

PRESIDENT SURPRISED EVEN SIMPLE SPELLERS

Prof. Brander Matthews Didn't
Expect Executive Aid.

LEXICOGRAPHERS IN LINE

Editors of Leading Dictionaries Here
and in England Favor the
Proposed Reform.

The Simplified Spelling Board replied yesterday to adverse criticism of its reform movement in English newspapers by announcing that Dr. James A. H. Murray and Prof. Joseph Wright, two noted English lexicographers, had been added to the board's membership. It also announced that a prominent American would take his place among the members soon, but refused to divulge this man's name. Incidentally it told how popular the movement is becoming by calling attention to the numerous requests for information concerning simplified spelling that made up the board's mail yesterday.

Dr. Murray is the senior editor of the Oxford Dictionary, and an ardent advocate of the reform movement. In his letter of acceptance to the board he expressed his entire sympathy with the work the board has undertaken. Prof. Wright is Professor of Comparative Philology in Oxford University, and editor of the English Dialect Dictionary, which has just been completed after thirty years of work.

"Prof. Skeat, the editor of the English Etymological Dictionary, became a member of the board two months ago," said Prof. Brander Matthews, Chairman of the board, yesterday. "The Simplified Spelling Board now includes the editors of the three chief English dictionaries published in Great Britain as well as the editors of the three chief American dictionaries, Webster's, the Century, and the Standard.

"The adhesion of the foremost linguistic authorities of both branches of the English-speaking race ought to be reassuring to those who have dreaded that the recommendations of the Simplified Spelling Board might work harm to our tongue and etymology. It serves to show that those who know most about English spelling believe it ought to be improved.

"Sooner or later what we propose to do is bound to go through. All thinking people already realize that, and nothing better could have happened for our movement than to have the President stand on a hilltop and blow a vigorous blast for us. What we want to do is to arouse the interest of people and make them look into what we are really proposing, and the President's action will do that as nothing else could.

"The President's order came as an entire surprise to me. I am sure that I did not even send him any of the documents published by the board, and did not have any idea that he was interested in the subject, even, until a request for our list of recommended spellings was received from Secretary Loeb.

"The next I knew was the announcement of the order in the papers. I am very glad to find that the President was more interested in our efforts than I supposed, and I feel sure that his indorsement will be of the greatest possible benefit to the simplified spelling movement."

Assistant Secretary Wharton of the board said that there were so many requests for circulars in yesterday's mail that "the printer was ordered to rush off an edition of from 10,000 to 15,000 of each pamphlet." He also said that department stores, shorthand schools, magazines, and commercial enterprises had sent letters indorsing the movement.

"The opponents of the movement have said that many professors of colleges and universities have not indorsed it," said Mr. Wharton. "I have started to sift down this statement. So far I have examined our 'adhesion list,' and have found that in three States seventy-three professors have announced their willingness to use the simplified forms. In California alone I found sixty-seven who have done so. I expect to have a complete list on this subject ready in a few days."