

ROOSEVELT SPELLING MAKES BRITONS LAUGH

London Newspapers Turn Their Humorists Loose.

PHONETIC WAIL IN THE SUN

It Says Karnegi (or Karnege) and
Ruzevelt (or Rusvelt) Mite Leve
(or Lev) the Langwidge Alone.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

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LONDON, Aug. 25. — President Roosevelt is the laughing stock of literary London to-day on account of the cabled announcement that, having nothing of much importance to do just now, he has undertaken to reconstruct the English language. Hardly a serious word has been employed in the discussion of his order to the Public Printer. The British press replies to Mr. Roosevelt with an outburst of ridicule. It is to laugh rather than to argue soberly has evidently been the mot d'ordre in editorial offices. The humorists have been turned loose, and have been allowed to say anything they liked.

All the evening papers are amusing, but the palm goes to the little ha'penny sheet called The Sun, which under the heading "Yanky-Panky" says:

"Mr. Andru Karnegi (or should it be Karnege?) and President Rusvelt (or is it Ruzvelt?) are doing their (or ther) best to ad to the galey of nations (or nashuns) by atemting to reform the spelling of the English langwidge. No dowt their (or ther) intentions (or intenshuns) are orl rite, but their (or ther) objekt is orl rong, not to say silly (or sily.)

"The idea seems to be Mr. Karnegi's (or Karnege's) and he apears to be indebted to the late Ser Izak Pitman, who in his day and generashun made grate efforts to the same end, as did a sertin gentleman before him named Artemus Ward. Ward managed, however, to get sum amuzement out of the noshun, and we kan stil reed him with relish for the buti (or bute) of his stile and the originalty of his fansy, but nither Mr. Karnegi (or Karnege) nor Prezident Ruzevelt (or Rusvelt) kon-tries to get much reel amusement out of this spelling kraze. They are (or ar) just sily, nothing more (or mor.)

"Mr. Ruzevelt (or Rusvelt) haz given instrukshuns to the Publik Printer at Washington to spel 'thru' wen he means (or meens) through and 'tho' wen he means (or mens) though, and in future leters wil b 'addest,' not addressed.

"We fale to se wy thay shude even (or evn) be 'addest.' Wy not 'adrest'? That form of the wurd has the merit of ekonomy in the matter of D's, which is a konsiderashun, espeshuly wen thay are (or ar) big wuns, wich thay are (or ar) quite likely to be if this sort of thing gos on much longer.

"Seryusly, tho, we ventur to think that even (or evn) Mr. Karnegi (or Karnege) and Prezident Ruzvelt (or Rusvelt) mite manage to get along very wel with the langwidge that was gud enuf for Shakespeare and Milton and for Gladstun and Brite, and not for them only, but also for men like Washington Erving, Longfelo, Walt Witman, and uthers who have aded lustre to the Amerikan name. We rely think Mr. Rusvelt (or Rusevelt) and his frends mite leve (or lev) us our own langwidge. Thay have not left us much else (or els.) In sum instanses it may be puzling, espeshuly to the foriner and imature skoolboy, but its orthografy has a sertin historikal valu, and we do not like to part with it.

"Of kors if Mr. Ruzvelt (or Rusvelt,) backed up by Mr. Karnegi (or Karnege,) sees we hav got to reform our spelling we shal hav to, and that wil be the end of it, for Mr. Karnegi (or Karnege) has awl the dolers and Mr. Ruzvelt (or Rusvelt) has awl the branes. But awl the same it wil be dasht hard lines (or lins.)"

SIMPLE SPELLING BOOM.

The President's Order Causes a Flood of Inquiries for Lists.

There was every indication yesterday that simplified spelling, as indorsed by President Roosevelt, is to have immediate vogue, though whether the vogue will be lasting remains to be seen. Before the President's pronouncement was twenty-four hours old letters of inquiry were pouring into the office of the Simplified Spelling Board, asking for lists, and in one instance a business college telegraphed for information and lists, presumably with the desire to put the lists to immediate use.

The officers of the board take it for granted that to-morrow's inquiries will be record breaking in their number, and as heretofore the percentage of "adherents" gained out of all inquiries has been about 55, it is more than likely that the week will see the number of advanced spellers greatly increased.

One of the first missives to reach the rooms of the board was the telegram. It came from a business school in Providence, R. I., and asked that lists of the changed words be sent at once, as well as the rules according to which the changes are made.

In addition to this, there were many letters from mercantile houses, insurance companies, express companies, and similar concerns, asking for information and lists, though in the majority of cases there was no promise that use would be made of the literature. But having once taken up the question, these firms and concerns may not find it so easy to drop, as the Simplified Spelling Board will keep them in mind.

May Have to Reprint Circulars.

"We have issued in all only six circulars," said G. W. Wharton, Assistant Secretary of the board, last night. "Of each of these we sent out about 1,000.

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and it is highly probable that we will have to order an expensive reprint of our literature. Previous to President Roosevelt's announcement of his attitude we sometimes had as high as 100 inquiries a day, and the number of signatures of adherents, as we call those who promise to use the simplified form, numbered about 30 a day.

"Of the inquiries that came in we gained, on the average, about 50 per cent. as adherents almost immediately. We had in force, however, a 'follow up' system by which we used all the inquiries a second time in sending out literature, and through this system we brought the average up to 55 per cent.

"To-day we received a request from a labor paper published in Chicago, asking us to send, if possible, 700 lists. The publishers of the paper said that if we would do this they would adopt our system in its entirety, and everything appearing in the paper would be written according to the simplified form. The 700 lists were needed, they said, for their contributors, compositors, and proofreaders.

"We have found that the trade papers are much more willing to adopt the new form than are other publications. The Dry Goods Economist obtained some time ago between 250 and 300 lists, published the list and the rules, and since that time has used the words simplified by the board in all the articles published in its columns.

"I learned recently that several dry goods firms in other cities have adopted the new form of spelling, and that shortly they will use it entirely in their advertising. To-day I received word that The Ore and Metal Magazine will adopt the system.

Readers Have Not Objected.

"The Seattle Post-Intelligencer adopted the new form of spelling several months ago, and since then has used it continuously in its pages without receiving adverse comment from its readers. One paper in Waterbury, Conn., not only uses the words we sent out, but applies the rules to all words. This Summer we have noticed a decided change of sentiment on the part of the newspapers, particularly in the West and Middle West. They have ceased making spelling reform a subject for badinage and are treating it seriously.

"I have seen printed to-day some opinions of college professors on the President's attitude. In this connection I want to say that a very large number of university men in Ithaca have sent us their signatures and promised to use the new form whenever practicable. We have many adherents in the University of Chicago and in Columbia; a smaller number in Yale, but a very strong membership in the University of Illinois.

"On the Pacific coast the movement in favor of reform spelling has been strong for a long time, and the number of adherents in the Leland Stanford University and the University of California is very large. The strength of the cause on the Pacific Coast is due in great measure to the attitude of the head of the University of Washington, who obtained lists from us and furnished them to all the high schools under the control of the University.

"It is not to be expected that there will be an immediate response from the schools of the country, as they are nearly all closed at this time of the year. Several school Superintendents in New Jersey are firm believers in the movement, however, and in the Keystone State Normal School at Kutztown, Penn., we have a membership of one hundred and twenty-five among the students. The heads of several Indian schools in the West are also with us, and the Hoopa Valley Indian School in California is one of our strongholds."

Railroad Wanted 300 Lists.

The stenographic department of one of the large railroads asked for 300 lists yesterday, indicating that it would put the new spelling method into immediate operation, and asking that all additional words added to the table be forwarded as soon as approved. From R. E. Denfield, Superintendent of Schools in Duluth, Minn., was a letter given out at the offices of the board. It read:

I send you herewith a recommendation of the Superintendent and the action of the board with regard to simplified spelling. We are very much in earnest about the matter, and shall endeavor to do as much as can be toward helping the good work along. I am trying to interest others outside the schools in it. I think it will be the only way the movement will gain strength.

The recommendation read:

At a meeting of the New York City Board of Public School Superintendents, held on April 17, 1906, simplified spelling was recommended in the following words:

(The 300 simplified words were then quoted.)

I should like authority to make use of this spelling as far as possible.

On the minutes of the Duluth School Board the following appears:

On motion of Director Washburn, seconded by Director Powell, it was ordered that the Superintendent be authorized to authorize the spelling of such of these words as in his discretion seems best, according to the list.

Mr. Wharton also announced that the Rev. James McGolrick, Bishop of Duluth, had recently become an adherent.

Try It in Patent Office.

An enthusiastic patent lawyer called up the offices of the board yesterday and asked that a list be forwarded to him immediately. He stated it as his intention to use the new form of spelling in several patent applications that he intends forwarding to Washington shortly, in order to test the earnestness of the Government. The law requires that patent applications be perfect in construction and spelling. A great many applications are denied because of faulty spelling. The patent lawyer is going to risk delay in order to find out whether the Patent Office will recognize as authorized the reformed spelling.

The question was raised yesterday whether the action of the President and the present enthusiasm among certain persons in favor of spelling reform would have any effect on the compiling of dictionaries. It was pointed out that the Century and Standard Dictionaries both give simplified forms of many words as alternative spelling, and a great many of the words in the list published by the Simplified Spelling Board can be found in the dictionaries mentioned, spelt in the latest approved form. I. K. Funk, one of the dictionary publishers, sent the following telegram to this city yesterday.

The action of the President is conservative and progressive. It should meet with general approval. It will immensely help the movement for the simplification of the spelling of English words. I trust that he will supplement the action by recommending to Congress the organization of a National board, made up of educators and other school representatives, which will have authority in such matters, as had the Academy of France.

It was ascertained on good authority yesterday that the Simplified Spelling Board will shortly announce the acquisition of several important members to the ranks of adherents. These men have signified their willingness to adopt the improved spelling and to further the cause of simplification, but they have not yet placed their signatures to the pledge, as required by the board. Until they do so, their names will not be made public.

It is said, however, that they are all well-known men; that two of them are eminent English scholars whose efforts will have weight in behalf of simplified spelling in Great Britain, and that their action is entirely independent of the endorsement of President Roosevelt, made public on Friday.