

[*Abstract.*]

ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSCRIPTION. By
LEONARD C. WHARTON, M.A.

AFTER some conversation with one of the participants in *The Times* correspondence on Transliteration and partly at his instigation, I venture to address you as shortly as I can.

I was asked to contribute to a proposed International Bibliographical Year-Book on a certain specific subject, and also any others that interested me. Among the latter is Transliteration and I wrote a critical account—from the technical point of view of the librarian—of several systems of transcription as applied to Russian, other Slavonic languages, and other fairly accessible languages. The various Balkan wars have up to now hindered its appearance, although its bibliography was a most valuable feature. Meantime, urged by the movement initiated by Mr. Harold Cox (who, however, never directly approached the Philological Society), I began to put on paper ideas for a constructive transliteration system, which my criticisms of other systems and makeshifts had more or less forced me to formulate. Indeed in the previously named paper—now in pawn at Vienna—I almost promised a constructive effort. This has now been presented in abstract to a meeting of the Philological Society and has benefited by the generous and fruitful criticism to which it was submitted, and it seems opportune, as no English periodical has published any account of that paper, and, for good reasons, no one has heard the gist of the critical article, to give a brief abstract of the latter and follow this by a report of the meeting of the Philological Society. I have retained the sequel in the shape of the report of the next meeting, which was devoted to an English dialect once spoken near Wexford, and affording fine scope for phonetic handling.

The critical article took the scheme given in the Cataloguing Rules agreed upon by joint committees of the American Library Association and of the Library Association of the United Kingdom, and compared the transcription of Russian and other languages using the Cyrillic alphabet with those adopted by the Liverpool School of Russian, the War Office, the British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books, and various other systems. I pointed out how America and Berlin delighted to invent fresh founts of type with new kinds of diacritic marks, and how many applied diacritic marks familiar to experts in one connexion to wholly inconsistent purposes. I could not help

making some suggestions for compromise there, but this is the gist of the matter.

At the meeting of the Philological Society on Friday, 4th February, 1916, Mr. L. C. Wharton read an abstract of a paper on "Some Problems of Transliteration".

The great need of our time for all educated people is a reliable system of universal interchangeable transliteration from alphabet to alphabet, so that the amateur in one subject shall not horrify the expert in another by contorting the words belonging to that out of all resemblance to the form familiar to the expert.

His paper pointed out the difficulties in the way, e.g. traditional spellings of such words as Musulman, Mohammedan, and so on, also the demands of historians for uniformity in naming places and people in any given language. There were other points mentioned like these, but the general fact is that there are divergent interests concerned. There are several classes of people to whom a transcription system is useful, but all classifications are crossed by the difference between those who visualize all names, etc., and those who vocalize them, if I may say so. Of this, account is taken in the paper. In this he made an effort to propound a proper and practically workable scheme for arranging and classifying the full hundred or so symbols of the International Phonetic alphabet and using the nearest corresponding letter of the ordinary alphabet with some set system of marks (not diacritics) to distinguish one from the other, so that the simple letters could be used without marks in e.g. journalism, the marked letters in ordinary literature, and the full apparatus of diacritically marked technical symbols in phonetic, linguistic, and literary works. This was followed by a brief discussion by Dr. Daniel Jones and others.

At the meeting on Friday, 3rd March, the Secretary read a communication from Mr. J. H. Lloyd on the Dialect (of English) of the Baronies of Forth and Bargy, prefacing it with some extracts from the letters sent him by the writer, whence it appears that there are several persons still living who are conversant with the dialect. The "baronies" in question are in Co. Wexford. The name by which the dialect used to be known is "the Barony Forth dialect". The late Dr. Lloyd had studied the dialect when it was alive, and the old people spoke its purest form still. The accent and intonation differed from those of all other parts of Ireland, being rather in the slower Elizabethan than in the modern rapid *tempo*. Though not known or recorded outside of the two baronies, topographical names such as Yolagrew, Growtown, and Muchwood show that the dialect must have been spoken also in part at least of the Barony of Shelmaliere West. Yoletown,

in the parish of Owenduff, bordering on Shelmaliere West, actually carries it into the Barony of Shelburne. The disappearance of the dialect took place about 1850. Mr. Edmund Hore made a vocabulary of the dialect—which he himself spoke—for the father of Mr. J. H. Lloyd, and the latter had the MS. bound. It is now in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, and it is suggested by Mr. Lloyd that he should edit it, as it is a complete corpus of the dialect. He appeals to the Society to publish it for him, and the matter is under its consideration.

Meanwhile any interested person may communicate with the Secretary of the Society anything he may be able to do to help on this and other good work.
