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THE SPELLING PROBLEM.

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The new education has transformed the methods of teaching spelling as of all other subjects. But the results obtained have been so unsatisfactory that a feeling has arisen that the methods demand revision. There has, in consequence, been a re-awakening of interest in the subject, and prominent educationists have begun to enquire into the cause of the bad spelling in our schools. I shall endeavour to bring before you some of the latest attempts that have been made to solve the spelling problem.

The new education has condemned oral spelling. Spelling is for writing, not for speaking, and is therefore to be learned through the eye, not the ear. With oral spelling has gone the spelling-match, which was such a prominent feature of the old schools. With oral spelling has disappeared also syllabication, and C-o-n s-t-a-n t-i n-o p-l-e, not to mention C-o-n, Con s-t-a-n, stan t-i, ti n-o, no p-l-e. Constantinople, is no longer heard. The alphabetic method of teaching reading has been relegated to an effete past, and cat is now *cat*, and not c-a-t, cat. The old-fashioned spelling-book with its columns of words without connection, and its long list of rules and longer list of exceptions has shared a similar fate. Words must be learned as parts of a sentence, for the sentence is the unit of thought, and dicta-