

DISCUSSION

OF THE MERITS OF

NOAH WEBSTER'S ORTHOGRAPHY,

AND

LYMAN COBB'S SCHOOL BOOKS,

IN THE

"SOCIETY OF TEACHERS AND FRIENDS OF EDUCATION"

IN

THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY,

IN

1844-5.

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1845.

INTRODUCTION.

At the meeting of THE SOCIETY OF TEACHERS AND FRIENDS OF EDUCATION IN NEW JERSEY, held in Trenton, in June last, Cobb's Series of School Books was adopted by a very large majority, certainly *four to one*. This excited the displeasure of the few who were deeply interested in the circulation of Webster's books, and in Sanders' Series of Books, and Town's Spelling Book. Accordingly a pamphlet was issued under the name of a Dissent, signed by the Rev. Dr. Weeks, Teacher of a school in Newark, Rev. Mr. Van Liew, Principal of the Grammar School at New Brunswick, and Mr. Nathan Hedges, Principal of a High School at Newark.

The following ANSWER to that *Dissent* was prepared by a committee appointed by the Society, at the meeting in September, at New Brunswick, consisting of the Rev. Prof. J. Holmes Agnew, Editor of the American Biblical Repository and Classical Review, and the American Eclectic Magazine, the Rev. Samuel I. Prime, one of the Editors of the New York Observer, (both residents of the city of Newark,) and Mr. R. L. Cooke, Principal of the Female Seminary in Bloomfield, an excellent scholar, and for many years a distinguished teacher of youth.

As great and unwearied efforts have been made by the extensive circulation of that Dissent and other means, to bring Cobb's Series of School Books into disrepute, I consider it my right and *duty* to set forth some of the measures made use of by the opponents of Cobb's books, as well as to show the *fairness* of the *dissenters* and their coadjutors in their *noble, disinterested, and patriotic* efforts, so "that the public may be disabused in reference to this subject."

In the month of December, 1843, at the meeting held at New Brunswick, by the *combined* efforts of the publisher and proprietor of Webster's books, the friends of Town's Spelling Book, and of Charles W. Sanders, the Book Committee reported in favor of Webster's School Dictionary, Town's Spelling Book, and Sanders' Spelling and Reading Books. The Report of the Committee in favor of Sanders' Spelling Book was adopted by a majority of *one*, Charles W. Sanders and the publisher of Webster in New Brunswick voting in the *affirmative*! The statement having been made that Town's Spelling Book disagrees with Sanders' Spelling Book in orthography, Town's Spelling Book was withdrawn by the Commit-

[See last page but one.]

REPLY TO THE DISSENT,

ON THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND

LYMAN COBB'S SCHOOL BOOKS.

Submitted March 7, 1845.

The Society of Teachers and friends of Education, at their meeting in June, 1844, at Trenton, recommended Cobb's New Spelling Book, and his Reading Books for use in the schools of this State. A very small minority of the Society had leave to enter their dissent upon the minutes. The Society freely accord to the minority the privilege of recording their reasons, but cannot allow the document submitted by the minority to go upon their minutes without correcting its numerous and palpable errors, and at the same time setting forth the considerations by which the Society was governed, in the recommendation to which a few of its members have taken exception.

The minority state three objections to the recommendation of "Cobb's New Spelling Book," which objections we will consider in their order :

"1st. The recommendation of 'Cobb's New Spelling Book,' is *inconsistent* with the previous doings of the Society. After a full and free discussion, at different meetings of the Committee, and of the Society, it determined in March last, by a very decided vote, to recommend WEBSTER'S SCHOOL DICTIONARY. That vote stands on our minutes, and heretofore our action has not come in conflict with this fundamental, and most important recommendation. No other Dictionary has been substituted, or even proposed, and while such is the fact, we regard it as exceedingly discreditable to our *name*, and to our *influence* as a society, to present to the world, this glaring instance of vacillation in our *opinions*—of *contradiction* in our doings."

Inconsistency is censurable only when the first step was right. If the Society erred in recommending a bad book, it surely is not to be considered under obligations to recommend bad books in all time to come. In order therefore to make the first objection of any force, the minority should have shown that the first recommendation was a *good* one, which being done, they might have urged with some propriety, that the Society had done wrong in recommending a book which is inconsistent with the former. It will be necessary for the Society to state concisely the history of their proceedings on the subject of books, by which it will appear that the first recommendation was made according to the light which those had who gave it, and that subsequent research and discussion have resulted in its withdrawal; so that the Society has done all in its power to correct the evil which in the ignorance of its infancy it was suffered to do, and is not liable even to the charge of inconsistency which the minority have sought to fasten upon it.

In March, 1844, the Society met for the second time, and the committee on books recommended a series of school books for the consideration of the Society, at the head of the list having placed Webster's School Dictionary. Previous to the meeting, an agent of the publishers had been visiting the State, a Professor in a New England College, and a member of Noah Webster's family, calling upon various gentlemen, and endeavoring to secure their influence in behalf of the Dictionary. By this extraordinary measure, it is evident, that an effort from abroad was

made to forestall the opinions of members and prevent the influence of a free discussion of the merits of the book. As soon as the motion to recommend Webster's School Dictionary was made, the committee were called on to assign reasons why they considered that a suitable dictionary for the use of the schools of the state, and after some delay one of the Committee gave the following :

- 1st. Dr. Webster was a genuine American—and if his Dictionary be as good as any other we should give it the preference.
2. Because Dr. W. was a practical teacher.
3. He was a ripe and thorough scholar.
4. He spent more than twenty years in preparing this dictionary to supply a deficiency.
5. It contains from 20 to 30,000 more words than any other, and if we would keep pace with the improvements in our language, we should adopt it.
6. Johnson and Walker were made many years ago.
7. This Dictionary is now in more extensive use than any other, and if we adopt any other we will be met with it in every quarter.
8. Dr. W. was a scientific man, and his definitions in all branches of science were real definitions—not referring the learner from one word back to the other as “midriff, diaphragm” and “diaphragm, midriff.” &c.
9. He would prefer him on account of his literary chasteness : he had a most delicate and refined taste : none of the coarseness and vulgarity of Johnson.

If there is any force in any of these reasons it must be in the 5th and 8th, both of which can apply only to the *larger* dictionaries of Webster, and are not true with respect to the book before the Society. And in all the subsequent discussion, while the opponents of the dictionary sought to confine the debate to the *School* book, its friends insisted upon speaking of the larger works, which were not before the Society. That we may show the grounds on which we resisted the recommendation of this dictionary, we will here repeat the remarks made by two of the undersigned in this discussion.

Mr. AGNEW replied to the reasons assigned above by one of the Committee, and said—

To my friend who has very appropriately opened this debate, I have, Mr. Chairman, but a few remarks to offer. He advocates Webster's Dictionary as “*American*.” But we are here, Sir, not to adopt a standard of Americanisms, but of the great English language. We wish to teach our children the same language spoken and written by the reputable in the mother country—by those, whose orthoepy and orthography are the basis of a good and authoritative lexicon of the English language. Let us be more and more one with England, whose tongue we speak. Let us write one language, and that a language, perhaps, destined to be the medium of intercourse throughout the world. I prefer *Anglicisms* to *Americanisms* in language.

The gentleman is greatly in favor of *domestic manufacture* : but he was careful to say “*when equally good with foreign*.” Ay, there's the rub. Is the manufacture under discussion equally good with old, long-tried stuff ? That is the question.

But “Webster was a scholar”—he was well qualified for his work. And I ask you, sir, were not Walker and Johnson scholars too ? “Webster,” the gentleman says, “has many more words than Walker—many not elsewhere to be found.” This, to say the least, is dubious praise. But I leave this point.

In respect to the affirmations that Walker is antiquated—that Webster is more extensively used, and that there is no substitute for his Dictionary, I pass them for the present, believing the contrary will appear, in the course of the discussion.

But, Sir, we are assembled here to-day, on serious business—business of high import to parents, and children, to the state and the country. We are laying the foundations of a superstructure, which should rise in fit and beautiful proportions. But it will be neither beautiful nor permanent, unless the foundation stones are carefully selected and properly laid. We are about to recommend a standard of orthography for the schools of New Jersey—a book from which all the children of our State are to learn to write the English language.

The great question, then, is, shall we adhere to the old standards of the language ? shall we remain firm on the basis of conservation, or shall we encourage innovations, and return again to the confusion of Babel itself, from which Johnson, with great pains, extricated the language ? Shall we ourselves begin to learn and teach our children a new orthography ? Shall we put Webster's *School Dictionary*, as proposed by the report of the Committee, into our children's hands and say to them : “There is your model—there your standard—write according to this ?”

Changes in language there will be, as the world grows older. A new word will occasionally be needed to describe a new thing. But here we have a new set of principles proposed, a re-formation of the English language. Shall we consent to it? Is there a call for it?

I shall perhaps be second to none here in my admiration of Dr. Webster, for his scholarship, his patriotism, his research. I render him all praise for his investigation into the origin of words, his exhibition of the shades of meaning, and his lucid and extended definitions: but these are the excellencies of his *large*, not at all of his *school* Dictionary, which is here recommended. The former for derivation and definition is probably superior to any other: but the latter, possessing no peculiar excellence, and abounding in *false orthography*, I abominate and repudiate. And whilst New Jersey has no debts to repudiate, and would not if she had, I hope she will for ever repudiate this thing, and bar her doors against its admission.

I shall not weary your patience by recounting the misplaced words—as sceptic, chimist, etc.—the inconsistencies, the contradictions, the barbarous orthography, everywhere manifest. See, for example, words terminating in c, ck, or, our, er, re, f, ff. But as a specimen, sir, imagine your little son abroad, at a school where Webster's orthography is the standard, and he writes you a letter, in which you find the following words, spelled thus: porposs, bridegloom, massacrer, center, tung, melasses, nehboor, mastif, etiquet, headake, aker, benum, etc. etc. Why, sir, you would stand aghast, and either suppose your boy a numskull, or his teacher an ignoramus. You would inquire into the fact, and if you ascertained the spellings to be accordant with the instructions of the teacher, you would remove your son at once, concluding that, if this were the beginning, the end would be that you and he could not correspond intelligibly.

But not only is the spelling outlandish—the division of words into syllables is the most inconsistent possible: e. g., enhanc-ed, aba-sed, assung-ed, aba-ted, (why sed, ted, and not ced, ged?) mak-ing, all-mak-ing, colleo-tive, connect-ive, discuss-ive, expens-ive, abu-sive, assuag-ing, assu ming, sa-ving, sav-ior, excheq-uer. These are but specimens, and not *rara avis* either.

I shall not, however, proceed any further in this part of the subject, nor touch, at all, on the vulgarisms which abound in Webster's Dictionary.

Let me call your attention to the fact that, notwithstanding the reiterations that Webster's is the standard, you cannot find his orthography in any of the select literature of the day. You may go to Boston, thence to New York, to Philadelphia, to Baltimore, and on to New Orleans, and examine the books in all the large publishing houses, and you will not discover there the orthography of Webster. You may read the periodicals of the day, and you will not find one in twenty, if one, that follows throughout the spelling of Webster.

But it is said that Webster's dictionary is highly recommended by Chancellor Kent, Chancellor Frelinghuysen, Daniel Webster, and a host of worthy names. Yes, sir, I know it. You will find the names of nearly all the Senators and Representatives of 1831, attached to recommendations of Webster's *American Dictionary*. But, sir, read the revised speeches of Daniel Webster, and whose orthography do you see there? Read the writings of Chancellor Kent, and you will find the pure *English* language in every word. And cannot I appeal to you, sir, and to this assembly for the pure Johnsonism of Theodore Frelinghuysen? Which of you has ever heard from *his* lips or seen from *his* pen the Websterian style of writing or speaking? No, sir, these high and honorable names, whatever they may have said in a recommendation, stand prominent among those who adhere to the good old way. And we feel honored in imitating their example! And where is the scholar in the land who will risk his reputation on following Webster's spelling? Spelling, I say, for really *orthography*, signifying *correct* writing, seems a misnomer in this application.

Let us pause, then, before we recommend as the standard for our children, a system which is contradicted by all the literature of the English language—a mode of spelling and writing which they never meet with in their daily reading: and let us rather teach them that genuine orthography, which will help them to appreciate the writings of those who have given shape to the English language, and will not oblige them to *correct* the best authors of the present day, as they read their valuable and beautifully written works.

After the debate had proceeded for some considerable time,

Mr. PRIME said it was probably useless to say a word against the evident determination of the Society to recommend Webster's Dictionary. Nor did he rise to do more than enter a protest for himself and a few others, who wish to preserve the English language in its purity, and to resist the innovations sanctioned by Webster. When the Society recommends one *dictionary* above others, it endorses and commends the *peculiarities* of that dictionary. Now we do not deny that there are great merits in Webster; he was a man of industry and research, and in years of toil he contributed much to the world of letters by his definitions and derivations of words. He has many things, of course, in common with other dictionaries, which we approve, and we do not wish to detract from the honor that is justly his due.

But when we come to recommend his dictionary as a standard for our children, we must ask if it answers the ends of a dictionary of the English language, and if it is entitled to be regarded as *the* standard.

It will not be contended that *one* man, however learned, has a right to set himself up as *despot* in the republic of letters, and say this word shall be spelled thus, and this so. A dictionary is a court of appeals, a court for the correction of errors, deriving its authority from the consent of the people. For example, the fact that such a word as *man* belongs to the English language is to be determined by the use of good English authors, and the *dictionary* is to determine whether or not such a word is in such use. The same authority is to settle its orthography, its pronunciation, and its definition. The question before us to-day

is, does Webster's dictionary thus reflect the common consent of the best English authors and speakers? Is it a safe standard of purity and correctness in the use of the English language? Let us go to the "wells of English undefiled," and examine this question.

And we contend that not a solitary writer, of good reputation, or of any reputation in this country or in Great Britain, or on the face of the broad earth, has adopted the peculiarities of Webster's system, or has acknowledged him as *authority* in the use of the English language. We know that many great names have *recommended* him; some great men on this floor have done the same; but we challenge contradiction when we affirm that the man is not living, and never did live, who follows *Webster* as his standard, and adopts his peculiarities.

[Here members interrupted the speaker, and Mr. Sanders, author of several school books, being present, said *he* followed Webster.

Mr. Sanders spells according to Webster, does he? (said Mr. Prime, turning to Mr. S. and taking up one of his books,) please to spell "tongue."

"T o n g u e," said Mr. S.

But, replied Mr. Prime, Webster spells it "tung."

Prof. Fowler explained that Webster spelled it both ways, but Mr. Prime proceeded.]

Webster gives the old way of spelling it as *FALSE* orthography, and gives "tung" as his settled opinion as to the correct mode of spelling the word.

And now I ask, said Mr. P., when the men who avow on this floor, that they follow Webster, disown his authority on the very first word that you give them, where shall we go to find those who take him for their standard?

Webster's has been spoken of as an American dictionary, and the pride of New England. Let us go thither for examples. Take up the last work that New England has given us. I refer to Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico," a work that has been spoken of as fulfilling the prediction made by Horace Walpole sixty years ago, that Boston would give another Thucydides to the world, and does Prescott adopt Webster as his standard? No. Does Sparks in his *Life of Washington*, or in any of his elegant writings? No. I have just been referring to these New England authors on this very point, and they bid defiance to the peculiarities in orthography sanctioned by Webster. But more than this; look at the writings of men who have committed themselves in support of Webster's system. My friend and brother, the Rev. Mr. EDDY, has just now declared that he spells according to Webster, and means to teach others so. But he has "written a book" and a good book it is too. I hold it in my hand. Does he follow Webster? So far from it, I find whole classes of words, (on which the principles and precepts of Webster are explicit and no room is left for choice) are spelled by Mr. Eddy precisely contrary to the authority of his standard, but I am happy to say that they are spelled correctly and according to the usage of all good writers of the English language. I do not find a word in this book that favors the peculiarities of Webster, but multitudes of words in the very teeth of the *acknowledged* authority. And look at New Haven, the home of Dr. Webster, and the seat of his greatest influence; where, if any where, you will find men who follow his orthography. Take Silliman's *Journal*. And does that work spell words as this dictionary does? No. [See Chemistry.] Take the "New Englander!" Open to an article eulogizing Dr. Webster, and in that very article, where of all others the writer would be careful to follow his master, he bids him defiance, and spells words right, where his master spells them wrong. And now I ask, if the leading writers of the mother country, if the leading writers of our own country, our historians and poets, our philosophers and statesmen, reject this dictionary, why will you put it in the hands of your children?

But I have more serious objections still to the adoption of this dictionary. It endorses as English words, many that do not belong to the language, that no good writer ever used and that ought never to be adopted. This is the great mischief to be apprehended from its use in schools. Suppose your child tells you that "he has been *licked* at school," and you reprove him for the use of that vulgar phrase. He opens his *school* dictionary and shows you "*licked*," meaning beaten, and all you can do is to regret that you gave him such authority for the use of words.

It would be easy to multiply examples, but I presume that every one is acquainted with the fact, that Webster has introduced *provincialisms* into his dictionary, and although in the larger dictionaries some of these are so stated, in the book now under discussion, they are given with all the weight of authority, as genuine English words. And when we come to the *orthography* of Webster, we shall be astonished at the innovations he has introduced. Few persons are aware of the nature and the number of the alterations thus attempted. Take a few examples:

Bild for build.

Benum for benumb.

Bridegroom for Bridegroom, [and he is particular to say in his school dictionary that bridegroom is false spelling.]

Crum for crumb.

Nehboor for neighbor.

Nusance for nuisance.

Suveran for sovereign.

Turky for turkey.

Tung for tongue.

And I might greatly extend this catalogue. These are but examples of whole classes of words, and what is, if possible, more worthy of condemnation, the principles upon which he justifies these innovations are disregarded in the case of other words of the same class, so that the uniformity he would secure, is not attempted, and the confusion is rendered "worse confounded."

Now the question before us is, whether our children shall be taught that the way their fathers and our fathers spelled these household words is wrong or not. Shall they be told that our fireside poets and our libraries, stored and adorned with the ornaments of English literature, are only relics of a barbarian age, and that they must never have reference to these classic volumes to guide them in acquiring the proprieties of their mother tongue?

Shall they be taught that Milton and Cowper, Addison and Johnson, Sparks and Prescott, to say nothing of a host of others, that will stand till the end of time as monuments of the highest cultivation of the intellectual tastes, and models of chaste and elegant English, shall our children be taught that all these men did not know how to spell? Whether the system of orthography established by good usage is according to *analogy* or not, according to *etymology* or not, according to our *wishes* or not, it is the English language as we received it, as we ought to write it, as we ought to transmit it to our children, and innovations, except as the improvements in arts and sciences render necessary new combinations of terms and new terms, should be resisted by all who reverence the language as it stands on the pages that have been their study in youth and age. Put this *school* dictionary of Webster into the hands of our children, and the most of that which renders invaluable the *larger* editions is lost to them, while the innovations in the orthography of the language, with all their confusion and corruptions, are entailed upon them.

The Society finally decided by a vote of thirty to twenty-one to recommend the School Dictionary, when the minority immediately gave notice of their intention to enter their dissent upon the minutes.

The Committee on Books then submitted a motion to recommend Webster's Spelling Book, and the debate was renewed. The farther it proceeded the more did the Society learn of the nature and extent of the innovations made in the language by Webster, and consequently the less was the disposition to recommend his books. The vote was finally taken by calling upon the members to name the spelling book which they would individually prefer, and after all others were laid aside but Webster's and Cobb's, it was found that the Society was *equally divided* in opinion between the two! This was highly encouraging to the opponents of the Webster system, and convinced them that the Society would reject that system as soon as they should become acquainted with its many and great demerits.

The opponents of the Webster system entered their dissent upon the minutes in the following terms:

The undersigned, members of the Society of Teachers and Friends of Education in New-Jersey, in complying with the permission kindly extended to them by the Society, would respectfully enter the following dissent from the resolution recommending Webster's School Dictionary for use in the Common Schools of this State. Because—

1. He [Dr. Webster] introduces into the language words that are not sanctioned by good usage, that are at best merely provincialisms, and are not adopted by any authors of established reputation.

2. His orthography is in many instances at variance with the almost unanimous usage of the English world at the present day, and with what has been the best usage since the Augustan age of English Literature. It is contrary to the usage of those who have now recommended it, and the strange inconsistency is exhibited by the Society of *spelling* in one way themselves, and recommending a dictionary that spells in another. That the innovations sanctioned by Webster may appear at one view, we subjoin some examples.

DR. WEBSTER'S INNOVATIONS IN ORTHOGRAPHY.

Accouter	benumbed	chimist	cutlas	fiber	hagardly	hurra
alchimic	benumbing	chemical	Dactyl	finess	hainous	hoora
alchemical	bridegroom	cimiter	defense	fulfill	hainously	hyperboly
alchemically	brimfull	cloke	deposit	fulfillment	hainousness	Instructor
alchmist	bronz	cloking	dextrous	fullness	headake	Jeweler
alchimist	bucaneer	comfry	dispatch	fullsome	heartake	Lanch
alchmistical	bild	center	dueling	Gammut	high	lether
alchimy	bilder	centering	Encyclopedia	gant	highth	loth
amphitheater	bilding	centered	enroll	granit	hemloc	lothe
apostrophy	bilt	connection	enrollment	grotesk	hickup	lothsome
Bailif	burlesk	counselor	epitomy	groteskly	hicup	lothful
boosy	Caitif	cryer	etiquet	groop	hilloc	luster
booze	catastrophy	croop	extill	grooping	hoorah	Maneuver
belles-letters	champain	crum	Fether	guillotin	hooraw	maneuvered
benum	chimistry	crummy	felly	Hagard	hurrah	marvelous

fnastif	niter	plad	Racoon	Saber	spredding	turnef
melasses	nusance	plaintif	railery	selvedge	stedfast	undersherif
meter	Ocher	plow	ranedeer	sepulcher	steddy	unplowed
midrif	ocherous	plowed	ravin	sherif	succede	Vant
miter	offense	pontif	rebuild	skain	Tarif	villainous
mitered	Palankeen	porpess	receit	skillful	theater	villainy
mold	parsnep	porpus	reconnoiter	sluse	thred	vultur
mullen	patroll	potage	redout	suveran	treddle	Willful
musketoee	pharmacopy	practice (v.)	restif	splise	trenchplow	willfulness
Nehboor	picturesk	procede	ribin	spred	turky	windlas
nightmar	pictureskly					

We have been thus particular that the *improvements* (if any) as well as the *corruptions* of the author, may be seen at a single view.

3. He is inconsistent with his own principles; the various editions of his dictionary are inconsistent with themselves and each other, and the School Dictionary now recommended is inconsistent with them all. We subjoin a number of illustrations of contradictions in the Orthography of Webster's dictionaries.

CONTRADICTIONS IN THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF DR. WEBSTER'S DICTIONARIES.

ROYAL OCTAVO.	SCHOOL DIC.	OCTAVO DIC.	ROYAL OCTAVO.	SCHOOL DIC.	OCTAVO DIC.
Accouter	do	Accoutre }	cimiter	cimeter	cimiter
accoutering	do	accouter }	cliff, clif	cliff	do
accoutered	do	accourting	comfrey, comfry }	comfry	comfrey, comfry
accouterments	do	accoutred	cumfrey	do	concentred
alchmic	do	accouterments	concentered	do	do
alchmical	do	alchmic	coquet, coquette	do	do
alchmically	do	alchemical	crier, cryer	do	do
alchmist	do	alchemically	croup	croop, croup	croup, croop
alchmistie	do	alchemist	Dandruf	do [aresy]	Dandruff
alchmistical	do	alchemistic	dieresis	(Qrto, Diarexis, Di-	diaeresis, diere-
alchimy	do	alchemistical			sis, dieresy
		alchemy	diocese	do	diocese, diocess
[Twelve contradictions in these seven words—seven in spelling—five in division of syllables!]			disembitter	disimbitter	disembitter
amphitheater	do	amphitheatre & ter	drayplow	do	drayplough
apostrophe }	do		drillplow	do	drillplough
apostrophy }	do		drouth	do	drouth, drought
Bailif	do	Bailiff, bailif	drouthy	do	drouthy, drought
belleslettres	bellesletters	belleslettres	Encyclopedia }	do	do [ty
benum }	benum	do	encyclopdy }	do	do
benumb }	do	do	epitome, epitomy	do	do
bouse, boose	boose	bouse, boose	feather, fether, and deri-	do	do
bousy, boosy,	boosy	bousy, boosy	vatives [see Dictionary]	do	do
bridegroom	bridegroom	bridegroom	fiber, fibre	do	Fibre, fiber
brimful	brimfull	brimful	finess	do	finess, finesse
bronz, bronze	bronze	bronz, bronze	footplow	do	footplough
bucaneer	do	bucaneer, bucanier	fulsome	fullsome	fulsome, fullsome
build, bild	do	do	fulsomeness	fullsomeness	fulsomeness
building	building, bilding	building	furlow	do	furlough, furlow
bumbailif	do	bumbailiff	gaunt, gant	do	do
burlesque, burlesk	do	do	gimlet	do	Gimblet
Caitif	do	Caitiff, caitif	granit, granite	do	granite, granit
catastrophe }	do	do	grotesque, grotesk	do	do
catastrophy }	do	do	group, groep	group	group, groep
center	do	centre, center	guillotin	do	guillotine
centered	do	centred	Hagard	do	haggard, hagard
centering	do	centring	hagardly	do	haggardly
champaign }	do	do	hainous	do	heinous, hainous
champain }	do	do	hainously	do	heinously
chemistry }	chimistry	chemistry	hainousness	do	heinousness
chemistry }	do	chemistry	hassoc	hassock	hassoc
chemist }	chimist	chemist	havoc	havock	havoc
chemist }	do	chemist	headache	headache, headake	headache
chemical }	chimical	chemical	heartache	heartache, heartake	heartache
chemical }	do	chimical	height, highth, hight, highth	do	height, hight, highth

ROYAL OCTAVO. SCHOOL DIC.	OCTAVO DIC.	ROYAL OCTAVO. SCHOOL DIC.	OCTAVO DIC.
heighten, highten	heighten	plaid, plad	plaid, plad
heightened, hightened do	heightened	plaintif, plaintiff	plaintif, plaintiff
hemlock do	hemloc [up	plow (n)	do
hiccough, hiccup	hiccough, hick-	plow (v)	do
hillock do	hilloc	plowed	do
hoorah, hooraw	hoora, hooraw	plowing	do
hurrah, hurrah, hurra, hurraw	hurraw, hurrah	plowland	do
hyperbole	hyperbole	plowman	do
Inwreath do	Inwreath	plowshare	do
isinglass isingglass	isinglass	pontif, pontiff	pontif
Jant do	Jaunt do	porpess	do
juice, juce do	do	potatoo	do
Leather, lether do	do	proceed, procede	proceed
ledger, leger do	do	Raccoon	do
loth, lothe do	Loath, loth	railery	railery, rallery
lothsome do	loathe, lothe	ravin, ravine	do
loathful do	loathful	receipt, receit	do
lothness do	loathness [ness	redout	do
lothsomeness do	loathsome, loath-	restif	restif, restive
luster, lustre do	lustre, luster	revery	do
Manœuver do	manoeuvre, ma-	ribin	do
maneuvering do	neuver	Saber	saber, sabre
maneuvered do	manoeuvring	sepulcher	do
massacer, massacre, massacre	manoeuvred	sherif, sheriff	sherif
mastic, mastick, mastick	massacer, mas-	sherifalty	do
mastif mastif, mastiff	sacer	sluice, sluse	do
mattock do	mastic, mastick	sovereign	sovereign suveran
mattress, mattress, mattress	mastif, mastif	splice, splise	do
medalist do	mattoe	spread, spred	do
melasses do	mattress, matres	spreading, spreading	do
meter do	medallist [ses	steadfast, stedfast	do
midrif do	molasses, melas-	steady	steady, stedly
millennium millenium	metre, meter	succeed, succede	succeed, succede
millennial millenial	midriff	tarif	do
mimick (a) mimic	millennium	theater, thestre	do
miter, mitre do	millennial	thread, thred	thread
mitered do	do	thumb	do
Neighbor, nehboor do	mitre, miter	treadle, treddle	do
nightmar do	mitred	trenchplow	do
niter, nitre do	do [mar	turkey, turkey	do
nuisance, nusanee do	nightmare, night-	unburthen, unburden	do
Ocher ocher, ochre	nitre, niter	undersherif	do
ocherous do	do	unplowed	do
opake do	ochre, ocher	Vant, vaunt	do
opakeness do	ochreous	villainous	do
Parol, parole do	opaque, opake	villainy	do
patrol, patroll do	opaqueness,	vulture, vulture	do
picturesque, picturesk do	opakeness	Windlass	windlas, windlass
	do	woe	do
	do	Zink	do
	do		zinc, zink

Many words are also spelled *differently* with the *same*, or nearly the *same* definition, as Enlist and Inlist, Enlistment and Inlistment, Engulf and Ingulf, Entomb and Intomb, Entwist and Intwist, Entwine and Intwine, &c., &c.

4. Because many features which render the larger editions of the dictionary of immense value to the scholar, (as the definitions and derivations of words) are necessarily excluded from the *book* recommended by the Society, so that almost every argument employed to defend the use of Webster's dictionary is inapplicable to the one under discussion.

While we thus seriously object to the introduction of the *school* (or 12mo) dictionary, some of the undersigned express a decided preference for the *Octavo* and *Quarto* editions of Webster as a *defining* dictionary, and are free to accord to Dr. Webster the honor of having labored long and most successfully on the elements of the language, in defining the technical terms in the arts and sciences and in tracing to their sources a multitude of words the etymology of which had not been previously settled.

The following are the names of the persons who dissent from the recommendation of Webster's dictionary, some for a part, and others for all of the reasons above given.
Newark, May 2d, 1844.

J. HOLMES AGNEW, Ed. Bib. Repos.
R. L. COOKE, Prin. of Bl. Fem. Sem.
S. H. PENNINGTON, M. D.
I. HARRINGTON, } Prin. of Newark
MARCIUS WILSON, } Academy.
WHITFIELD NICHOLS, M. D.
S. I. PRIME,
JOHN TAYLOR,
W. W. HOMES,
H. F. WILCOX,
J. N. TUTTLE,
A. S. LINCOLN,
C. HOOVER,
H. S. APPLGATE,
R. WOOD,
B. DAVENPORT,
A. L. DENNIS,
J. GREGORY, Teacher of Select School in Newark.
ISAAC HAMILTON, Teacher of Public School of Paterson.
LAWRENCE VAN HORN, Weasel, N. J.
JAS. ANDERSON, Prin. of High School at Rahway, N. J.

The discussion was now carried on in the newspapers, and by pamphlets; and the effect was such as might have been expected. The literary pride of New Jersey was aroused, and her men of education, who had long regarded Webster's innovations with aversion akin to contempt, were mortified to learn, that in an evil hour, a society within her borders, had recommended his dictionary to be used in her schools. It was evident that the decision did not reflect the public sentiment of the State; and it was firmly believed that at a future meeting of the Society, the decision would be reversed.

In the mean time the family of Dr. Webster felt themselves under the necessity of resisting the tide of opposition, which was setting against their honored father's innovations, and accordingly they published, and circulated, in great numbers, a pamphlet review of the dissent, which we have given above. This called forth a reply, from which we will make an extract, showing the nature of the information which was spread before the public, and which could scarcely fail to convince all who should read it of the folly of attempting to make Webster's school Dictionary a *standard* of orthography!

The first ground of dissent was, that Webster has given the sanction of his dictionaries to words not in good use. This is admitted by the family and claimed as a merit. "The censure" they say "is praise." It is not necessary therefore to go into the proof of the objection, by citing as we might readily do, the numerous *provincialisms* which this dictionary introduces as good English words, which our youth are thus taught to employ without hesitation in their composition and conversation; words that no good writer in this country or in Great Britain ever did use, which are not essential to convey our ideas, and which may be perfectly unintelligible out of a narrow portion of the United States; words that are not used by the refined even in those parts where they are used by the vulgar, and which would never find their way into good use unless they were incorporated into a dictionary to be placed in the hands of children, who are thus taught, before they can judge for themselves, that these are good *English* words.

That the progress of arts and sciences will require new terms is obvious, and that the diversities between "the British and American people" will render some terms familiar in this country which are seldom used in England, may be to a certain extent true; and there is not a word in the dissent which objects to the use of such words. The insinuation to the contrary is unfounded. But there is a vast differ-

ence between the introduction of *technical* terms and those that are merely the vulgarisms of illiterate persons, or at best the corruptions which are common in conversation, but are never and nowhere employed by reputable authors.

If it is a "merit" in a dictionary to be the register and the recommendation of the *corruptions* of a language, then we freely accord to Webster's dictionary merits immeasurably superior to any and all others that the world ever saw. But if, as President Talmage declares, it is an "outrage on the Saxon tongue," then let the dictionary be expurgated and amended, or condemned and rejected.

The second ground of dissent has respect to Webster's innovations in the mode of spelling certain words, examples of which are given. "The family," in reply to this objection, state that some of these words are not spelled by Dr. Webster in the mode represented by the dissenters. Here is a question of veracity to be determined by reference to the dictionaries themselves. But "the family" do not show a single word that is not fairly and literally quoted from the pages of Dr. Webster's Dictionaries. Some of the more gross innovations they say are "merely errors of the press long since corrected," and others Dr. W. himself abandoned; and in his school dictionary and his large work they have been altered to conform "to the common orthography." Let the reader take up the *nineteenth* edition of Webster's School Dictionary, published in 1843, since or near the death of its author, (he died May 28, 1843,) and bearing the following solemn declaration, as a dying testimony, of the great and good man whose "memory" his family feel called upon to defend. Here, in his preface, Dr. Webster says:—

"Whatever discrepancies appear between this work and the larger ones, this duodecimo volume, *my last work*, all written and corrected by myself, is to be considered as containing the pointing, ORTHOGRAPHY and pronunciation which I most approve."

Now open this volume and observe the mode in which the words are spelled. It will be found that he has indeed abandoned some of his peculiarities, which the public would not adopt; but others, even those positively alleged by "the family" to have been restored, are here recorded *precisely* as given in the *dissent*. Nay, more than this; the old and correct mode (as in the word *bridegroom*) is declared without any qualification to be "false spelling," and the innovation [*bridegroom*] is registered in the text, and in the *definitions*, as the true mode of spelling the word! We confess ourselves astonished, and unable to explain this extraordinary statement, the incorrectness of which any child may detect who will open the dictionary before him.

In relation to a large part of the words specified in the *dissent*, "the family" state that Dr. Webster has authority in former lexicographers, and that they are therefore not to be charged upon him as his "innovations." If the word "innovation" means always, and only, the introduction of something never known before, then they who employed the term should have selected one that would more accurately express their idea. But Webster defines "innovation" to be "change in established laws, customs, rites and practices," and he adds that "it is often used in an ill sense for a change that disturbs settled opinions and practices without an equivalent advantage." Precisely in conformity with this definition and use, was the term applied to the mode of spelling certain words in Webster's dictionaries. And we are perfectly willing to go before the literary world with the list we have published, and with many other examples which we could easily furnish, and leave it for that *tribunal* to decide whether the mode is an *innovation* or not.

Ake	Lether	Porposs	Tung	Steddy	Suveran
Aker	Midrif	Sherif	Bridegroom	Sepulcher	Sluse
Bild	Melasses	Ribin	Center	Spred	Burlesk
Fether	Nehboor	Nusance	Crum	Encyclopedia	Tarif

These are a few only of the modes of spelling which the *School* dictionary recommends, and if they are not "changes in the established practice" of spelling

such words, as, ache, acre, feather, sluice, tongue, bridegroom, sovereign, &c. &c., then we have misrepresented the lexicographer. But we submit the case. No book in which the *score* of words above cited are thus spelled ought ever to be placed in the hands of children. Yet scores and scores of words as barbarous as these are *taught*, as the correct spelling of the English language, by Webster's School Dictionary. But while we are on the point of orthography let us spend a few moments in the examination of the Websterian system.

In discussing this subject, four general principles or questions should be observed and settled.

I. Is it advisable, under any circumstances, to establish the principle that Dr. Webster (or any other lexicographer) has the right to *change* the orthography of the language, or is he simply to *record* it as found in the periodicals, newspapers, elementary books, and as used by the best writers of this country and England?

II. If it be admitted that Dr. Webster (or any other lexicographer) *had* a right to change the orthography of the language, then he should in those changes, be consistent and uniform, and in strict accordance with the analogies of the language.

III. Have the changes and innovations in orthography introduced by Dr. Webster, *fifteen years* since, in his new American Dictionary, been adopted by good writers either in this country or England, so as to warrant their introduction and use in the elementary school books of this country?

IV. If they have not been thus adopted, is it good policy, is it proper to introduce a Spelling Book and School Dictionary, into our schools which teach an orthography entirely at variance with the orthography of all the other school books of the land, and also at variance with the orthography to be found in all the periodicals, magazines, newspapers, miscellaneous books, and especially in the Holy Bible?

We will take them up in order.

I. Is it advisable, under any circumstances, to establish the principle that Dr. Webster (or any other lexicographer) has the right to *change* the orthography of the language, or simply to *record* it as found in the periodicals, newspapers, elementary books, and as used by the best writers, of this country and England?

If the precedent or principle be admitted, we have no barrier or landmarks to keep in check the spirit of innovation except the limited influence of the innovator and his publishers—our language has many anomalies; and, we can easily see that if one lexicographer should gain notoriety and reputation by changing one portion of them, another, and still another in quick succession, would follow until the whole fabric and structure of our language would be undermined. Other persons have attempted changes both in the orthography and letters of our language. We have had a Weed, a Kneeland, and a Lyon—still more, Dr. Webster himself has innovated and changed his *own* orthography from time to time, sufficiently to show the evil tendency of *innovations*. Thus, in 1806, Dr. Webster in his Dictionary, spelled *determin*, *examin*, *medicin*, *doctrin*, *disciplin*, *requisit*, *perquisit*, &c. &c. without final *e*; but, in his Dictionary, published *eleven years* after (1817) he restored the final *e* in all these words! so also *havock*, *heartach*, *headach*, *redout*, *redoutable*, *sepulcher*, &c. were thus spelled by him in 1806, but *havoc*, *heartache*, *headache*, *redoubt*, *redoubtable*, *sepulchre*, &c. &c. in 1817! Again; *hypocrit*, *imagin* *enterprize*, *merchandize*, &c. &c. spelled in this manner in one or both his Dictionaries in 1806 and 1817, are all changed back to the *Johnsonian* orthography, in his new American Dictionary of 1828, thus, *hypocrite*, *imagine*, *enterprise*, *merchandise*, &c. &c.! And again, many words spelled but one way by him in 1806 and 1817, as *apostrophy*, *catastrophy*, &c. are spelled *two* ways, *apostrophe*, and *apostrophy*, *catastrophe*, and *catastrophy*, &c. in his American Dictionary! Then, as will be seen in the following list, in 1828, we are presented with a still greater budget of innovations! Still more, many of these have been changed by Dr. Webster *already* which appeared in his American Dictionary in 1828, as *sceptic*, *scepticism*, *gimblet*, *camomile*, etc.

etc. to *skeptic*, *skepticism*, *gimlet*, *chamomile*, etc. the Johnsonian spelling!! These examples are, it is believed, sufficient to convince any person of the great evil of establishing the precedent of innovation and change on the part of any lexicographer.

The following is an extract from a letter written by a gentleman of great literary attainments, well known to the scientific and literary portion of our country:—

“I have long thought that all the benefit which Mr. Webster has rendered to literature, is far insufficient to compensate for the evils that he has brought on our orthography. I see no prospect of our ever again attaining to the uniformity in spelling which existed before his labors. Whether his spelling is more analogical than Johnson's, or better in any sense, is but a miserable question compared with the inevitable evils which result from possessing no settled orthography. If orthography is to be alterable till all men shall concede that it has attained to perfection it will for ever be mutable. Its analogical defects are but speculative evils, but its variability and uncertainty are great practical misfortunes to any people whose language is the subject of them. The great evil is that it renders literature transient. Few persons will read a book whose orthography varies much from the common standard.”

II. If it be admitted that Dr. Webster (or any other lexicographer) *has* the right to change the orthography of the language, then he should in those changes, be consistent and uniform; and in strict accordance with the analogies of the language.

One of the innovations of Dr. Webster which he claims to be a very great improvement is that of spelling a class of words with *er*, which, by others, are spelled with *re*—Thus he has spelled *accounter*, *center*, *fiber*, *luster*, *miter*, *ocher*, *sepulcher*, *verteber*, etc. one way, but *sabre*, *saber*, *theatre*, *theater*, etc. two ways! Again; he has spelled *chancre*, *electre*, *livre*, and *lucre*, with *re* only! Thus we find *inconsistency* and a want of *uniformity* in the orthography of these words. Great perplexity arises in the formation of derivatives from words of this class when they end in *er*; but when they end in *re*, we drop the final *e*, when we form derivatives by adding a syllable or a part of a syllable, as we do in forming derivatives from other words which end in *e*, and thereby render them regular in their formation; thus, *centre*, *centric*, *central*; *fibre*, *fibrous*; *lustre*, *lustrous*; *nitre*, *nitrous*; *sepulchre*, *sepulchral*; *chancre*, *chancrous*, etc.; but they must be formed in a very awkward manner when these words end in *er* as *center*, *centric*; *sepulcher*, *sepulchral*; *miter*, *nitrous*, etc.

Another innovation of Dr. Webster is that of dropping one *f* in *sheriff*, *tariff*, etc. Thus, *bailif*, *caitif*, *dandruf*, *mastif*, *plaintif*, *pontif*, *restif*, *sherif*, *tarif*, etc. with a single *f*, while *distaff*, *cuff*, *puff*, *skiff*, etc. have been spelled by him with *ff*, thus contradictory! As it is the custom in our language to write *ff* and *ss* in many cases where all other consonants would be single Dr. Webster should, to be *consistent*, omit one *s* in the words *harass*, *embarrass*, *compass*, etc. as *ss* is as “unnecessary” in the words of this class, as *ff* is in the class of words in which he has expunged an *f*! But Dr. Webster seems not to have taken *consistency* into the account in making his innovations.

Dr. Webster and his friends claim also that he has made a great improvement by omitting final *k* in *public*, *music*, etc. But the *k* was omitted by Perry and others before Dr. Webster published any dictionary or even the old American Spelling Book, in 1783. Writers and printers in this country were beginning to omit the *k*. But Dr. Webster is *inconsistent* and *contradictory* in this class also. Thus he has *frolick*, noun, verb, and adjective, and *frollicksome* where *k* comes before a consonant, all *with* final *k*, but *mimic*, adjective and noun and *mimicry* where *k* also comes before a consonant all *without* final *k*! Again; *traffick*, noun and verb, both *with* *k*, and *physic*, noun and verb, both *without* *k*! every species of contradiction and inconsistency!

Dr. Webster has changed *c* to *s* in *defense* and *offense*, but still retains *c* in *fence* and *fenceless*, *fencible*, etc. If he intended to produce “*uniformity*,” he should have spelled all these words with *c* or *s* only.

Another innovation made by Dr. Webster is that of doubling *l* in many words in which other lexicographers give single *l*. Dr. Webster's "reasons" are that "the *l* must be doubled in *distiller*, *fulfilling*," etc. and therefore, that it should be doubled in *distill*, *fulfill*, etc. The foregoing "reason" is very novel and singular; for there can be no better "reason" given for doubling *l* in *distill*, *extill*, etc. than for doubling *r* in *debar*, *n* in *trepán*, *t* in *admit*, etc. because the *r*, *n*, and *t*, "must be doubled in the derivations," *debarring*, *trepáning*, etc.; and, we find the same inconsistencies, and contradictions in the orthography of this class of words, which characterize the "innovations" and intended "improvements" in the orthography of the language, of which notice has been taken. Thus he has spelled *distill*, *extill*, *instill*, with *ll*, and *compel*, *dispel*, *expel*, *excel*, *impel*, *propel*, *refel*, *repe*, with the single *l*! and the *l* is doubled and "must be in the derivations" of all these words alike! Again; Dr. Webster has *annul*, *disannul*, with single *l*, contrary to the "reasons" above given, as the *l* "must be doubled in the derivations," *annulling*, *annulled*, *disannulling*, etc.; and he cannot assign this as a "reason," that the *u* would be sounded as in *bull*, should the *l* be doubled, as *u* never has that sound when preceded by *n*! the orthography of these words then is a contradiction of his rule. Thus he has the following with numerous other similar inconsistencies; *annulment*, *disannulment*, etc., with single *l*, and *distillment*, *fulfillment*, etc., with *ll*! He has spelled *control*, *parol*, *bandrol*, with single *l*, and *enroll*, *disenroll*, *patroll*, *unroll*, with *ll*! Thus we find the following inconsistencies: *controlment* with single *l*, and *enrollment*, with *ll*!

It is the custom with all lexicographers (except Dr. Webster) to omit one *l* in the derivatives and compounds of *fill*, *full*, *skill*, *will*, &c., thus *fulness*, *sinfulness*, *skilful*, *wilful*, *skilfulness*, &c.; but Dr. Webster has spelled *fullness*, *skillful*, *willful*, &c., with *ll*, though he has single *l* in the last syllable of *skillful*, *wilful*, and in *sinfulness*, &c. He cannot, with any degree of propriety, assert that *ll* are inserted in *fulness*, &c., to denote the sound of *u*, as the *u* has the same sound in *fulfill*, *skillful*, *skillfulness*, *spoonful*, *handful*, &c., in which it is followed by single *l*! Hence, we observe that there is neither propriety nor consistency in this doubling of *l* by Dr. Webster in the compounds above referred to, contrary to the established rules of the language, adhered to by all other lexicographers. Again: Dr. Webster has urged in favor of his system of orthography, that he has "abbreviated" and omitted "all useless" letters, as well as rendered the language "uniform;" but this insertion of another *l* in compounds in which it is both inconsistent, "useless," and not "uniform," is rather a novel way of abbreviating the language!

In the omission of one *l* in *counselor*, *traveler*, &c., Dr. Webster seems not to be supported by analogy; for the letter *l* is and always has been a privileged letter, as well as *f* and *s*, being doubled in cases where no other consonants are doubled, as *ball*, *fell*, *will*, *roll*, *bull*, *puff*, *pass*, *puss*, &c.; but *cab*, *lad*, *leg*, *ram*, *ran*, *rap*, *far*, *met*, &c., &c., have the consonants *b*, *d*, *g*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *r*, *t*, &c., single in the same situation. Thus in words of more than one syllable, *bailiff*, *tariff*, *harass*, *embarrass*, &c., the *f* and *s* are doubled, in the primitive and derivative words. So with *l* in the words *counsellor*, *traveller*, &c., &c., it is doubled in the derivative, although single in the primitive, *counsel*, *travel*, &c., for the *l* is a liquid letter, easily uniting with other letters, and has not in any situation in the language, the power of shortening the sounds of the vowels which precede it. This is the reason why *l*, in particular, is doubled in all monosyllables when all (with few exceptions, and Dr. Webster has not corrected these exceptions,) the other consonants are single as shown above; and for the same reason, *l* not having the shortening power as other consonants, as above stated, is doubled in the derivative words *counsellor*, *counselling*, *traveller*, *travelled*, *cavilling*, etc., etc., although single in *travel*, etc., while the letters *t*, *r*, etc., are not doubled in the derivatives *coveted*, *profited*, *differing*, *murmuring*, etc., when unaccented, as the letter *l* is doubled.

Again: Dr. Webster has dropped one *s* in *cutlas* but retains both in *carcass*!

He has spelled porpoise (porpess) with *ess* but retains *oise* in *tortoise* ! He has furlough (furlow) with *ow* but retains *ough* in *although* ! He has plough with *ow* (plow) but *slough* with *ough* ! He retains *i* in *villainy* because there is *i* in the primitive word *villain*, but omits the *u* in *generosity*, *pomposity*, just as Johnson does, while the *u* is in *generous* and *pompous* ! The preceding "reason" assigned by Dr. Webster and his "family," is really *surprising*, not to say *absurd* ; for it is in accordance with the analogies of our language to drop many letters in the derivatives which are in the primitives ; thus *i* in *declaim*, *proclaim*, *exclaim*, etc., dropped in *declamation*, *proclamation*, *exclamation*, etc. ; *goose*, *gosling* ; *sheep*, *shepherd* ; *reveal*, *revelation* ; *grain*, *granary*, etc., etc. Dr. Webster drops the *e* in *height* (hight) because there is no *e* in *high* ; but he *forgot* to omit the *e* in *hearken*, although there is none in *hark* ! etc., etc. It is quite impossible to give a list of all his *contradictions*.

The greatest objection to Dr. Webster's dictionaries is that the orthography is variable and contradictory. This is so far the case, that the Octavo and School Dictionaries differ from each other more than any two other dictionaries extant. To do away, or explain this objection and reproach, Dr. Webster, while living, and his "family," since his death, very *modestly* inform the public that "Dr. Webster is not *responsible* for the orthography of the Octavo Dictionary." Why, then, in the name of *common honesty*, do they not put the name of the man who *is* "responsible" on the titlepage of the dictionary, that the public may know what credit should be given to his labors, or confidence placed in his opinions, of the orthography of the language. But the name of *Webster* is on the titlepage, and on the back of the Octavo Dictionary. What presumption, then, for the family to say that Dr. Webster is not "responsible" for the *orthography* of the work, when *his* name only appears on the titlepage and back of the dictionary, and his "family" are now receiving thousands annually for the copy-right of the work !

No man, in this country or England, has talked and written half as much about the importance of *uniformity* in orthography as Dr. Webster ; yet the *innovations* and *contradictions* introduced by him in his several books, have done more to introduce irregularity in orthography than all of the other works published in this country and in England within the last fifty years ; for, nearly all of the *errors* in spelling, which now appear on almost every page of the best written books and periodical publications, and in nearly every column of our newspapers, have been introduced and kept in use through the medium of his old American Spelling Book and former dictionaries, the orthography of which is now *rejected* by him in his American Dictionary ! and this *contradictory* orthography has been continued in his old American Spelling Book and Dictionary more than fifty years !! thus, *angle*, *achievment*, *boult*, *bass*, (a long,) *biggen*, *chace*, *calimanco*, *chalibeate*, *cholic*, *clench*, *cobler*, *doat*, *epaulette*, *ethral*, *etherial*, *faggot*, *frolic*, *fellon*, *grey*, *goslin*, *hindrance*, *halloe*, *impale*, *jocky*, *laste*, *laquey*, *negociate*, *noggen*, *phrenzy*, *paroxism*, *rince*, *sadler*, *sallad*, *staunch*, *streight*, *seignor*, *shoar*, *tatler*, *thresh*, etc., etc.

So as before stated, the orthography of other words also, which has been brought quite generally into use through the influence of Dr. Webster's former works, is now rejected by him in his present works, as *merchandize*, *enterprize*, *tipler*, *serjeant*, *waggon*, now spelled by him *merchandise*, *enterprise*, *tippler*, *sergeant*, *wagon*, etc., as Johnson spells them.

III. Have the changes and innovations in orthography introduced by Dr. Webster, *fifteen years* since, in his new American Dictionary, been adopted by good writers either in this country or England, so as to warrant their introduction and use in the elementary school books of this country ?

No person will, it is believed, assume that these innovations and changes *have* been adopted by any good writers or respectable publishers, not even by the publishers of the Octavo Dictionary, or in the "Journals of Congress," or "in the reports of judicial proceedings of courts." If this reason given by Dr. Webster for the omission of *u* in *favour*, etc., *k* in *publick*, etc., be good, that they were *not* used,

as above stated, certainly the *same* reason is good and valid against the adoption of his *innovations*; for, who has seen *bridegroom*, *sherif*, *tarif*, etc., etc., in any respectable publication? Even Dr. Webster *himself* does not spell *bridegroom* without *r* in his (Webster's) bible, Matthew, chap. 25.

IV. If they have not been thus adopted, is it good policy, is it proper, to introduce a spelling book and school dictionary into our schools, which teach an orthography entirely at variance with the orthography of all the other school books of the land, and also at variance with the orthography to be found in all the periodicals, magazines, newspapers, miscellaneous books, and especially in the Bible?

We cannot express our opinion in any better or stronger language than in that used by Dr. Webster *himself*, in his pamphlet, published in 1836, in which he speaks of the great importance of uniformity in orthography:

"How very *absurd* as well as *inconvenient*, how very *unwise*, to put into the hands of children, elementary books containing an orthography *different* from that which they are to find in *other* books, and to use in the common business of life!"

And again in the same pamphlet he remarks:

"The most obvious method of banishing discrepancies in orthography, is to supply schools with books of uniform orthography, and continue them in permanent use."*

As great objections, if not greater, can, with propriety, be urged against the *pronunciation* as of the *orthography*, of Dr. Webster's works. As the sound of flat, or Italian *a* in *slander*, *lancet*, *glass*, *pass*, *class*, etc., of *t* in *nature*, *future*, etc., his giving but one sound to the letter *n*, and the omission of any distinction between *o* in *corner* and *o* in *bottle*, etc. But this reply or rejoinder must be limited to the *orthography*. It may be here remarked, however, that, not only the divisions of words, but also the pronunciation of many of them, are so *contradictory*, as to lead to great confusion—again (*agane*) and against (*aganste*) School Dictionary, but *agen* and *agenst* agreeably to Walker in the Octavo Dictionary, etc., etc.!

In the dissent it was stated that much of Dr. Webster's mode of spelling is at variance with the almost unanimous usage of the English world at the present day, and with what has been the best usage since the Augustan age of English literature. Instead of attempting to meet this just and undeniable position, "the family" treat it with a contemptuous sneer. They say that the assertion "implies an acquaintance with the English world on the part of those who make the assertion, such as few have the good fortune to enjoy." This is to insinuate that the signers of the dissent have arrogated to themselves an unusual acquaintance with English literature; and that if they had known more about it, they would not have made the declaration. "The family" may think that sneers of this character are in place in a literary discussion, and may pride themselves on a hereditary right to treat those with contempt who disapprove of Dr. Webster's spelling; but surely it requires no very intimate or extensive acquaintance with English literature to make a man safe in asserting that the almost unanimous usage of the English world is opposed to the ridiculous, new-fangled forms of spelling introduced by Dr. Webster, and which no man can ever look at without laughing.

But it requires something more than *arrogance* to intimate that there is any respectable authority in the whole field of authorship, for the spelling recommended to our children by Dr. Webster. We challenge the author; we call distinctly for the name of the reputable writer on either side of the ocean, or in any island of the ocean, who ever published a book according to the *spelling* of Dr. Webster, (or even professedly in conformity with his principles,) or even not in direct and

* It is not a little remarkable also, that Mr. Ely omitted to insert a great many of the innovations of Dr. Webster in the Elementary Spelling Book. Thus *sherif*, *tarif*, *bailif*, *pontif*, *midrif*, *mastif*, *plaintif*, *restif*, *dandruf*, etc., *fiber*, *luster*, *miter*, *scepter*, *saber*, *theater*, etc., *bridegroom*, *burlesk*, *picturesk*, *turnep*, *alledge*, *willful*, etc., etc., do not appear in the Elementary Spelling Book!!

undisguised contradiction of his principles. "The family" would have given us the name if they had ever heard of such a man. *D'Israeli* would have chronicled him and his book among the "*Curiosities of Literature*," if, in his researches among the unexplored wilds of letters, he had ever met with the barbarian who in trying to write English, had blundered into such *orthography* (?) as the great American lexicographer commends. NEW HAVEN is a place rendered illustrious already as the observatory from which phenomena, celestial and terrestrial, have been *first* discovered; but neither there nor within the field of its largest telescopes, was the author ever yet seen revolving in the orbit defined by this eccentric pioneer in the literary firmament. And until some approximation to *authority* can be found for the Websterisms proposed, we shall be pardoned for believing and saying that they are opposed to what has been the best usage since the Augustan age of English literature.

The last reason of dissent is found in the fact that the school dictionary is deficient in many of those particulars that render the larger ones valuable. This is not denied in the reply of the family, and we are therefore spared the necessity of defending the assertion. But it is a point of very great importance. It should be known, and we wish to state distinctly, that "Webster's dictionary" was defended in the New Jersey Society by those who *never had seen* the "*school*" dictionary, but supposing that it was at least consistent with the larger editions, they thought they were safe in recommending it. And those who opposed the recommendation were not aware of the great deficiencies, and the numerous inconsistencies and innovations of the book they were opposing. The more we examine it, the more of these we discover, and the clearer and more abundant is the evidence that it is not a suitable dictionary for children.

But we now invite the reader's attention to a most remarkable and most gratifying statement. It is the last sentence in the singular pamphlet which we have been reviewing. It is in these words:

"And in respect to the comparatively few forms of spelling introduced by him (Dr Webster,) against which a repugnance is expressed, it should likewise be considered that he adopted the changes on what he deemed good grounds, and was not tenacious of maintaining them, that he reverted to the ordinary spelling in respect to a number of words as mentioned above; and was ready to do so with respect to others, if he found the proposed forms would not be adopted; and that his family will act on the same principle in the future editions of his works."

What have we here? 1. That Dr. Webster was not tenacious of his own mode of spelling. 2. That in his dictionaries he reverted to the ordinary mode in respect to a number of words, and was ready to do so with others. And lastly, if the proposed forms are not adopted by the public, that the family will abandon them in future editions of his works.

But is not this a most astonishing declaration? Untiring and unexampled efforts are made to force a new dictionary upon our schools; the men who resist it on account of its *innovations* are held up to ridicule; good men are obtained who lend their great influence to secure the adoption of the book in our schools, and when all this is accomplished, the family tell us that they will alter the "future editions" to conform to old usage! So the present generation are to be *experimented* upon, to see if they will consent to spell *tongue*, *tung*, and sovereign, *suveran*, &c., &c., but if they will not, the Webster way shall be abandoned!

We do rejoice that a sound public sentiment has driven the friends of Dr. W. to this determination. And if the "dissent" of a few humble individuals in the state of New Jersey has extorted this public pledge to render the future editions of Webster's works conformable to good usage, it will be a great and abundant reward for the labor, and ridicule and calumny, which we have borne, in resisting the introduction of the *present* and *former* editions into our schools. But we must be permitted to question the propriety of placing as a *standard* in our schools, to form the tastes and opinions of thousands now in them, a book that the author and proprietors

declare shall be altered if its *barbarisms* are not adopted! *It is MORALLY wrong.* As men of conscience, as well as friends of education, we protest against any such experiments with our children.

Never in the history of literary labors did we read such an avowal as this. We thought that Dr. Webster had devoted his life to a great work which was to be known as *his* work, the result of his herculean labors and the monument of his industry, until the end of time. But he has scarcely been laid in his grave, before his family issue a pamphlet announcing that if his innovations in spelling are not adopted by the public, the future editions of his works shall be altered to conform to public taste. In the volume which contains his essays, and the copy-right of which he entered in his own name in the year 1843, in the spring of which year he died, so that this may be justly regarded as his last work, in the very last paragraph of this volume Dr. Webster says, when speaking of orthography:

"My own books have been rendered as correct as my present knowledge enables me to make them; it having been my determination that they shall not be disfigured with the obvious mistakes and improprieties of common usage."

"Common usage" Dr. Webster regarded as sanctioning "mistakes and improprieties," and he declares that his books "*shall not* be disfigured with them." But his family tell us that if the "forms of spelling introduced by him" are not adopted by the public, "the future editions of his works" shall be altered! Thus for the sake of making his books more popular, they are disregarding his own injunctions, and preparing to send down to posterity forms of spelling *as his*, which he abhorred and rejected, and declared should never disfigure his books!

But we rejoice in the determination at which the family have arrived. It is better that the great man now gone should have the credit of spelling as the rest of the world spell, rather than after the model of his "present editions." It will be better for the children that are so unfortunate as to be born in a region where the *School Dictionary* is recommended, to have a revised and corrected edition, rather than the one which the literature of New Jersey endorsed last March! And the gentlemen who have so zealously defended the ridiculous innovations of Webster will be mortified to find that they are deserted by the family, that the principles of the dissent have triumphed in the very citadel of Websterism, and that a printed pledge has now been given that the forms of spelling introduced by Webster shall be abandoned if the public will not adopt them! It is a cause of unfeigned satisfaction to us to know that the first decided and united movement which has been made against the innovations of Webster, has been so immediately and signally successful. What we supposed would take years to accomplish, has been done in less than three months. And we have the pleasure of knowing that our feeble efforts have contributed to bring about this desirable result.

While our convictions are thus strengthened that the *School Dictionary* is unsuitable to be placed in the hands of children, we wish to pay the tribute of exalted praise to the late Dr. Webster for his vast philological labors, the fruits of which we have in his great dictionary, the most valuable English Lexicon in the world. We are proud of him as our countryman; we use his works daily, and would advise every Student to have the Royal Octavo in two volumes always upon the table for consultation. Its definitions and derivations of words are more extensive, accurate, and valuable than are to be found in any other work. Its proposed innovations in spelling will of course be rejected by all educated men, while they would render any volume unfit for the use of children in schools.

In conclusion, we remark, that we have not the slightest pecuniary interest in the subject. We have no copy-right, no per-centage, no family ties or affinities, no personal friendship or acquaintance, that can directly or indirectly bias our minds on this subject. But we are actuated solely by a desire to preserve the purity of our mother tongue, and we resist the innovations of Webster as we would the in-

vader of our homestead or the defiler of a father's sepulchre. The language we learned in infancy, in which we have held communion with the illustrious dead, our inheritance and pride, we wish to preserve against the vandal spirit of the age that loves to blot out the ancient and venerable, and rejoices only in what is new and strange. It is an accursed spirit in morals or in literature; and we count ourselves happy in having been permitted to make this resolute and decided stand against the flood of innovations and corruptions. Our position is taken. We contend that a dictionary which places before the eye of a child, as a correct way of spelling, the words we have already cited, and scores besides which we might have cited, ought not to be introduced into our schools. On this ground we are prepared to stand, and we expect the sympathy and support of all conservative men of letters, all the friends of a pure literature, and all enemies of innovation, throughout the Anglo-Saxon world."

Such was the reply which the opponents of the Webster orthography made to the "family" pamphlet, and by the circulation of such facts and arguments as these, the attention of teachers and the friends of education was awakened. At the next quarterly meeting of the Society it was reasonable to suppose that a very different sentiment would prevail from that which was exhibited at the former session. Accordingly when the Society met at Trenton it appeared that nearly twice as many were present as at any previous meeting, and it is proper to add that it was composed of teachers of common schools and of professional men almost without exception. They were prepared by careful examination of the subject to decide intelligently, and their judgment is certainly entitled to consideration. The motion of the previous meeting to recommend Webster's Spelling Book was now renewed, and after a long and able discussion was **REJECTED** by an overwhelming majority. Probably out of a society of sixty or seventy members not more than fifteen were found who were now willing to vote for Webster. The Spelling Book of Lyman Cobb was then adopted by the Society, and recommended for use in the schools of the State.

This historical statement will show at a glance that the Society is not to be reproached for *inconsistency* in recommending Cobb's books, but on the contrary it deserves the highest praise for having pursued the subject with patient attention and acted according to the light which it obtained in consequence of its investigations.

The charge of *inconsistency* is however effectually put at rest by following the discussion one step farther. At this meeting after the condemnation of Webster's Spelling Book, a motion was made to **RESCIND** the resolution adopted at Newark, recommending the School Dictionary. This motion was laid on the table to be deliberately acted upon at the next quarterly meeting of the Society. The next meeting was held at New Brunswick, and the members came together with the distinct understanding that the question of *rescinding* was to be the subject of action. The motion to rescind was taken up, and debated at great length; and was finally adopted by a large majority; at least two-thirds of the Society voting in favor. The New Jersey Society has thus withdrawn all the sanction of its name and recommendation to the use of Webster's School Dictionary, and has expressed its decided and deliberate disapprobation of both the Dictionary and the Spelling Book. This fact should be made known wherever the authority of this Society has been quoted in favor of the books which have thus been rejected, after protracted and laborious examination and discussion.

Nor should we fully set forth the reasons which led the Society to this almost unanimous condemnation of Webster's spelling book, if we did not state distinctly some of the facts which were urged against it.

I. The Society believe Webster's spelling book one of the most *defective* spelling books in the language. These deficiencies were clearly pointed out, and all who are acquainted with the subject know, that since it was compiled, many and

important improvements have been introduced, to which this book lays no claim. Almost any one of the almost numberless spelling books struggling for popular favor, is preferable to the one that bears Noah Webster's name, but which (we are credibly assured) he did not make, and which we know is altogether unworthy of him.

It is deficient in the classes of words which should be found in every spelling book. For instance; of all that class of words of two syllables ending in *ff*, as *sheriff*, *tariff*, *midriff*, *pontiff*, *distaff*, *mastiff*, *caitiff*, *bailiff*, &c., not one can be found in any spelling lesson of the Elementary Spelling Book! all of which appear on page 108 of Cobb's New Spelling Book, the work adopted by the Society. Again; of more than four hundred words ending in *le*, contained in Cobb's New Spelling Book, pages, 57, 58, 59, 60, 88, 89, and 106, as *table*, *stable*, *bible*, *noble*, *title*, *pebble*, *fable*, *cable*, *apple*, *saddle*, *bottle*, &c., &c., not one appears in any spelling lesson of the El. S. Book! So also, of about eighty words ending in *ance*, and *ence*, page 78, as *dance*, *trance*, *balance*, *instance*, *hinderance*, *resemblance*, *hence*, *sentence*, *impudence*, *eminence*, *benevolence*, &c., &c., one word only, *remonstrance*, can be found in any spelling lesson of the Elementary S. Book! Again; of the forty words ending in *age*, as, *damage*, *manage*, *cabbage*, *village*, &c., on page 95, Cobb's S. Book, two only, *plumage* and *postage*, are in the Elementary S. Book! So of words ending in *en* and *on*, as, *risen*, *oven*, *season*, *reason*, *treason*, *prison*, *pardon*, *open*, *even*, *kitten*, &c., &c., *apostrophe*, *epitome*, *catastrophe*, *hyperbole*, &c., *care*, *dare*, *flare*, *rare*, *share*, *parent*, *square*, &c., &c., those ending in *ify*, as, *ratify*, *edify*, *verify*, *modify*, *purify*, *satisfy*, &c., &c.; those ending in *ace*, *ice*, and *uce*, as, *face*, *farce*, *preface*, *surface*, *novice*, *notice*, *justice*, *prejudice*, *edifice*, *artifice*, *avarice*, *seduce*, *induce*, &c., &c.; also, *coercion*, *suspicion*, *excursion*, *oration*, *valuation*, *liberation*, *separation*, *preparation*, *preservation*, *irritation*, and hundreds of other common words ending in *tion* and *sion*; and such words as *again*, *against*, *door*, *floor*, *sacrifice*, *suffice*, *burlesque*, *surprise*, *peruse*, *oppose*, *suppose*, *palsy*, *leprosy*, *monosyllable*, *leisure*, *college*, *castle*, *bustle*, *bristle*, *tempt*, *prompt*, *purpose*, *impulse*, *casue*, *pursue*, and hundreds of other, equally important and common words, are wholly omitted in the spelling lessons of the El. S. Book.

Again; the El. S. Book, is very defective in its classification. Thus, all different diphthongs promiscuously thrown together which sound alike, as *foul* and *owl*, *rouse* and *browse*, &c., page 38; *tease*, *seize*, and *cheese*, &c., page 39; *mourn*, *borne*, *own*, and *soap*, *stair*, *heir*, *weight*, and *wait*, &c., page 45; *severe*, *career*, and *brevier*, page 79. All single and double consonants thrown together, as *valet*, and *mallet*, *claret* and *garret*, page 65; *alum* and *vellum*, *habit* and *rabbit*, *limit* and *summit*, page 34; *jollity* and *polity*, page 48; &c. All terminations confusedly thrown together, as *janizary*, *monastery*, *allegory*, page, 52; *deliver*, *elixir*, *preceptor*, page 53; *saffron*, *modern*, *checker*, *vicar*, *heifer*, *solemn*, *column*, *volume*, *answer*, *conquer*, *corsair*, *grandeur*, page 68, &c., &c. Silent consonants are thrown among those which are sounded, or unnoted, as, *herb*, 27; *hour*, 38; *eight*, *freight*, &c., 45; *salve*, *caught*, 47; *honor*, 61; *solemn*, *column*, *answer*, 68; *campaign*, *arraign*, 79; *thumb*, 84; *wednesday*, 85, &c., &c. Different consonants and combinations of consonants are promiscuously thrown together in the El. S. Book, as, *bon fire* and *camphire*, 68; *mortise* and *practice*, 88; *mention* and *pension*; *sponson* and *tor-tion*, 108; *gracious*, *factions*, *luscious*, *noxious*, 126; *annunciate*, *licentiate*; *provincial*, *prudential*; *cetaceous*, *licentious*, *efficacious*; *quotient*, *ancient*, *transient*, &c., page 127; every possible confusion and intermingling in the classification, creating continual doubt and uncertainty as to the orthography of the words, thus classed, on the part of the pupil when called upon to spell them.

Of that class of words, two or more of which are pronounced alike, but spelled differently, only a part has been classed in the El. S. Book; thus, *four* and *fore*, *gait* and *gate*, *plate* and *plait*, *sore* and *soar*, *tail* and *tale*, &c., &c., have not been classed with other similar words, leaving this most important lesson which should

be contained in every spelling book, exceedingly *deficient*, as it does not now contain *more than half* of the words of this class in the language! Again; we find in this lesson, in many cases, *two* words of the same sound, when there should have been *three*, as *pair* and *pare*, *rain* and *reign*, *shear* and *sheer*, *too* and *two*, *vane* and *vein*, &c., while *pear*, *rein*, *shire*, *to*, and *vain*, are *entirely omitted*! These words to a great extent, are also intermingled with other words in the previous spelling lessons, where the distinctive definitions are not given, thus creating great difficulty and embarrassment, as their particular orthography can *not* be learned unconnected with their definitions; as *ale*, *bale*, *male*, *hale*, *pale*, *sale*, *tale*, *lane*, *mane*, *pane*, &c., page 22; and *ail*, *bail*, *mail*, *hail*, *pail*, *sail*, *tail*, *lane*, *lain*, page 40, &c., all except *tale* and *tail*, repeated with *definitions*, pages 146 and 147, &c. filling up also, the book, uselessly by these repetitions, while in Cobb's New Spelling Book, all these words are classed (more than twice as many as in the El. S. Book,) *not one* of which is given in any previous lesson where its distinctive definition is not given!

Again; of the large class of words, differently accented when a different part of speech *SEVEN* only are classed in the Elementary Spelling Book, page 145, as *august*, *conjure*, *gallant*, *invalid*, *repent*, *recollect*, *reform*; while *insult*, *compact*, *abstract*, *extract*, *project*, *conflict*, *conduct*, *affix*, *prefix*, &c., page 71; *convert*, *desert*, *escort*, *import*, *transport*, *digest*, &c., and others, are scattered promiscuously throughout the book, with *one accentuation* only noted, so that the scholar who uses the Elementary Spelling Book will not know that these words should ever be *differently accented*! while in Cobb's New Spelling Book, pages 135 and 136, all of this class, *near y* TWO HUNDRED, are classed with the different accent noted!

These are some of the proofs that the Elementary Spelling Book is the most *deficient* and *defective* Spelling Book extant, *wholly unworthy* of public patronage.

2. It abounds in contradictions with itself, and with the *school* dictionary bearing the name of the same author.

First. The work is full of *contradictions*, *inconsistencies*, and *blunders*, in its classification. For instance; pages 124 and 125 is a class of words in which *g* is hard before *e*, *i*, and *y*; and on page 23 are *gift* and *gimp*, 25 *tiger*, 29 *geese*, 35 *giddy*, 55 *give*, 65 *gimlet*, 71 *begin*, where they should not be, as no rule is there given for the sound of *g*, and repeated pages 124 and 125 where they *should* be! but *gib* 20, *get* 21, *gilt* 23, *forgetful* 66, *beget* and *forget* 71, where they should *not* be, and *not* repeated where they *should* be, pages 124 and 125! On pages 134 and 135, is a class of words in which "the sound of *ng* is close," or the *g* doubled in pronunciation; and *ingot* page 105, *mongrel* 72, &c. where they should not be, and repeated 134 and 135 where they *should* be! while *congress* 64, *distinguish* and *extinguish* 115, &c. where they should *not* be, and *not* repeated where they *should* be! On page 114 is a class of words in which *th* has its "aspirated" or sharp sound; and on page 85 *thursday*, 109 *misanthropy*, *philanthropy*, and *theocracy*, 112 *leviathan*, &c. where they should *not* be, and repeated page 114, where they *should* be, and *philanthropy* differently divided, thus *phi-lanthropy* and *phil-anthropy*! while *disinthrall* 60, *overthrow* 61, *withdraw* 72, repeated again 83! *authenticate* 77, *faithful*, *youthful*, and *thralldom* 87, &c., &c. where they should *not* be, and *not* repeated where they *should* be! On page 120 is a class of words in which *x* has the sound of *gz*; and, on page 51 *exemplary*, 77 *executive*, 110 *exordium*, 111 *exasperate*, &c. where they should not be, and repeated where they *should* be, and *exasperate* differently divided, thus *exasper-ate* and *exaspe-rate*! while *luxuriant* 63, *exhilarate* 111, *uxorious* and *luxurious* 112, &c. where they should *not* be, and *not* repeated where they *should* be! Again, *inclosure*, *disclosure*, *composure*, *exposure*, *foreclosure*, 54, *rasure*, *seizure*, 87, *pleasure*, *measure*, *treasure*, 88, &c. all wrongly classed, should be on page 122, with words in which *s* and *z* have the sound of *zh*! and so of all the classes in which an attempt has been made to class them, *inconsistencies*, *blunders*, *contradictions*, and *useless repetitions* occur. Even of those words in which no peculiarity exists, many *useless repetitions* occur in the different

spelling lessons of the most *blundering* character. Thus, page 20, *fib*, *rid*, and *wig*, all three repeated on same page! So take and take page 22! so *sham* and *sham* page 26! *much* and *much* page 27! *pink* and *pink* page 31! page 37 *noise* and *poise* repeated next page! page 38 *sprout* and *sprout*! page 42 *flake* and *flake*! page 44 *lentil* and *lentil*! page 47 *state* and *state*! page 51 *nugatory* and *adversary* repeated next page! page 68 *surfeit* and *surfeit*! page 77 *prognostic-ate* repeated page 111 *prognosti-cate* differently divided! page 49 *incitement* and *excitement* both *blunderingly* and *uselessly* repeated page 101! page 94 *insular* and *insular*! page 100 *adopt* and *adopt*! page 111 *origi-nate* repeated and *differently* divided page 126, *origin-ate*! page 127 *delicious* and *delicious*! and *officious* and *fruition* repeated next page 128! and hundreds of others throughout the book!!

Another great objection to the use of the Elementary Spelling Book is that it differs in many cases from Webster's School Dictionary in its orthography. Thus:

ELEMENTARY S. BOOK.	WEBSTER'S SCHOOL DIC.	ELEMENTARY S. BOOK.	WEBSTER'S SCHOOL DIC.
postilion	postillion	oose (149)	oose (151 tan-ner's bark!)
abscision	abscission	seine	sein
rescision	rescission	masque	mask
twiggin	twiggen	bdellium	bdellium
paragoric	paregoric	mosque	mosk
exorcize	exorcise	opaque	opake
raddish	radish	threatning	threatening
boult	bolt	tortion	torsion
bass (in music)	base	cimiter	cimeter
casque (a helmet)	casck	trefoil	treefoil
drachm	drachma	scurilous	scurilous, &c. &c.
nett (clear of charges)	net		

But perhaps the very greatest objection to the use of the Elementary Spelling Book, under any circumstances, is the very BAD, *inconsistent* and *contradictory* division of the words into syllables in the spelling columns.

ELEMENTARY S. BOOK.	WEBSTER'S SCHOOL DIC.	ELEMENTARY S. BOOK.	WEBSTER'S SCHOOL DIC.
34 pul-ley	pull-ey	skir-mish	skirm-ish
ur-gent	urg-ent	varn-ish	var-nish
35 tran-sit	trans-it	50 hil-lock	hill-ock
yon-der	yond-er	bul-lock	bull-ock
43 pes-ter	pest-er	ver-nal	vern-al
tes-ter	test-er	65 fid-get	fidg-et
el-der	eld-er	bud-get	budg-et
tin-der	tind-er	bil-let	bill-et
ten-ter	tent-er	hor-net	horn-et
53 infer-nal	infer-nal	bur-net	burn-et
etern-al	eter-nal	bul-let	bull-et
diurn-al	diur-nal	74 ran-ger	rang-er
deter-mine	determ-ine	stran-ger	strang-er
56 bor-der	bord-er	102 trans-cen-dent!	tran-scend-ent!
pist-on	pis-ton	indul-gent	indulg-ent
cen-ser	cens-er	efful-gent	effulg-ent
61 ran-cor	ranc-or	emul-gent	emulg-ent
fer-vor	ferv-or	astrin-gent	astring-ent
49 blan-dish	bland-ish	restrin-gent	restring-ent
bran-dish	brand-ish	emer-gent	emerg-ent
furn-ish	fur-nish	deter-gent	deterg-ent

Thus it will be seen that in *eight* words, page 102, there are *nine* contradictions in division!! Space will not permit the insertion of any more.

With such a mass of testimony before them, the Society were ready to pronounce sentence of condemnation, not only upon the Websterian system of orthography in general, but upon Mr. Webster's Spelling Book in particular; a sentence which, we venture to predict, will never be reversed, but will receive the concurrent approbation of all the friends of pure English literature throughout the world.

Of the satisfaction with which this decision was received by the friends of sound education in the state and abroad, we have received the most abundant evidence; sufficient certainly to assure us that the action of the Society is sustained by the enlightened judgment of those who truly represent the literature of New-Jersey.

II. We come now to the second ground of dissent which is expressed by the dissenters, in the following words:

"2d. We dissent from this vote, because in our opinion, it is not the unbiased action of disinterested and impartial men; but of men influenced—selected—avowedly and openly brought to the meeting at Trenton, for the express purpose of *approving* certain books, and *rejecting* all which might come in competition with them. New members, constituting more than a majority of all the votes, were, we doubt not, brought to Trenton, sustained there, and returned to their homes, by the agents of certain publishing houses, with the express understanding that they should vote for certain books, and *against others*."

In meeting a charge so derogatory to the Society, and so vague and indefinite in its details, the Society is in doubt whether its own dignity, and the feelings of the dissenters would not be better consulted, by dismissing it without notice. It is common in *political* controversies for a defeated party to bring the charge of "Bribery and Corruption" against the majority; but that a literary discussion like this, should lead a minority to charge the New Jersey Society of Teachers and Friends of Education with being "brought to Trenton, sustained there, and returned to their homes by the agents of certain publishing houses," is indeed one of the most extraordinary statements into which honest men were ever deluded.

That the statement is without foundation in fact we have not a particle of doubt. Two of the undersigned were present at the meeting, were personally acquainted with many others who were there, and can testify that to our knowledge and belief, the charge is wholly gratuitous and absurd; a creature of the imagination, or invented by some designing book-agent who has imposed it, as a fact, upon the worthy gentlemen who have put their names to it, supposing it to be true.

The impression, so injurious and unfounded, probably had its origin in the fact that a publisher in New Brunswick invited several teachers of his acquaintance to ride to Trenton; but with no pledge, or even expectation that they would vote for one book, or one set of books rather than another; as is evident from the result, for some of them voted for Cobb's Spelling Book, and others voted against it, just as they thought proper; but all of those thus "brought to Trenton" did not exceed a dozen in number, and some of those helped to make up the small *minority* who voted for Webster's Spelling Book.

III. The dissenters next proceed to indicate their principal objections to the adoption by the Society of Cobb's Spelling Book and Series of Readers. To these we shall reply *seriatim*; and in doing so, contrast Mr. C's. Spelling Book with those of Webster and Sanders, the favorites of the minority.

We do not, however, propose to represent Mr. C's. Spelling Book as by any means perfect, nor presume that he has forestalled all future efforts in Orthography; but we do intend to say, and doubt not we shall prove to the satisfaction of the unprejudiced, that his is the *best spelling book in use in our country*. Having done this, we shall have done all that is necessary, not only to justify, but to demand its adoption by this Society: for it is our duty as guardians of the intellectual growth of the children of our state, to recommend to their instructors the best means of education the age affords.

One would suppose, from the array of minute exceptions taken to Mr. Cobb's books, not only that they are pre-eminently defective, but especially so in comparison with those dear objects of the dissenters' love, Webster and Sanders. We are sorry to disturb their complacency; we almost shrink from it: so unpleasant is it to interrupt the reciprocities of friendly feeling. But we must sacrifice every thing to the stern *behests of duty*. And if some poisoned arrow should seem to penetrate the vitals of any one of this loving fraternity, we hope it will be remembered that *TRUTH* pointed the arrow and took the aim, while the strong arm of *DUTY* drew the bow.

We entirely accord with the Committee when they say, "The spelling book is the *first* book. It is used *earlier*, and for a *greater length of time*, than any other. It occupies the mind when *fresh and impressible*. It should, then, be as faultless as care and talents can make it." We add: It ought to be true, correct, philosophical: and we hesitate not to affirm, that Mr. Cobb's more nearly fulfils the intent of such a book than any other within our reach. The minority, however, say *nay* to this, and sustain their dissent thus:

1st. "It does not teach reading and spelling together." This is surely no very grievous fault, especially if the old adage be true—one thing at a time. Mr. Cobb has so high an idea

of the spelling book as "lying at the foundation," has labored so perseveringly to render it as complete as possible that, not being able to accomplish all that might seem desirable to some, he has sacrificed the less to the greater, i. e. the frequency of reading lessons in a spelling book, to the introduction and classification of all the *common* words of the language. To do both would make the book larger than might seem useful to some.

2d. "The type is too small." We have serious objections to diminutive type ourselves. But look at the facts. The first 93 pages are in the usual type of such books, viz: pica, small pica, and long primer. When a child has gone through these 93 pages, he can read smaller type with greater facility, and of course less injury. Besides, if you abstract the long reading lessons of Webster and Sanders, these 93 pages will nearly equal the entire number of words for spelling in these books: so, that what is smaller in Cobb is in a degree extra, and enables him to execute his plan of thorough classification, fulness, and variety. Mr. C. far exceeds all others in the number and variety of words he gives; and that, too, without repetition.

Moreover, when the whole truth is told, it appears that there are but 16 pages of Cobb in smaller type than is found on some pages of the favorites. 3d. "The arrangement of the lessons and sections, divisions and subdivisions makes it unfit for a *first* book." They mean that as early as page 30, we have words of four syllables, page 38, of six and seven; and then long and short words occurring, at intervals, throughout the remainder of the book. Then the minute sectional divisions (37 on two contiguous pages) are represented as "offensive to the eye," and not to be "*mastered by a child*."

To the former portion of this objection we reply, that both Mr. Cobb and Dr. Webster discard the Dilworth method of classifying by the number of letters and syllables, having respect to the sounds of the vowels and consonants, and consequently words of different length must often occur on the same and successive pages. Yet 'tis passing strange how eagle-eyed these dissenters are, when scrutinizing Mr. C., and how sealed in very blindness, when their faces are turned towards the pages of their dear ones! But, "how pleasant 'tis to see those of one family agree!" and we forgive them for closing their eyes to the faults of friends, for 'tis a beautiful exercise of charity!

Yet alas! not feeling the force of this family tie, we must proceed to reveal the truth. Look then, to Webster, and at p. 51, you find *four* syllables; p. 55, *one* syl.; p. 84, *one* syl.; p. 93, *six* syl.; p. 108, *two* syl. easy, and, wo betide us! at p. 113, *seven* and *eight* syl.; p. 117, *one* syl. (e. g. elf, self, dish, fish,); p. 124, *one* syl. (gig, gild,); p. 137, *one* syl. (dead, head, etc.) So Sanders, p. 43, *one* syl. (fay, tall, fall,) p. 46, *four* syl. hard; p. 80, 84, *one* syl. (get, gig, bath, lath, etc.); p. 91, *five* syl.; p. 112, *eight* syl.; p. 114, the very next on which spelling occurs, *two* syl. (giver, coffer, dower.) Oh! consistency, thou jewel!

To the latter part of the objection, viz: the minute subdivisions, we have this to say. In our opinion Mr. C. has extended his classification rather too far, while the *system itself* is the most thorough and philosophical, and most consistently carried out, ever given to the public. Moreover, while on "pp. 106 and 107 of Cobb there are 37 distinct classifications," in the language of the dissent, yet all the words under each class are alike, so that on these two pages there are only 37 changes of form. Now, see how it is in Sanders. On pp. 85 and 86, (two contiguous pages,) we find 45 distinct classes; on p. 50, containing 189 words, the *terminations change* 178 times!!! So Webster, p. 68, in 80 words 49 changes of form!!

We ask *common sense*, which is the more philosophical, correct, and easy, 178 different terminations in 189 words and all on *one* page, (Sanders,) thrown promiscuously together; 49 in 80 (Webster) in the same way; or a series of words on *two* pages, arranged in an orderly way, in 37 classes, so as to bring both *eye* and *ear* to the child's aid? *Common sense* answers: The latter is, by all odds, the best for the child, and is the true philosophy. This, then, is just the difference between Cobb on the one hand, and Webster and Sanders on the other.

And even granting that no "*child can master or remember*" all the subdivisions, they may be valuable. That may be very useful to a *child* which will only be comprehended fully when he becomes a man. And as *all the words* are to be learned *somehow*, will they not be better learned in a methodical arrangement, (even though the classes be forgotten,) than in pell-mell confusion?

4th. "Its syllabication is unwarranted." e. g. tur-ner, gol-den. We should probably disagree with the dissenters, as to the proper syllabication of some words, yet, while we by no means endorse all that of Mr. Cobb, we beg here to remind the Society of our proposition that Cobb's is the best spelling book, and that we are, therefore, bound to adopt it. Thus much can be said, however, for Mr. C's syllabication, that it is the *first* which is marked by *uniformity*. Take Webster for instance, we find on page 66, *correct-ive*, but *invec-tive*—at-

ten-tive—prevent-ive—impress-ive—submis-sive—inac-tive—defect-ive. Sanders, page 48—discrim-i-nate—predes-tin-ate—domin-i-cal—jurid-ic-al—polit-ic-al—orient-al—diag-o-nal!

5th. "Frequent change of accent," e. g. on page 95, thirty-seven times. We believe they are about as frequent in Webster and Sanders. See, in W., pp. 114, 127, etc.—in S. pp. 80, 85, 86, 95, 96, etc. We apologize for them all thus: Unless you adopt *accent* as the basis of your classification, you must have changes of accent in the same lesson. Accent is not a good basis, and with any other, the evil complained of must exist. The question is, shall we not submit to this incidental evil, for the sake of a good basis of classification? Cobb and Webster agree in saying, yes.

6th. "Wrong pronunciation." That improprieties exist in Mr. Cobb's books in this respect, we think quite probable; but where are they not found? In Webster? In Sanders? Alas! alas! for the men. On pp. 12, 17, 37, of Sanders you have the authority for sounding unaccented *y* like *e*, and as an example, the pronunciation of orthography given thus, orthogra-fe: and of Webster, the authority by *himself*, for pronouncing unaccented *e* like *i*. Now these are the two principal faults attributed to Mr. C. under this head; sounding unaccented *y* like *e*, and *e* like *i*, e. g. hardy, handy, (de)—market, bushel, (it, il.) The dissenters also complain of short *a* in national, rational,—and would pronounce na-tional, ra-tional, because na-tion, ra-tion; yet they and Dr. Webster and Sanders too, all pronounce meadow (meddow,) although derived from *mead*. Their principle requires them to pronounce it *mead*-ow. Here we perfectly agree with Mr. C., as we do also in asso-ci-ation, pronun-ci-ation, and most of the other words specified as wrong; and we presume to say that we are sustained by the *best speakers of the English language*. What *is*, is one thing: what certain men fancy *ought* to be, is another thing.

7th. "Orthography." On this point there seems to us some unfairness. The dissenters say: "It is not our purpose to say, that in any one instance, Mr. Cobb spells incorrectly; but to insist that a spelling book should conform to some standard." [By the way, the Committee use the word "conform" here improperly. It can only be used in an active sense, or form of an active agent, as, I conform, he conforms; but a bench *is* conformed to a pattern; and a spelling book should be conformed (not conform) to a standard.] Then they add: "The dictionary bearing his name (i. e. Cobb's Walker, an old book,) must be regarded as his standard"; and comparing the spelling book with that, they find various inconsistencies. Now, we believe it was known to these same dissenters that Mr. C. has not, for years, offered his old dictionary as an accompaniment of his spelling book. He did not present it to our Society, because he knew it to be inconsistent in some points, with the present usage, to which his spelling book is conformed.

It is note-worthy, that *this* Committee should specify first and foremost as inconsistencies, the omission of *k* in music, etc., and of the *u* in honor, etc., for which their idol has so earnestly contended. After these specifications, the mode of spelling in the spelling book and dictionary is compared in respect to many words. Then, the final objection to his orthography, is, that it is "hap-hazard, without uniformity or consistency."

Mr. Cobb is the last man against whom a discreet and well-informed committee would venture to bring the charge of "inconsistency." We hesitate not to affirm that there is not an author of an English spelling book as consistent with himself, with his principles, as Mr. C., and we stand ready, at any time, to prove the assertion, by a comparison with any one or more the Committee or any one else shall select. We farther affirm, that no spelling book which records the orthography of the best writers, will either be, or seem to be, consistent with itself. For instance,—and these are some of the very words specified as inconsistencies in Mr. Cobb,—some of the best writers spell cor-rect-ion, but con-nez-ion—me-tre, but hexam-eter—neu-ter but ni-tre; so also some begin with *en*, others with *in* when there exists no reason why all should not begin alike. The same is true of terminations. So that it is as true of every other as of Mr. Cobb, that he is "widely variant from any system, and from every authority which is or ever has been before the public."

Let us now look a moment at the dissenters' favorite book, Dr. Webster's! Is there no inconsistency with himself, and with the standard, in por-ress, tor-toise—im-pel, dis-till—controlment, enrollment—fullness, blissfulness—mimic, traffick—handful, brimfull—hight, highten, harken, hearken—metallist, duelist, etc. etc. etc. These are a very few out of very many. The same inconsistencies abound in Sanders.

We have thus briefly, but effectually as we think, reviewed the dissent of the minority-committee. And what shall we say more? If disposed, we could exhibit before you defects and inconsistencies in Webster and Sanders, the like to which have never been heard of elsewhere, and in comparison with which, all that the keen vision of the dissenters could discover in Cobb, are as the drop in the ocean.

We re-affirm with confidence, that, while his minute classification leads him into some errors and evils, Mr. Cobb has prepared the *best spelling book now in use*.

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Of Mr. Cobb's Reading Books we have but little to say, except that, although not faultless, they possess many excellences. The critique on them by the dissenters, is characterized by the faults and errors of that on the spelling book. For instance, when they ridicule the definition of short and easy words by longer and more difficult ones, they have omitted to state, (what is, at least, some diminution of the fault,) that those defining words are all themselves defined, in other parts of the book. Besides, those specimens of defective lessons which they give,—perhaps they were not aware,—are all found in the very books of their own preference and recommendation. More than all, in giving the orthoepy of the twenty-six words, which they quote as instances of ridiculous pronunciation, they have omitted the figures over the vowels with their significations, which are, of course, *essential* to a right and fair view of Mr. Cobb's orthoepy: and, to cap the climax, laughable indeed is it, that, out of the twenty-six thus cited for ridicule, *ALL but three* have precisely the spelling given by their own *Magnus Apollo*! Yes, even Noah Webster could not otherwise designate the pronunciation of these same words, than as Mr. Cobb has done. How one's mischief will sometimes come down upon his own head!

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With these remarks we conclude our reply, congratulating the Society that they have acted with so much judgment and reason in the adoption of Mr. Cobb's books.

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tee. Finally, the whole subject of books was postponed until the meeting of the Society in March, 1844, held at Newark.

At the meeting of the Society, at Newark, the March following, the Committee again presented a Report on School Books. But, lo! *Sanders'* Spelling Book was *dropped* by the Committee! and *Webster's* Elementary Spelling Book substituted in its stead. This, to say the least, was very unkind to Mr. *Sanders*, whatever cause the *public* may have had to complain; for, besides voting for the adoption of his *own* book, he had otherwise labored very diligently to convince the Society of its merits. But so it was. Prof. Fowler, son-in-law of Dr. Webster, had visited New Jersey; and, with all becoming zeal had changed the heads of this Committee. After much discussion, however, by a *tie* vote between the adoption of Cobb's and Webster's Spelling Book, the whole subject of a spelling book was postponed until June following, at the meeting of the Society, held in the city of Trenton.

As at Newark in March, great efforts were made by the *combined* influence of Sanders, Town, and their friends, and the friends of Dr. Webster to avert such a dreadful *calamity* as the adoption of Cobb's Series of School Books by the Society. Prof. Fowler again visited the State of New Jersey. Mr. Sanders too, thinking no doubt, that the welfare of the State demanded it, at great personal sacrifice, left his business and went to Trenton. Here he not only circulated a handbill got up by him against Cobb's books, but also made a long speech in opposition to them in the Society. This handbill among other things showed differences in spelling between Cobb's School Dictionary and New Spelling Book. But Mr. Sanders knew that that Dictionary belonged to the *old* Series, and had never been shown with the other books. Again, there were spellings of words in orthoepy, on that sheet not to be found in Cobb's Dictionary! The Chairman of the Society, a *Webster* man, permitted one of their *highest* men to spend the brief time allotted to him, to speak of *Webster's* Elementary Spelling Book, then under discussion, in reading from this sheet against *Cobb's* books! Still more, these dissenters, all three, were present and heard the explanations which I made that the School Dictionary and Spelling Book were not presented by me in the *New* Series; yet, in their dissent, they have had the *unfairness* to quote from that sheet!

What would have been said by these friends of *Webster*, had some critic brought up a comparison between Webster's *old* American Spelling Book, and his *new* Dictionary! Notwithstanding all these combined efforts, Cobb's books were adopted. Then, at the meeting at New Brunswick, in Sept. last, these dissenters made an effort to have the vote, adopting Cobb's books, passed at Trenton, *rescinded*. This was voted down by *more than two to one*. Hence, the only alternative was the publication of this *dissent*, now under consideration. In the meantime, however, one of their number was commissioned to go to Philadelphia, to *prevent* the adoption of my books by the Board of Controllers of the Public Schools in that city. In this, they *failed*. My books were unanimously adopted by that Board in January last.

On looking over that *dissent*, one would be led to suppose by the comparison of several classes of words, by this minority committee, in order to disparage and injure my books, and to destroy my reputation as to *consistency*, that Dr. Webster whom they so much admire as a pattern of *consistency* in orthography, has not, or ever had, any *inconsistencies*! Let these dissenters look at pages 8, 9, and 22, of this Answer, and read over the contradictions of Dr. Webster in spelling and division of words, and *blush* for shame at the *unfairness* manifested in their *dissent* towards Mr. Cobb and his books!

In speaking of the Reading Books, this minority committee did not fairly state the plan or the design of the author. The plan and object of Mr. Cobb have been to give all the *new* words which occur in each *reading* lesson in the form of a *spelling* lesson, *spelled, divided, accented, pronounced, and defined*, with the *part of speech* designated. Thus, the system is complete, neither Expositor or Dictionary being

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