poſed the omiſſion oſ vowels in the middle of words @@(d), which it is obvious are not wanted, and invented letters, which could be connected as in a running hand without lifting the pen in the middle of the word, made a real improvement on the works of his predeceſſors. But, in fine, moſt ſyſtems, either in their plan or execu­tion, labour under ſome capital defect, attended with circumſtances highly discouraging to the learner, and which in a great meaſure defeat the end of their in­vention, by being too complicated to be learned with eaſe and remembered with accuracy, or to be practiſed with the expedition which is requiſite ; and ſo difficult to be deciphered, that a man can ſcarcely read what he has juſt written.

To obviate theſe defects; to provide againſt prolixity and conciſeneſs, which might occaſion obſcurity ; to ex­hibit a ſyſtem founded on the ſimpleſt principles, which might be eaſily learned and read, and yet be capable of the utmoſt expedition—were the motives that gave riſe to the preſent attempt.

This method will be found different from any yet publiſhed, and ſuperior to all in the diſpoſition of the vowels and the facility of arranging them ; the confusion in placing which ſeems to detract from the merit of the best performances on the ſubject ; and it may be affirmed, without oſtentation, that characters ſimpler in their form, and more perfect in their union, have not been applied to the art of ſtenography.

As well as it could be determined, the ſimpleſt charac­ters are appropriated to the letters moſt uſually em­ployed : indeed, as far as poſſible, thoſe which are com­plex have been rejected ; but as it was an object always kept in view that the writing ſhould be on a line, a few are admitted into the alphabet for that reason.

The characters for the double and triple conſonants are the eaſieſt that could be invented, conſiſtent with perspicuity @@(e) ; for care has been taken to provide againſt all obſcurity which might ariſe by adopting letters too similar in their formation ; and with reſpect to the prepoſitions and terminations, thoſe which occur moſt frequently are expressed by the ſimpleſt cha­racters, which will be found perfectly eaſy in their appli­cation.

The arbitraries are few in number @@(f), and the arbi­trary abbreviations, as they are entirely from the letters of the alphabet, and choſen from ſome thouſands of words in common uſe, will well repay the learner for an hour’s trouble in committing them to memory.

The laſt chapter lays down a ſcheme of abbreviation, compriſed in a few rules, perfectly eaſy to be underſtood and practiſed by proficients in this art, which we hope will anſwer the expectation of the author, and will be found free from the perplexity complained oſ in many ſyſtems where abbreviation is admitted. Theprincipal rules are new, are ſo eaſy, ſo extenſive in their uſe, and ſo conſiſtent with expedition and legibility, if applied with judgment, that they alone might ſuffice. The learner is however adviſed by no means to adopt any of them, till experience has convinced him that they may be uſed without error or injury to legibility. All ab­breviating rules are ſuited to thoſe only who have made ſome progreſs in the ſtenographic art ; for although they certainly promote expedition in a wonderful manner, and afford the greateſt eaſe to a proficient, yet a learner, as expedition is not his first, though his ultimate view, ſhould admit of nothing that in the leaſt renders the reading difficult.

CHAP. II.

The Engliſh alphabet conſiſts of twenty-six letters ; six of which are vowels, *a, e, i, o, u,* and y; and the other twenty conſonants, b*, c, d ,f, g, h,j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x,* and z.

This alphabet, as is obſerved by the beſt grammari­ans that have written on the language, is both defective and redundant in expreſſing the various modifications of sound @@\*.

Cuſtom or prejudice has aſſigned ſome letters a place, when others would with much more propriety ex­preſs the ſame sound: and to this may be added, that ſeveral letters, ſometimes in one word, ſeem to be ad­mitted for no other reason than to perplex a young be­ginner or a foreigner, as an obſtruction to true pronun­ciation, and to add to the apparent length oſ the word, when they are entirely quieſcent and uſeleſs. That this is the genius of the orthography of our language muſt be perceived by the moſt ſuperficial obſerver ; but no modern tongue is absolutely free from the ſame ex­ceptions. In particular, the French has a great number of dormant letters, which, it is obvious, render the pronunciation more difficult and perplexing to learners @@(g).

But as it is neither our buſineſs nor our intention to propoſe a mode of ſpelling different from that in com­mon uſe, when applied to printing or long-hand writing (ſince ſeveral innovators in orthography have fallen into contempt, and their plans have been only preſerved as beacons to warn others of the folly of endeavouring to ſubvert eſtabliſhed principles @@\*) ; we ſhall only obſerve, that in ſtenography, where the moſt expeditious and conciſe method is the beſt, if conſiſtent with perſpicuity, the following simple rules are ſtudiously to be regarded and practiſed.

Rule I. All quieſcent conſonants in words are to

@@@[m]\* Lowth's Gram. Priestley's Gram. Sheridan's Lectures on Elocution.

@@@[m]\* Preface Johnson's Dictionary.

@@@(d) Mr Byrom rejected vowels entirely in the middle of words, as others before him had only done partially. Without critically examining the executive part of his performance, which is very defective, it muſt be owned, that it is above the reach of human ingenuity to exceed his general plan ; which for ever muſt be the baſis of every future rational ſyſtem.

@@@(e) Thoſe for *th* and *ch* may be either made upright or sloping to the right.

@@@(f) Theſe are not by any means prescribed ; they may be employed or not according to the fancy of the learner.

@@@(g) The Latin and Greek claim a juſt ſuperiority over every modern tongue in this reſpect. In them no confuſion or doubt can ariſe from the manner of ſpelling ; and the reader can ſcarcely be wrong (unleſs in quan­tity) in founding all the letters he sees.