,000 inhabitants seven miles from Manchester in Northern England. It has long been known as one of the world's greatest centers of cotton spinning. It will now go down in educational history as the most outstanding of that little group of local school authorities (soon to be reduced to 19) which pioneered in i.t.a. that memorable September.

Oldham had the good fortune to have in Mr. Harrison, a Director of Education who had held that job since 1938. He had, therefore, seen 22 yearly intakes of 4 and 5 year olds waste their unreturning time and violate the higher attributes of their defenseless little minds on the gross irrationality of our customary print. But, whatever his part in the long campaign of the S.S.S. to replace this spelling jumbledom by a phonetic medium, it was not till now that that he had the legal sanction to effect this change on his own town. But now that the Ministry of Education had withdrawn its long opposition to so much as an investigation of the workings of a consistent and predictable notation, he wasted no time, spared no effort in getting ready for the coming Fall.

This, he tells us, was none too easy. It was vital that the headteachers and infant class teachers of the schools involved should be at least *willing* to take the plunge into i.t.a., and that the parents of the little experimentees should have at least an unworried attitude to the new ae, bee, ceez. Moreover, the i.t.a. classes must be matched by T.O. classes as nearly as possible of the same age,

the same level of intelligence and from the same socioeconomic background. Besides which, their teachers must be as nearly as practicable of the same ability, education, experience and devotion as their i.t.a. counterparts. For this was to be a highly scientific investigation with a full paraphernalia of records, tables, graphs and objective tests administered under the watchful eye of the Institute of Education and its Reading Research Officer,. John Downing. But by June, 1961, preparations had reached the point where a workshop could be held for each group of teachers in the hope of preparing each for a top performance in the coming school year.

That opened with an intake of 150 i.t.a. infants and 273 T.O. controls. The great majority of both groups had a working class background with the homes of most of them harboring very few books. But, as it turned out, the little pioneers faced far more than the usual vicissitudes which affect classroom life. They were unevenly distributed thru five infant schools in which that year, there proved to be an unusual turnover of teachers and disorganization of instruction due to building changes. Moreover, the one school which had modern buildings and a life uninterrupted by repairs or change of location, had a major or problem of its own. It tended to become the center for the visitors – 4000 of them the first two years who came to size up this new development. They came from all over the United Kingdom and from many different parts of the world. Most of them had no more than read or heard about the experiment but some were teachers who had been amazed at the reading standards of Oldham infants who had migrated to their areas. In any case, the disorganization of the class life can be imagined! But the Headmistress and class teachers bore this influx very cheerfully and accepted their role as 'Exhibition Center.' As for the children, they became so accustomed to visitors that they took them as an integral part of the school day.

None the less, because of this impact, their routine was affected and their school life was anything but orderly and peaceful. "So," Mr. Harrison summarizes, "it will be seen that the experimental schools were not in any way privileged or cossetted; rather is the reverse true."

Another disadvantage the little pioneers suffered wars that they were deprived of the ubiquitous (if incidental) support of the print all around them – the headlines, the advertisements, the infant material of their Sunday Schools and what books there were in their homes. And spite of the zeal of the S.S.S., it was some little time before the book corners of the i.t.a. classrooms could compare with those of the T.O. controls. Moreover, it took some time for the i.t.a. teachers to feel at home in the new alphabet, even tho they were encouraged to continue in the method in which they were accustomed, be it look-say, phonics or a combination thereof. What they were experiencing, it was impressed on them, was a *change of medium*.

Meanwhile, every encouragement was given the T.O. teachers to outdo their i.t.a. counterparts if they could. And sure enough, by the end of the first term, (December, 1961) that was just what they did. But by the end of the second term (April, 1962) the i.t.a. teachers: had left them a long way behind. By the end of the third term (July, 1962) so unequivocally had they demonstrated the superiority of the new medium, that eight more infant schools, with an enrollment of 509 four and five year olds, asked to join the experiment the coming September.

Oldham had 37 infant schools. A year later (July, 1963) the headmasters of 35 of them requisitioned books printed in i.t.a. for the school year 1964-65. So nearly the same was the experience of the other 18 local education authorities which had started out with Oldham in 1961, that in 1962 their i.t.a. infant schools had increased to 78. Now this winter of 1964, the number of such schools thruout England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales has nearly reached 1000.

But the tables and graphs to which Mr. Harrison devotes his chapter XV are based only on the Oldham pupils. Of the September, 1961 intake, the i.t.a.'s maintained their lead to the point where by July, 1963, more than 60% of them had finished the reading scheme for those two years while less than 10% of the control group had done so. As for the Sept. 1962 intake, he compares them with their predecessors of the year before. Their record is closely parallel, with this interesting

difference: the 1962 entrants made a quicker start in reading. This circumstance Mr. Harrison attributes to the growing experience of his infant teachers in the new medium. The teachers who began in 1961, passed on their knowledge and ideas to those who began in 1962. Still longer experience, he comments, may bring still swifter progress and a quick beginning is good, in that it heightens early interest. Swifter progress seems more than likely when lengthening experience brings books and methods devised to take advantage of the consistency of i.t.a. spelling.

Chapter XVI devotes itself to some appraisals of the experiment which the tables, charts and tests of the foregoing chapter scarcely touch. One of these was an enthusiasm for reading such as none of the teachers had ever known before. "It has to be seen to be believed," said one teacher. "I have been concerned because these children preferred to sit with their noses in books, rather than play with the many and varied toys in the classroom. The book corner is the busy part of the classroom in free activity periods, and when parcels of new books arrive, there is a rush for them. Often the children can be found happily engaged not only in reading to themselves, but reading to others in small groups.

Another i.t.a. development was that the teacher's work was different and happier. The increased independence of the brighter children who, thanks to the consistent spelling, could read new books without help, left her free to devote much more time to the slower ones. One teacher said, "Never have I taught so little reading and heard so much."

But the crowning achievement of the experiment was that "Spontaneous writing was discovered." *Discovered*, Mr. Harrison claims, is the right word since creative writing, not limited to words already learned, was unknown among children of this age. "But these i.t.a. infants write freely," he states, "Vocabulary is unrestricted; what they can speak, they can write." The better ones write stories like Cinderella and Brer Fox, told in their own words, or they make up comparable stories of their own. Here is such an invention by a little girl of five years and nine months, who had recently made the transition from i.t.a. to T.O. but whose spelling still retains something of the former. Notice that she disregards periods, capitals, quotation marks, and writes in the unbroken stream of ideas in which she would tell her story. [2]

> **the selfish crocerdiel**
> once upon a tiem thær was a selfish crocerdiel
> hoo lived in a fish pond and every fish he saw
> he æt it and soon he groo biger than the
> pond and he had too stik his nose out ov the pond
> and all the people hoo saw his teeth were
> afræd wun day a little girl thaut it was a
> house so she œpend its mouth and went in and
> the crocerdiel shut its mouth and the little . .
> girl sed it is dark in here just whot can I do
> she mermerd and she cried until its mouth opend
> sudenly and the little girl went out verry unhappy
> sæing iel never go in thær eny more

The lovely little thing which follows is from a boy of five years and three months who had not yet made the transition and so used nothing but i.t.a. spelling:

> a littl bird woz dieing ie sau it lieing thær hed doun sœ
> ie took it too the docterz and hee strœkt its littl hed

A line not anticipated by the London University's Institute of Education was the spread of i.t.a. from the infant school to a remedial role for the reading retardees of the junior schools. In November, 1961, scarcely two months after the big experiment got going in the five Oldham Infant Schools, a teacher in its Beever Junior School began using the new alphabet with three boys between 10 and

11 years old – three reading failures who also presented behaviour problems. Their Reading Ages were less than 5½ years. One responded to no test at all and his referral card simply carried the one word 'hopeless.' *Within a fortnight* all three had completed *Here we go* and *Off to play*, the first two books of the Janet and John i.t.a. series.

"'They were delighted," Mr. Harrison quotes their teacher, "and their enthusiasm knew no bounds. By February, these three boys had completed the other basic readers of the Janet and John series and were working their way thru the various supplementaries. Indeed, they had become such avid readers that at times I was obliged to stop them and redirect their energy.... As their confidence grew, the behaviour problems disappeared."

Meanwhile, he had introduced the rest of his 20 retardees and failures to the new alphabet and by April, 1962 – just 8 months after it had come to Oldham – there was not a single, non-reader in the class. A year later Mr. Kilgannon could report that of his 20 backward readers, 18 had made the transition to T.O. He noted with some surprise that the transition had presented no problems whatever; "It just happened." He was particularly impressed by the way in which the logical consistency of i.t.a. instilled self-reliance. "Instead of asking the teacher to pronounce a difficult word for him, the child now re-phrases his question: 'This word says --, doesn't it?'"

From this junior school, i.t.a. spread to others and everywhere the results were similar. One headmaster, summarizing the situation in his own school, really summarized it for them all:

"The overwhelming problem," he said, "was one of establishing self-confidence – and in some cases, self-respect as well – and removing the general attitude of resignation to failure and incapacity. I can only repeat what I have said several times before, that i.t.a. has provided a unique instrument for this purpose, and has thus and had results far beyond the immediate one of teaching reading."

English children enter secondary school at about 11 – that is to say at about the time ours enter 6th grade. So it comes as no surprise that each new class of entrants brings its contingent of reading retardees and failures. But when the value of i.t.a. in the junior schools became known, a number of secondary headteachers asked why not for these older pupils, too? To be sure, no one had anticipated any such move and no books of a content suitable to this age had been published in the new alphabet. But little that worried the retardees. "They were delighted to find that reading is within their scope," explained one headmaster, "that they are devouring infant books for the sheer pleasure of knowing – and *showing* – that they can read after all."

Of course, the move to provide more suitable fare was quickly made. More and more readers adapted to the 11, 12 and 13 year olds were produced. It is hoped, however, that as more and more infant schools start their beginners off with i.t.a., there will be only the most occasional retardee among the junior entrants and none among the children entering secondary schools.

Meanwhile, among these older youngsters, also, success in their basic learning tool, worked gratifying changes. in attitude and behavior. Said another Oldham headmaster; "Children who were ashamed, at the outset, of their inability to read, have openly asked me to come to their classroom and listen to their reading. I am not alone in believing that a considerable proportion of cases of delinquency have their origin in ... backwardness in reading ... At least one "hard case" of delinquency appears to have been cured by success with i.t.a. From one who slunk about the school wearing a furtive expression, he is now a happy, confident lad, proud of his achievement.

In Chapter 18 of his book, Mr. Harrison sets down some of his conclusions. He begins with the news that on the 11th of July, 1963, the Minister of Education, in Parliament, referred to "these exciting and interesting experiments," As a result, the Ministry made financial contributions to their cost. For they are to go on for years yet. For himself, this long-term Director of the Oldham Schools states: "What I have said in the foregoing chapters is by past standards quite incredible. If I had

been told these things, I should have been incredulous. One must see for oneself. This is not a mere improvement in method, bringing small, easily measured gains; this is a revolution. One eminent visitor from an American University called it "the bigest breakthru in English education since the invention of printing." Another said we had "opened the door of the intellectual slum."

Again Mr. Harrison emphasizes that i.t.a. is not a teaching *method;* it is a simplification of the *medium* – of the early material with which the child is required to deal. He learns and puts to use only 45 characters instead of the more than 2000 characterizations used with our customary spelling. Only when he has learned to do that simple task, does he tackle the complexities of normal print. Methods of using this simplified medium vary widely and some teachers are more successful than others with it. The fact remains that the least successful teachers are apparently more successful in this particular job of teaching reading than are the very best teachers teaching with the old medium.

"Some visitors," Mr. Harrison continues, "find it very difficult to believe the evidence of their own eyes when things happen which, thru long experience, they have regarded as impossible. For example, I have been told that the experimental schools must be spending an excessive amount of time on reading. We have shown that this is not true and that the children were as good as ever, and even better, at other school activities." Other objections are that the i.t.a. children would not be able to read ordinary print and as for their own seemingly advanced readers and story books, they read them without understanding – charges which objective tests show to be utterly false. When these critics have exhausted all other objections, they wind up by declaring that such young children should not be reading the books they read and be writing as readily as they do. "It is not good for them," they declare. "But surely," replies Mr. Harrison, "if a child of infant age wants to read, loves books, and is happy reading them, wants to write without any external pressure at all – how can it be harmful? It would really be harmful to deny him the opportunity. The critics would boast joyfully if their own children were doing these things. It is unrealistic to complain for a hundred years that many children cannot be taught to do these things and then, when the means to teach them is found, to complain that they are learning far too fast and far too readily."

The truth is that infants in these i.t.a. classes often have to be made to do other things than read. They often have to be told to close their books and go out to play in the fresh air. "Please, Miss, I want to finish the story," is a common plea at playtime. And there are those of them for whom the free reading library in their classroom is insufficient. It was in April, 1962, just 8 months after the beginning of the experiment, our author reminisces, that the librarian of the Oldham Central Library called him up and asked if he knew that every Saturday some 50 children under *five years of age* visited the library to borrow books. It was one of these children who first, in Oldham, made the transition to ordinary print. This little boy of four years, five months, mischievously wandered from his i.t.a. section and took home Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty.* When his father told him he could not read it, the child replied, "But I have read it." A year later, when asked by his headteacher what books he liked best, he replied, "Peter Pan, Winnie the Pooh, Treasure Island, (and after a thoughtful pause) and Black Beauty. It makes me cry, but I keep on reading it." "That," comments W. Harrison, "is the most youthful example of literary appreciation I have ever heard."

A mother brought her infant son to school to tell the teacher how the child had changed a family quarrel to laughter when he looked up from his book to say, "I cannot do with all this fighting and. disputing." Children use many variants for a simple phrase such as: "He said." Instead, they often say or write, "hee anserd," or "cæm the replie," or "shee mermerd," These are actual examples and this is literary achievement which would do credit to children twice as old. Another headteacher said, "Children can write at will. Some sent us postcards in i.t.a. from their holiday centers.

"Much of course," Mr. Harrison forsees, "remains to be done. In the immediate future, we must investigate the value of i.t.a. in special schools for the handicapped. One of the most interesting innovations in Oldham in the school year 1963-64 was its introduction into the Oldham School for

the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Language must come to them thru the sense of sight and touch. Then, are not rationalizations of the visual forms of language likely to be even profitable to them than to physically normal children? Blind and partially sighted children who learn to read through the sense of touch may also be expected to find help in simplified spelling."

Immediate, too, are some problems concerning the ordinary schools. For instance, what sort of readers are going to be needed at the infant levels? Many of the children there refuse very early to use reading apparatus; they want *books.* Obviously the old type of reading scheme, graded for word difficulty is out of date. In a wun-simbl-wun-sound medium a child can read and understand any word he speaks and understands. Next, what about the infants who make the transition to T.O. during the second – and even the first – year of their two year course? Thus far in Oldham they have been provided with reading previously supplied to Junior schools. But most of these advanced moppets are still only five or six years old when they are ready for the transition. It may be that they need the matter of those older books but still need the abundant and colorful illustrations of their infant reading.

Well then, if now in their infant school days they are using up the present junior school material, what reading should be provided through their own junior course? They will be from seven to eleven years old – hardly of an age for much of the present secondary school material. The answer would seem to be an immense increase in reading matter suitable for their mental and emotional stage of maturity.

But who can prognosticate what the mental and emotional maturity of i.t.a. starters will be at these ages? Present tests were devised for Juniors whose maturation had been held back by the blockage of our present spelling. New tests will have to be worked out, and fortunately, the Institute of Education has set no terminal date for its investigation.

As for what reading i.t.a. starters may require in secondary school .... we may discover that Mr. Harrison's "revolution" is more revolutionary than anyone can foresee.

After summing-up the gains clearly visible as he finishes his book, he says, "Even if all these gains had not been made, the new approach to reading would have been worthwhile in making their first years of school so enjoyable to little children." He winds up his last chapter with, "I have tried to state factually what has happened in Oldham schools where the new alphabet has been in use. My figures, facts and stories have been supplied me by the teachers doing the job, or have come from my personal experience while visiting schools... I shall probably be criticized for not mentioning the difficulties and the problems. I have, however gone from school to school and asked to be told about misgivings and difficulties and nobody can tell me of any. Never have I seen educational theory so completely and so quickly realized in practice. Maybe difficulties have yet to be discovered; they will have to be great indeed to outweigh the gains."

[1] The Janet & John copies would contain the same vocabulary.
[2] Editor's note: For lack of an i.t.a. keyboard, we had to substitute ordinary T.O. digraphs in place of the more picturesque i.t.a. symbols.
[3] These 2000 characterizations include the different typefaces of both capitals and small letters, italics, and script letters. i.t.a. uses just one type face for each of its 45 characters,

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 pp23,24 in the printed version]

10. How to Teach Your Baby to Read, by Glenn Doman*

*Published 1964 by Random House, New York.

Since this book is being quoted extensively on pages 13 to 16 of this issue, it is not necessary to treat it in detail here.

Suffice it to say that this exciting and challenging book portends to be the most talked-about book since Rudolph Flesch raised such a furor with *Why Johnny Can't Read* and Arther Trace continued the exciting controversy with *What Ivan Knows that Johnny Doesn't*.

Glenn Doman challenges many of the sacred educational precepts that have long dominated the educational thinking of our word merchants for several generations. If his theories are true (and they are formed as the result of hundreds of actual case histories of teaching very young children and brain-injured children to read), then we have greatly underestimated the learning power of young children and greatly overestimated our teacher's ability to teach reading properly and effectively. Of course, the standpatters, who are still claiming via the conservative educational press, that we are teaching reading better than ever and that our school children are all learning to read with a higher average reading level than before, will not like Doman's claims.

This book should create many red faces among the educational psychologists who have held back the early education of our children by convincing those in authority that children were not ready to learn to read until they had reached a "reading readiness age of over six." Actually, the reading readiness tests are often used as a means of soothing our consciences that educators have been turning out adequately trained, capable teachers, when the poor results obtained by look-and-say and other combination methods, indicate just the opposite.

Nor will they be able to explain convincingly how Doman and his associates have been so successful in teaching brain-damaged children to read at such a young age.

This challenging book offers our staid educators an opportunity to fight back or else give up their vaunted positions as reading experts and retire. Maybe that is the safest thing to do.

Every reader who starts this book will find it difficult to put aside before finishing it. Certainly, it is packed with exciting and stimulating phraseology.

And while you are on this subject, you should also see a similar book by Mary Aline Cox. *Teach Your Child to Read*, published by Exposition Press, 1953. It will reinforce many of the startling things said in Doman's book and show you that other teachers have also discovered that young children can learn to read with ease if you are just patient, persistent and appreciative.

Reviewed by Newell W. Tune.

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1965 p24 in the printed version]

11. Our Wealth of English Homonyms, by Helen Bowyer

Owe that eye mite bee that be
Winging hur weigh oar the see,
Oar the waives sew bright and blew,
With the fishes glinting threw,
Sea-ing pour-poises at play,
Here-ing the see-hoarses nay,
Passing I-lands green and fare,
With myrrh-mades on them hear and their,
And sumtimes sea a killer whale
Cinque a wore-ship with it's tale.
Owe that eye mite bee as free
Two go winging ore the see!

12. the kaf path, bie Sam Walter Foss (1858-1911),

transliterated into world inglish* [1]

wun dae thhroo the priemeval wuud
a kaf waukt hoem az guud kafs shuud
but maed a trael aul bent askue,
a kruuked trael az aul kavz doo.

sins then too hundred yeerz hav fled
and, le infur, the kaf iz ded.
but stil hee left behiend hiz trael,
and thaerbie hangz mie moral tael.

the trael woz taeken up nekst dae
bie a loen dog that past that wae;
and then a wiez belwether sheep
pursood the trael oer vael and steep,
and droo the flok behiend him, too,
az guud belwetherz aulwaez doo.

and from that dae, oer hil and glaed
thhroo thooz oeld wuudz a path woz maed;
and meni men wound in and out
and dojd and turnd and bent about
and uterd wurdz ov riechus rauthh
bakauz twoz a kruuked pathh.

and stil thae foloed – doo not laf -
the furst miegraeshunz ov that kaf,
and thhroo this wiending wuud-wao staukd,
bekauz hee wobld hwen hee waukt.

this forest pathh bekaem a laen
that bent and turnd and bent agaen;
this kruuked laen bekaem a roed,
hwaer meni a hors withh hiz loed
toild on beneethh the burning sun,
and traveld sum thhree mielz in wun.
and thus a sencheri and a haf
thae trod the fuutstops ov that kaf.

the yeerz past on in swiftnes fleet,
the roed bekaem a vilij street;
and this, befoer men wur awaer,
a siti'z krouded thhoroofaer;
and soon the sentral street woz this
ov a renound metropolis;
and men, too sencheiriz and a haf
trod in the fuutsteps ov that kaf.

eech dae a hundred thhouzand rout
folood the zigzag kaf about,
and oe'r hiz kruuked jurni went
the trafik ov a kontinent.
a hundred thhouzand men wur led
bie wun kaf neer thhree sencheriz ded.

thae foloed stil hiz kruuked wae
and lost a hundred yeerz a dae,
for thus such reverens iz lent
too wel establisht president.

a moral leson this miet teech,
wur ie ordaend and kauld too preech;
for men ar proen too goe it bliend
along the kaf pathhs ov the miend;
and wurk awae from sun too sun
too doo hwot uther men hav dun.

thae foloe in the beeten trak,
and out and in and forthh and bak;
and stil thaer deevius kors pursue
too keep the pathh that utherz doo.

but hou the wiez oeld wuud-godz laf,
hoo sau the furst priemeeval kaf.
ahl meni thhingz this tael miet teech
but ie am not ordaend too preech.

[1] From the *Desk Drawer Anthology,* compiled by Alice Roosevelt Longworth and brother, Theodore Roosevelt. Published by Doubleday Doran & Co., Garden City, N.Y. Copyright 1937. The editors thank Lothrop, Lee & Shepherd for permission to use Sam Walter Foss' poems.

Editor's note: the moral applies equally well to our spelling