

Stated Meeting, April 5, 1889.

Present, 14 members.

President, Mr. FRALEY, in the Chair.

Correspondence was submitted as follows:

A letter from the R. Accademia delle Scienze, Turin, announcing the death of its President.

A circular inviting subscriptions for a monument to Antonio Rosmini in Milano.

Letters of envoy were received from the Mining Department, Melbourne, Victoria; Université R. de Norvège, Christiana; K. Geologische Landesanstalt und Bergakademie, Berlin, Prussia; Literary and Philosophical Society, Manchester, Eng.; New York State Library, Albany.

Accessions to the Library were announced from the Department of Mines, Melbourne, Australia; Geological Survey of India, Calcutta; Institut Égyptien, Cairo; Tashkend Observatory, Tashkend; Académie des Sciences, Krakow; K. P. Geologische Landesanstalt und Bergakademie, Berlin; Oberlausitze Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Görlitz; K. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Göttingen; Académie Royale de Copenhague; Bibliothèque de l'Université, Christiana; Société Royale Malacologique de Belgique, Bruxelles; Philosophical Society, Cambridge, Eng.; Royal Institution of Great Britain, London, Eng.; Literary and Philosophical Society, Manchester, Eng.; Geological Society, Glasgow; Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence; Mr. Augustus Schoonmaker, New York; Mr. W. J. Potts, Camden, N. J.; Academy of Natural Sciences, Board of Directors of City Trusts, Germantown Dispensary and Hospital, Messrs. W. S. Baker, Henry Phillips, Jr., Dr. J. Cheston Morris, Philadelphia, Pa.; U. S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, Md.; Johns Hopkins University, Editor of the "American Journal of Philology," Baltimore, Md.; Bureau of Education, Adjutant General's Office, Smithsonian Institution, U. S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries, Washington, D. C.; General

Thomas Ewing, Marietta, O.; Sociedad de Geografia y Estadística, Mexico; University of California, Sacramento, Cal.

The Committee on Publication reported that it had examined the communication of George Simpson on the "Fossils of the Helderberg Series," and that it recommended its publication in the Transactions of the Society, which was so ordered.

The Committee chosen January 6, 1888,* to assist the Commission appointed by the State of Pennsylvania in the examination of the defects of English orthography, presented the following report, of which, on motion, the Secretaries were directed to have a sufficient number printed separately for general distribution, and the Committee was continued.

Report of the Committee Appointed (January 6, 1888) by the American Philosophical Society to Assist the Commission on Amended Orthography, Created by Virtue of a Resolution of the Legislature of Pennsylvania.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, April 5, 1889.)

The literature of the subject of "Spelling Reform" is already extensive, and, for its purposes, sufficiently exhaustive. The most eminent filologists in England and America have contributed to it, and the published testimony in favor of reform is from filologists, linguists, scientists, statesmen, educators, editors and literary workers in general.

In view of this, your Committee recognizes that there are practically no new facts to be brought out to strengthen the argument on either side. What it aims to do, then, is to present, in a logical and conclusive manner, the known facts in the case, together with a consensus of opinions drawn from high sources, in so far as they illustrate the points at issue.

In this way, your Committee designs to review the whole problem, so that the objective point, the recommendation of the State Commission that certain simplified spellings be employed in the public documents, can be intelligently considered.

1. WHAT IS SPELLING?—According to Worcester, it is the art of "forming words by arranging their proper letters in due order." But this definition is as loose, and therefore unscientific, on the one hand, as it is popularly true and sufficient on the other. The main issue is bound up in the adjective "proper;" a secondary issue is in the word "letters."

To dispose of the latter, it need only be remembered, that "letters" are but the mechanical devices or symbols by which words are represented to the eye. Any one who can analyze a word into its fonetic elements can

* Proceedings, Vol. xxv, pp. 1 and 18.



1889. "Stated Meeting, April 5, 1889." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for promoting useful knowledge* 26(129), 305–306.

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