

It will surely rejoice the teacher's heart to think that she can give a fairly complete spelling course consisting of six or seven thousand words. But Dr. Rice proposes means to still further reduce her work. He continues:—

"When the words have been selected, the next step will lie in a systematic treatment of the difficulties. And here again the course is open to simplification, by separating the words that may be learned collectively from those which must be mastered individually.

"The words that can be acquired collectively are those to which rules of spelling apply. While in some instances the exceptions are so numerous as to rob the rules of their value, a few of them, nevertheless, are very reliable, at least for all practical purposes. And as these few rules govern thousands of words, it would be much less burdensome to master them than to memorize such words individually. Among these rules, two are particularly comprehensive, and should be taught, year after year, until applied automatically. They are: First, the rule referring to the doubling of the consonant, as in *run-running*; and, second, the rule concerning the dropping of the final e, as in *bake-baking*. That so many children, even in the highest grammar grade, should spell *lose* with two o's does not necessarily throw discredit on the teacher; but that a child who has attended school four years or more, should write 'While runing he slipped,' or 'She was bakeing cake,' is as unpardonable as if he were unable to add 2 and 2. And yet, out of 252 pupils in the fourth school year, whose papers were examined with reference to this point, *running* was misspelled by 94, *slipped* by 126, and *baking* by 69."||

Dr. Rice then presents a tabulated statement of errors to show that "as many errors were made on words governed by rules, as on those to which they did not apply," and continues:—"The words that must be studied individually are those in which no clue is given either by sound or rules. The best to be done with such words, until our spelling is reformed, is to bring them to the notice of the child, and trust to chance for the results. The simple reform of dropping the silent letter in the last syllable of such words as *beggar*, *driver*, *doctor*, *mantel*, *bundle*, *metal*, would enable us to strike no less than 15 per cent of the words from the