

fessor F. A. March, published in a valuable circular from the Bureau of Education at Washington under the National Government of the United States: "Three years are spent in our primary schools in learning to read and spell a little. The German advances as far in a twelve-month. A large fraction of the school time of the millions is thus stolen from useful study and devoted to the most painful drudgery. Millions of years are thus lost in every generation. Then it affects the intellect of beginners."

He goes on: "We ought then to try to improve our spelling from patriotic motives. If this do not move us, it may be worth while to remember that it has been computed, that we throw away \$15,000,000 a year paying teachers for adding the brains of our children with bad spelling, and at least \$100,000,000 more paying printers and publishers for sprinkling our books and papers with silent letters."

Were our spelling system perfectly phonetic, mechanical reading and spelling could be mastered in less than one year. It is perhaps not generally known that in foreign countries, and even in America and England, our language is taught in some schools at first from phonetic books.

They then pass on to the ordinary English, and find the process to pay. Mrs. E. B. Burnz, of New York, says: "The phonetic teaching in the Fisk school (at Nashville), as elsewhere, proved beyond all cavil, that with phonetic books as much could be accomplished in four months, in teaching to read, as by a year with the common method, and moreover, it showed that there is no difficulty experienced by children in passing from phonetic to the ordinary printed book." How much more satisfactory would the system be were the ordinary book not in existence! Mr. William Colbourne, of Sturminster, England, is quoted as follows: "My little Sydney, who is now a few months more than four years old, will read any phonetic book without the slightest hesitation; the hardest names or the largest words in the Old or New Testament form no obstacle to him. And how long do you think it took me—for I am his teacher—to impart to him this power? Why, something less than eight hours! You may believe it or not, as you like, but I am confident that not more than that amount of time was spent on him, and that was in snatches of five minutes at a time, while tea was getting ready. I know you will be inclined to say: 'all that is very well, but what is the use of reading phonetic books? He is still as far off, and may be farther from reading romanic books.' But in this you are mistaken. Take another example, his next elder brother, a boy of six years, has had a phonetic education so far. What