

tion to those who are interested in orthography and grammar.
 Grammatical differences are as follow:—
 O. puts *a* for *o* in twenty-three instances—viz., in *urdele*, but (fourteen times), *redesmen* (O. *redesmen*, twice), *del* (twice), *stedofest* (O. *stedfest*, thrice); and:
 O. puts *o* for *oa* in *foangen*; *bi*, but, contrariwise, *oa* for *o* in *o*. Also *oa* for *a* in *amanges*.
 O. puts *e* for *o* in *delicid*. Also *ea* for *a*; in *in* for *andin*. Also *e* for *a*; in *hene* for *hane*. Also *sch* for *sc*; in *Maraschal* for *Marschal*.
 Grammatical differences are as follow:—
 O. drops the final *e* of a grammatical inflection in several instances. Of these the two are plural endings—viz., *aise* and *isovore*; and five are latives singular—viz., *gide*, *loande* (twice), *oje*, and *yeare*.
 Again, O. drops the Southern prefix *i*. (A. S. *ge*.) in ten instances—viz., *iseide* (twice), *istelande*, *istessene*, *imakele*, *ist*, *foan*, *isein*, *idon* (once), *isovore*. It may further be remarked that it retains the prefix *ve* in seven instances—viz., *spretinge*, *erde*, *Heavode*, *isohen*, *idon* (once), *iseid*, *isoverid*; but it never inserts it.

Again, O. has *but* for *han* in the construction *bi han* *iche* *oje*, where *han* is the dative of the definite article.
 Lastly, O. has three unmistakable instances of Midland grammar as distinguished from Southern—viz., in the forms *beo*, *habben*, and *maken*, as compared with *beop*, *habbet*, and *makien*.
 I venture to submit that all these variations follow much more regular laws than might, perhaps, have been expected. The spelling and grammar of Middle English are less capricious and chaotic than they are generally believed to be.
 WALTER W. SKEAT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

A LETTER FROM MR. CHARLES DARWIN.

Latham, Ormskirk: June 3, 1882.

It has been suggested to me that a letter which I received from Mr. Darwin on the day before he died, though not important in itself, does not seem to be so widely known as the latest things he wrote an interest such as entitles it to publicity. Written by return of post in answer to the mere casual communication of a stranger, it has, at all events, the interest of being one of the many illustrations of that almost proverbial courtesy which characterized the greatest, since Newton, of "those who know." I had taken the liberty of pointing out to him what seemed to me, for certain reasons, a false conclusion arrived at in a paragraph of "The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals," where Darwin certainly seems to imply that the familiar canine practice of throwing up earth by backward ejaculations of the hind-feet is a "purposeless remnant" of a habit, on the part of some wilder progenitors, of "burying superfluous food." Mr. Darwin's reply was as follows:—

"Dear Sir,—You have misunderstood my meaning; for the word *remnant* was a very natural one, and you criticism good. I ought not to have interpolated the sentence about the burying of food; and, if inserted at all, it ought to have been at end of paragraph, or in a separate one. The case was instanced solely to illustrate a long-continued habit, for, as far as I have seen, well-fed domestic dogs do not *remnant* as a very natural one. A dog when burying food makes a hole (as far as I have seen) with his front-legs alone, and thrusts in the earth with his nose, so that there is no resemblance to the supposed excrement-covering movements.—Dear Sir, Yours faithfully, "CH. DARWIN.
 "I see that I have omitted to thank you for your very courteous expressions towards me."

The foregoing letter Mr. Darwin wrote on April 17. It will be remembered that he was seized with his mortal illness on the 18th, and on the 19th he died. WILLIAM WATSON.

HENRY III.'S PROCLAMATION IN ENGLISH.

London: May 12, 1882.

Prof. Skeat queries the word *Plecc* or *Pless* in this document. John de Plessisset is called a Norman, who rose to importance by his marriage with Margaret de Newburgh, the heiress of Warwick, a widow of John Marshal. This John de Plessisset, as the name is abbreviated, was the second Earl of Warwick, and died 1263. His son Hugh, by a former wife, and a grand-

son Hugh were barons of England; but this branch has not been traced further. There was, however, a relative sister Robert de Pley, living 1290-91, perhaps a brother, who held a manorial property at Wimborne, in Dorsetshire, which was called Upwinborne Place, and the present Earl of Shaftesbury is his lineal descendant and representative. Possibly the name is from Plessis, near Tours.
 "Perres de Sauwaye" is Peter of Savoy, uncle of Queen Eleanor, a well-known historical character, sometimes, but erroneously, called Earl of Richmond. He was brother to Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, who also appears in this very interesting connexion. A. HALL.

THE NAME "PYRENEES."

Lanvryn, Mynahyell: June 3, 1882.

If the name "Pyrenees" is of Celtic origin, it probably has no connexion with the Welsh *bryn*, a hill, but with *Berywyn*, the name of a somewhat extensive mountain range in Merionethshire. The latter name is derived from *bar* (top) and *gwyn* (white), and signifies the "white-topped" (mountain), a term as applicable to the Pyrenees as to the Merionethshire range. In Modern Welsh the Pyrenees are generally called *Y Barwynion*. D. SILVAN EVANS.

PRIMITIVE BELIEF.

Bristol Museum: June 6, 1882.

Prof. Sayce's strictures upon the etymologies contained in my *Outlines of Primitive Belief* seem to be grounded upon two suppositions. First, that I set up for being a philologist; and, secondly, that I find fault with Mr. Herbert Spencer for not being one. I should never dream of doing the one thing or the other. Comparative philology, with its accompanying comparative mythology, has cast lights upon the history of thought which cannot be neglected. But that he may appreciate this fact it is not necessary that the student of that history should be a professed philologist. The entire object and tenor of my book are very different from what Prof. Sayce's construction would be. I set up for being a philologist in the sense of belief called Nature worship, in a shape more human and, if I may use the expression, more historical than the abstract forms which they take in the hands of mythologists. All writers upon Aryan mythology have detected this Nature worship, and explained it more or less truly, and with etymologies more or less false. At present, however, ethnologists pretty generally refuse to have anything to say to it, and Mr. Herbert Spencer notably sets it all upon one side. Among his reasons for doing so, he alleges not unnaturally the impossibility of tracing any connection among the etymologies which bear upon the matter. Neither Mr. Herbert Spencer nor any other enquirer can reasonably be expected to verify the disputed questions of modern philology in order to come to a conclusion upon the subject of Nature worship. And this, no doubt, the reason why, outside a charmed circle of students, no account of it is taken.

But despite all philological disputes there remains the general agreement among these students, that the phase of Nature worship has been passed through. What is needful, therefore, for us is to see how it may be incorporated into the history of human thought. If we leave it out, we shall have to put in its place some other system of belief—ancestor worship, animal worship, medicine-man worship, or what not; and we shall thus, as I hold, raise these systems into a prominence which is wholly factitious. Almost all that I have attempted has been to present to my mind a picture of this Aryan Nature worship, which had about it some features which one could