

NEW SPELLING (1956)

(Statement on the Agreement reached between the British S.S.S. and the American S.S.A.)

In May, 1955, representatives of the Simplified Spelling Society of Great Britain and of the Simpler Spelling Association of the United States of America met in London with a view to bringing their respective systems of reformed spelling completely into line.

Previous attempts to reconcile the few outstanding points of divergence and so to reach total uniformity had been unsuccessful, and the five points of divergence on matters of detail (as set out in Appendix X of the Simplified Spelling Society's book, *New Spelling*, 6th edition), had consequently remained.

At the meeting, however, complete unity was reached, concessions being made by both sides in the common cause.

Detailed proposals were subsequently submitted to, and have been ratified by, the respective Societies.

Both Societies consider that the system now jointly put forward, far from being in the nature of a compromise solution, is actually an improvement on the several previous ones.

Until the Simplified Spelling Society's publications can be printed in the revised form, the main alterations are summarized below, and consequential changes in the text are to be inferred by the reader.

I. The letter *y* shall not function both as vowel and as consonant, but shall stand only for the consonantal sound of *y* as in yet.

Final *-y* (as in *pity*) is therefore to be written *-i*: thus *piti*. Piteous is spelt *pitius* if pronounced as three syllables, with the alternative spelling *pityus* for a pronunciation of two syllables. Similar alternative spellings will exist for a number of other such words.

(Point 4 on page 128 of *New Spelling*, 6th edition, refers.)

II. Vowel digraphs shall be always written out in full, even before another vowel. Thus *lion* for which the suggested New Spelling had been *lion*, will be written *lieon*. Similarly *lying* (formerly N.S. *liing*) will be written *lieing*.

This will obviate any need for the diaeresis to distinguish between ambiguous forms caused by "reducing" digraphs. For example, quite quiet, for which the suggested New Spelling was *kwiet kwiët*, will be *kwiet kwieet* (but see also III below).

(Point 1 on page 128 of *New Spelling*, 6th edition, refers.)

III. For any cases of potential ambiguity it is recommended that there be used a stop or dot between letters to mark syllabic separation - and this in preference to either hyphen or diaeresis.

Thus *hapi.est* (*happiest*), *terri.er* (*terrier*), *sosie.eti* (*society*). If desired also *kwie.et* (*quiet*), as well as *child.hood* (*childhood*) *foot.hold* (*foothold*), and the like.

In writing by hand, this dot can be placed slightly below the line, and inserted after the complete word has been written. The dot will, however, doubtless generally be omitted altogether from printing and typewriting (except for beginners) as well as from handwriting, since in practice ambiguity is rarely likely to arise.

(Point 2 on page 128 of *New Spelling*, 6th edition, refers.)

The remaining points 3 and 5 on page 128 of *New Spelling*, 6th edition, have been resolved by the American Society's acceptance of the usage of New Spelling.

Thus New Spelling, as above modified, and the American Society's system of reformed spelling are now identical.

APPROVED BY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, OF S.S.S., 6TH JULY, 1956

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