

that, since writing the article in question, I have tried other experiments strongly tending to confirm its conclusions. I have dipped into "mind-reading," and have myself, found hidden articles and done things which had been secretly agreed upon by other persons, one of whom accompanied me with his hand upon my forehead. The key to ascertaining the purpose was, of course, successfully observing and interpreting the muscular impulse. I found the thing secreted, or did the thing described, unerringly and with considerable alacrity, exactly as water finds its level by flowing in the direction of the least resistance. I have no doubt that anybody with quick sensibilities can do the same thing, and, after a little practice, with as much readiness as any professional muscle-reader in the field. But the Barkis who officiates as companion in the experiment must be "willin'."

So much for that. When Dr. Post postulates that "the muscles belonging to one body may be controlled by the mind belonging to another," I have only to say, "Prove it." When I am told that the indulgence in profound and vehement thinking on the part of a nurse kept a patient from vomiting, I am inclined to say, "Maybe the patient would not have vomited any way." When I am told that a mind-reader who had been secretly "willed" to kiss a young lady felt an almost irresistible "contraction of the orbicularis oris" on approaching her, I have only to add that one swallow does not make a summer or one pucker a universal law.

It should be remembered that many of the observers of "thought-transference" seem to be rapid generalizers, and that rapid generalization is fatal to scientific accuracy. In fact, I think the skeptical mood is the one in which all investigators should approach both hypnotism and "mind-reading," and that they should not only remember that coincidences explain most of the mysterious in human life, but that research should proceed on the identical lines that would be followed if it were known that all the persons concerned were dishonest, and were bent on the perpetration of fraud.

As to Dr. Post's defence of physicians, I have only to say that while the medical societies of the United States decline to investigate hypnotism, much less practise it, most doctors take pains to condemn the practice of it by "laymen," and only the other day I was advised by one of the most distinguished physicians in the country to "give it up," and he predicted dire evils if I should persist in experimenting with hypnoses. As the advice was not paid for or even solicited, it may at least be assumed to have been sincere.

W. A. CROFFUT.

VI.

PROTECTION FOR OUR LANGUAGE.

THE English language as spoken by the American people is subject to great and rapid changes. Among a people so little conservative every one seems to feel at liberty to coin words and take liberties with his mother tongue. The varied foreign elements pouring into our country from every nation under the sun, the extent and variety of our territory, the vast sectional industries carried on, the cosmopolitan and migratory character of our people, their omnivorous habit of taking intellectual pabulum from all nations and languages and tongues—all these are constantly transforming our language. While these things may prevent a tendency to distinct dialects and serve in a measure to knead our language into a compact whole, yet they keep pouring into the mass an endless variety of new elements, and thus it is at the mercy of an infinite number of fluctuating forces.

It is of interest to every American that the language in which the English classics have been written shall be kept as pure as possible, and that all changes shall be made with the greatest care. In no way can this be so well accomplished as through an American Academy of Language. No other means will so effectually secure unity, prevent sectionalism, and abolish dialects. No mere dictionary-making, whether by one man, one university, or a committee of men, can secure the greatest permanence, breadth, or unity to a language. When the standard of a language is left for the individual lexicographer to establish, sectionalism will at once come in. The West can complain that it is controlled by the usage or dictum of the East, or vice

versa. The battle waged between the admirers or allies of different lexicographers produces an endless confusion; and dictionary-buying becomes an expensive luxury, while the buyer has a vague feeling that the latest "unabridged" will be a transitory authority.

What is imperatively needed is an American Academy of Language, with representatives from every section of our country. Every first-class college or university should be entitled to have a member. Only the best linguists and scholars should be allowed to become members. Such men would win the respect of the nation by their scholarship and soon establish a standard of pronunciation and orthography that would be recognized and obeyed as *the authority* on such subjects for Americans. And it would not be long before the scholars of England would coöperate with them, and we should then have a standard for all English-speaking people. In what way could a part of the much-discussed "treasury surplus" be spent that could bring us more honor or lasting profit than in founding such an institution?—a national monument of which all Americans would be proud, a permanent testimonial to our national culture, wisdom, and patriotism. Unsectional and thoroughly American, representing our ripest scholarship and broadest development, it would become an authority to which we would not only gladly submit, but to which we would all eagerly appeal.

N. A. CAMPBELL.

VII.

FRENCH PROPER NAMES IN ENGLISH.

IN CONNECTION with my work recently, I have been interested in observing how frequently French proper names are anglicized, becoming something entirely different from what they originally were. The town in which my notes were made lies near the Canadian boundary and contains a large population of French Canadians—day laborers and mill-hands. When a family of this class come there, they retain for about one generation, usually, the name by which they were known when they arrived. The older members of the family, the parents, generally retain their French name as long as they live, but as their children grow up they almost always change. There seem to be two reasons for this. The first is that, as the younger generation grow up, speaking the English language, and surrounded by American customs and institutions, they desire to become Americans in all things, and so prefer American names. The second is that the business men with whom they deal, particularly the merchants, who in the way of trade have to write their names frequently, find the French forms inconvenient, if not impossible, and so adapt them in some way to the English tongue. Sometimes, indeed, the change is made by inventing entirely new names—a method to which the Canadian usually agrees with the most remarkable equanimity.

Where, as is usually the case, the French name has a meaning which has an equivalent in our language, the latter is used as the substitute. In this way Boivert has become Greenwood,—*bois*, wood, and *vert*, green; Boulanger becomes Baker, Bienvenu is transformed into Welcome, Lemieux into Betters, and Couturier into Tailor. Roche is French for rock or flint, and Joseph la Roche becomes plain Joe Stone. No less complete, and much more unreasonable, is the change from Henrichon to Anderson, and from Morin to Morrill. From St. Pierre to St. Peter is an easy and natural step. Frequently the most astonishing results arise from an attempt to anglicize the spelling of a French pronunciation. This has given us Prue for Proulx, Rushlow for Rocheleau, Veno for Vigneault, Derusha for De Roche, Longeway for Langevin, and Young for Dionne.

Many more examples might be given, but these are enough to show one way in which our vocabulary of proper names is enlarged more rapidly than would at first, perhaps, have seemed probable.

M. B. THRASHER.