compulsory discipline for those whose business it is to raise the study and teaching of the Spoken Language from the level of an empirical dogma to that of a rational and scientific body of knowledge.

I have spoken at length in other places of the extreme difficulty of finding a nationally acceptable form of Speech, and indeed of defining Standard English, that fiction so dearly loved by so many of us. You will find the constitution and work of the B.B.C. Advisory Committee on Spoken English fully described in the relevant publications. One aspect of the problem is new in the sense that I have only recently had the opportunity of observing it. It is the question of English in Scotland. Scotland has for centuries had its own centres of culture and education in its Universities. Owing to its social organization, its geographical formation, to the comparative isolation of many of its centres of population, the regional dialects of Scotland have always enjoyed a higher degree of prestige than prevails in England. There are many varieties of educated Scots English, and nowhere in Scotland, except in a few girls' high schools, is there any desire to accept Southern English as a national standard. But Southern English is broadcast, although an occasional announcer may have been Scottish born. This is accepted, although not without protest. Nevertheless, in the performance of English drama, for instance, most Scottish people would expect to hear in Scotland, if not the advanced dialect of the London stage, some very close approximation to what is known as Standard English, reserving to themselves the right to define that fiction in their own terms. Lessons in Speech are now for the first time being broadcast in Scotland to the school-children. The broadcast is a Scottish woman, an eminent phonetician, and she broadcasts her own pronunciation, which is pure Scottish. Here is a linguistic situation quite unlike anything that has come under my notice, in this country or elsewhere, and I watch the outcome with much interest.

There is no doubt that the North of England and the Midlands are becoming more tolerant of at least one feature of South-Eastern English that used ten or twelve years ago to cause them intense annoyance. Such pronunciations as "gras", "paib", "dams" are, I suspect, becoming less unpopular in the North. My evidence for this is that whereas ten years ago I used to receive many letters of complaint on this score, now I seldom receive one.

On the other hand, the resistance to certain prevalent South-Eastern forms is as considerable as ever, e.g.:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>standard English</th>
<th>regional English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;for&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;för&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;a land&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;ar land&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;empair&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;empair&quot;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

continue to bring forth protests in abundance, while the intrusive causes nightly offence to millions. These two features are very strongly established, and resist all efforts on my part to remove them from the speech of announcers. Possibly it is idle to attempt it; and the young man who, despite—or perhaps on account of—his public school and Cambridge education, despite his high honours
Secondly, there is the criticism of the philologist, who complains that the Committee does not sufficiently respect traditionally established pronunciations. *Conduit* was first given as *kondjuit* largely because

(a) I formed the view that many people in the habit of referring to Conduit Street use that pronunciation, and

(b) because the casing used by electrical engineers for enclosing cables and wires is usually referred to in that way.

This decision raised a violent discussion in *The Times*, in which one eminent man of letters referred to another as a "bumptious amateur". This word really caused a reconstruction of the Committee, and when it came up for reconsideration was promptly reverted to its older form *kandit*.

It has recently been decided to call Marylebone *maarsban* despite the fact that there now remain but very few elderly people who use this form.

Personally I have very little philosophy left in this matter, despite the fact that I was brought into phonetics through the broad avenue of Philology (Romance). But when two or more variant pronunciations are available, it appears to me that ease of verbal communication is promoted if that variant is chosen in which the discrepancy between the visual and aural forms is least pronounced. Sometimes variants are not available.

Lastly, there is criticism of the doctrinaire kind, a good example of which will be found in Sir Richard Pagar’s recent book, *This English*. Sir Richard wishes that the Committee would introduce more system into its deliberations, and impose upon the public pronunciations which, in his view, despite the fact that they may be non-existent, would make for uniformity.

Such are the observations upon a unique linguistic situation which I offer to the Congress, with an expression of the honour I feel in being invited to address it.

*Note.* For a fuller discussion of many of the points dealt with above see the author’s *The Broadcast Word* (Regan Paul, 1933).

63. Prof. C. M. Wise (Louisiana): A comparison of certain features of British and American pronunciation.

As the Dialect Atlas of the United States and Canada proceeds towards completion, and when a similar Atlas of the British Isles is undertaken, comparisons of British and American speech can be illuminated by historical data. Sources of colonial groups, and their movements subsequent to reaching American shores, will then be better known. Comparative British and American linguistic study can then be more easily “vertical” or historical, as well as “horizontal” or contemporaneously descriptive. Meantime, this paper limits itself to descriptive commentaries chosen selectively as follows:

1. The comparison of the relative standing, in the two countries, of certain British and American pronunciations.