

Simplified Spelling Society Pamphlet No. 7.

The best method of teaching children to read and write

Reports of experiments conducted in sixteen schools.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

This pamphlet contains Reports from 16 Schools in England and Scotland of successful experiments in training young children to read and write in a simple phonetic orthography. In most of the experiments the system of spelling used was of a type similar to the New Spelling now (1942) recommended by the Simplified Spelling Society. [1] Equally successful results have also been attained with other phonetic systems, including systems embodying new letters. [2]

The success of an experiment of the kind depends, in very large measure, on the interest taken in it by the teacher, on his confidence in trying new methods, and, if he has not actually been trained in phonetics, on his possessing at least some phonetic sense. This, however, means no more than that the teacher must have qualifications, necessary under any method, if efficiency is to be attained. There have been instances, no doubt, in which experiments started in a particular school have been subsequently abandoned, because a new Head Master or Head Mistress disliked spelling which departs from the conventional, or had no belief in, or was disinclined to adopt methods other than those to which he or she had been accustomed, or because an enthusiastic teacher had been replaced by one unable, or unwilling, to follow unfamiliar ways; *but we have no evidence of failure when the experiment has been fairly tried*, and, if evidence of failure, not known to us, has been produced, we more than suspect that the failure is traceable to one or other of the causes mentioned.

The reports which follow show, as we believe, conclusively:-

- (1) *That children learn to read fluently matter in a simple phonetic spelling, and to write correctly according to the system, in the course of a few months;*
- (2) *that, as a consistent spelling presents no bar to free expression, the original compositions of children who use a phonetic spelling are markedly superior in matter and manner to the compositions of children of the same age who use the traditional spelling;*
- (3) *that, in reading aloud, the children who use a phonetic spelling acquire a clearer enunciation than children taught to read throughout in the current orthography;*
- (4) *that, contrary to expectation, the transition from the Phonetic to the ordinary spelling is attended by no difficulty, and indeed, that children who pass from the former to the latter, acquire something like proficiency in the ordinary spelling sooner than children do who are familiar with no other;*
- (5) *that the better mental discipline introduced into the reading and writing lesson leads to improved work in other subjects of the School course.*

These experiments more than confirm the almost self-evident proposition that it takes longer to learn to read and write in an inconsistent than in a consistent orthography. They show that the new method has a value in education not possessed by the old; and further prove that against the clear gain there is no corresponding loss. The objection, for example, once common, that books in the old spelling would be practically inaccessible to children taught in a phonetic spelling has been completely falsified. Such children come to the books earlier than other children do, and enjoy them more.

In addition to the saving of time and the enhanced efficiency attained, we would emphasise the educational advantage which results from the substitution of a sound for an unsound mental discipline at the very beginning of the child's school life. With an inconsistent spelling the appeal

must be almost throughout to memory, and to memory alone. The child must memorise the visual appearance of every word he meets; must carry in his mind a host of contradictory statements, seemingly irreconcilable, which the philologist can doubtless account for, but of which the explanation is probably outside the School teacher's knowledge, and certainly beyond the pupil's comprehension. With a simple phonetic orthography the appeal is to observation and reason first of all, and to memory only after the observed fact is understood. Further, it is no small advantage to the method we recommend that it fosters habits of independence and self-reliance in the child; that it sets before him tasks which, with guidance and encouragement, he can largely carry out for himself, and from which he can derive a fruitful pleasure in the discovery of powers that steadily increase as they are applied, and are subject to no unexpected and disappointing set-backs.

REPORTS.

I. - CLEPINGTON SCHOOL, DUNDEE.

Reports of the working of the School were received in 1915 (1) from a member of the Simplified Spelling Society, who visited the School, [3] and (2) from the Head Master, Mr. James Sword, and the Infant Mistress, Miss Margaret McConochie.

The first report is as follows: "A short time ago it was the good fortune of the writer to visit the Clepington School, and to observe the results of an interesting experiment that had been made in the Infant Department of the School.

"The subjects of the experiment, about a dozen in number, had not been specially selected; they had been taken at random from a group of incoming children at the beginning of the, school year. For the first ten months of their school life they had been taught as a separate class in reading. They were given their lessons by the infant mistress herself, at the same periods as the other children of similar age who were taught on the usual 'Phonic' lines. Their textbook, however, was not an ordinary book set up in the conventional spelling, but a special book called '*Nerseri Rymz and Simpel Poënz: A Ferst Reeder in Simplifyd Speling*,' which had been supplemented by suitable extracts taken from the books in use in the school and printed on the black-board in Simplified Spelling.

"As far as possible, the Simplified Spelling section of the class had lessons of the same duration as the 'Phonic' section. An unusual amount of illness amongst both teachers and pupils interfered somewhat with the carrying out of this ideal, but, in spite of interruptions, the '*Ferst Reeder*' with the supplementary blackboard work was overtaken in ten months. The Simplified Spelling section was then put to the ordinary Senior Infant work.

"The Head Mistress reports that 'at this stage the Simplified Spelling pupils were very apt at reading and spelling passages with fairly ambitious words, as long as they were printed in Simplified Spelling. So far as the pupils' experience went, each sound was represented by one symbol or group of symbols. There were no exceptions, and there was nothing to cause hesitancy. They knew nothing of the irregularities of the conventional spelling.'

"It was feared that much trouble would be experienced in acquiring familiarity with what is irregular and exceptional in the ordinary spelling; but it was found that the thorough training the Simplified Spelling pupils had received in the relations of sound and symbol made the 'transition' stage easier than had been expected.

"On the day of my visit the Head Master and the Infant Mistress brought together the subjects of experiment. At this time they had been fourteen months at School, during the first ten months of which their instruction in reading had been given, through Simplified Spelling. A book in the conventional spelling was put into their hands, and each child read a passage, after which he or she was given certain words to spell. No child was passed over in either reading or spelling.

"Next, about the same number of children, who had been *nineteen months* at School, and who had been taught in the usual way, were brought in and read the same passages from the same reading book, and were also given words to spell.

"On the whole, the reading of the two sections, as regards the naming of words, was very similar. Words of irregular spelling that gave trouble to the first section gave trouble to the second section also. *The pupils who had had only four months' experience of the vagaries of the ordinary spelling were quite as good as those who had had nineteen months.*

"Such difference between the two sets tested as revealed itself was found in the results of the speech-training. *The pupils of the Simplified Spelling section had a freer, clearer, easier pronunciation, and a more distinct and clear-cut articulation, than those of the other section.*

"To sum up: *The Simplified Spelling pupils, taken at random from a group of new pupils, after ten months' instruction in Simplified Spelling and four months in the conventional spelling, could read the latter as well and spell as well as the pupils who had worked at it exclusively for nineteen months. The balance of advantage was altogether on the side of the children who had been taught on the new lines. They had had a better training in the relations of sound and symbol; they had acquired a better and a more natural utterance and expression, and had laid a more solid foundation for the subsequent cultivation of good, clear speech.* This, too, under conditions which the Head Master and the Infant Mistress responsible for the experiment did not consider altogether favourable.

"Surely, in the results of this experiment, teachers will find matter for contemplation, and cause for encouragement to go and do likewise."

The report of the Head Master and Infant Mistress confirms the foregoing.

At the Annual Meeting of the Simplified Spelling Society in January, 1916, Miss McConochie read an interesting paper based on the experience she had gained by the Clepington Road School experiment. In the course of the paper she said:-

"It (Simplified Spelling) has certainly great possibilities and advantages. *In the first place, the saving of time is very considerable.* The pupils learn the short vowel sounds, the consonants, and the nine combinations of vowels which make up the sum of the long vowel sounds. That preliminary work completed, and the initial difficulty of putting the sounds together to form words overcome, the work proceeds smoothly. The pupils have absolute confidence in their symbols, and this faith is not disturbed by the unexpected appearance of exceptional words, multiplicity of symbols for one sound or of sounds for one symbol. *There is increased fluency in reading, as there is no hesitancy, and it is found that quite ambitious words can be introduced into the reading lesson. The advantage resulting from this is that the child is enabled to possess an enlarged vocabulary, an aid to self-expression both orally and in writing.* As teachers in elementary schools know, pupils from poorer homes come to school with a very limited vocabulary indeed; and much of that even may have to be un-learned. In fact, they have almost to learn a new language, and any method which is helpful in this matter is very valuable. The system also admits of more time being spent on drill in phonic work, resulting in greater purity of sound and clearness of articulation."

II. - DENS ROAD SCHOOL, DUNDEE.

In this School the experiment was conducted by Mr. Robert Loggie, Head Master, and Miss J. D. Paten, Head Mistress of the Infants Department. A preliminary report was received in December, 1916, from which the following is an extract:-

"The experiment began at the end of August - the beginning of the School session. The first lessons were oral, but after a few days the blackboard was brought into use, and special wall

sheets were prepared. The method followed was that of 'Examples of Syllable building' (pages 8 to 11 of 'A First Reader in Simplified Spelling.').

"About the beginning of November, most of the letters being then known, books were given out. Our correspondent happened to visit the school on the day on which these were distributed, and was greatly struck by the enjoyable surprise with which the pupils - 56 in number - found themselves able to run down the columns on page 8.

"Another visit was made a fortnight later, when the class teacher printed one of the Nursery Rhymes - not one previously read - on the blackboard. *The class translated the symbols into sounds and combined the sounds into words in a manner that showed the value of the logical training the consistent spelling had made possible.* The work was done a little slowly, but there was no guessing and there was no blundering. Blundering, in fact, did not seem to be possible, so sure was the step with which each pupil moved from letter to letter, and from sound to sound, in the process of synthesis. The Head Mistress of the Infants Department, a lady of long experience, is well satisfied with the results so far as the experiment has gone.

"The Inspector for the district has given his cordial approval."

In June, 1917, the Head Mistress reported that, *at the end of six months, children who had been in regular attendance were able to read in Simplified Spelling as difficult matter as is usually read by Pupils at the end of the Infant School course.*

She reported also that children who returned to School after five or six weeks' absence - there had been an outbreak of measles - could take their part in class work almost as if they had not been absent at all. They had forgotten neither the symbols nor their values.

It would appear, therefore, from the present results, that the *adoption Of Simplified Spelling would lead, in reading and speech training, to a great saving of time in the first two years of school attendance.*

III. - MORGAN ACADEMY, DUNDEE.

Miss Edith Law and Miss Edith Luke, who carried on the experiment reported in 1917:-

"All the children, about 80 in number, beginning school life in August, were made the subject of an experiment in teaching reading on the principles embodied in the First Reader in Simplified Spelling. By the end of the month the children knew the sounds and their symbols, and were putting them together in simple words. Very soon these words were used in the formation of easy sentences, which were eagerly read by the children. The advantage of the method was very apparent at this stage, for instead of sentences such as, 'He is up,' 'Do I go so?' etc., the children were reading sentences which both interested and amused them, and at the same time afforded material for systematic speech training.

"At the end of six months the first Reader had been read, and the transition stage was entered upon. A simple Fairy Tale Reader was put into the children's hands, and the ease with which they sounded unfamiliar and unphonetically spelt words was astonishing. In previous years this book has not been attempted till the children have been eight or nine months at school.

"In teaching to read by this method, much of the drudgery and monotony of many of the pages of Infant Primers have been avoided. During the initial and most difficult stages of learning to read, each symbol has only one sound, and *the children have nothing to worry and confuse them in the way of irritating exceptions, so that reading very soon becomes a real pleasure to them.*

“ During this period their vocabulary rapidly increases, owing to the abundant practice they have in reading practically all words within their power to understand. To this is due their greatly increased fluency and ease of utterance, when they reach the stage of reading ordinary English spelling.”

Mr. Robert Jackson, of the Training College, Dundee, writing in 1918, on the experiment in this School, states:-

“The School authorities are delighted, enthusiastic, in fact, over the results of their six months’ experiment. They have begun the transition stage, and to their surprise my prediction as to ‘little trouble’ is being verified.”

IV. - LUMPHINNANS SCHOOL, FIFESHIRE.

Of this School, Mr. Robert Jackson, speaking at the University College Meeting, in 1918, said:-

*“A few years ago an infant mistress in Fifeshire, after attending classes in phonetics organized by the St. Andrews Provincial Committee for the Training of Teachers, introduced the phonetic method into her classes, making use of a modified form of the alphabet of the *International Phonetic Association*. The result was eminently satisfactory. Within a comparatively short time the pupils learnt to read anything that described facts within their own experience, and to write and spell any such words as come within their natural diction with almost perfect accuracy. Facility in learning to read was accompanied by a very marked improvement in their speech. Miss McCullam, the teacher responsible, still uses a phonetic method, but has altered the values of the letters to lighten the pupils’ work in the transition stage.”*

Of the experiments in Dundee, Mr. Jackson said:-

*“During recent years there have been three experiments carried on in Dundee schools. The first was made in Clepington School. It was described pretty fully in *The Pioneer*, of August, 1915. The results might be summed up as follows. Pupils who had been taught by means of *Simplified Spelling* for ten months, and had then learnt the conventional spelling for four months - fourteen months in all - could read as well and spell as well as pupils who had been at school for nineteen months and had been taught exclusively the conventional spelling. The balance of difference was altogether on the side of the pupils who had been taught on the new lines. They had acquired a better and more natural utterance and expression, and had laid a more solid foundation for the subsequent cultivation of good, clear speech. Untoward circumstances prevented the continuance of the experiments beyond one year; but a few months ago the *Simplified Spelling* method was reintroduced, with results that are giving full satisfaction.”*

Summarising the results of the Scottish experiments, Mr. Jackson remarked:

“The results of the experiments in the four schools - Lumphinnans (Fifeshire), Clepington, Dens Road, and Morgan Academy (Dundee) - prove that the forty forms that represent the forty sounds of English speech can be mastered in a few weeks, and that thereafter only a little practice is needed until the pupil can decipher any word whatever that forms part of his daily diction, or that, keeping in mind the stage of his mental growth, can legitimately be introduced in teaching.

“But the question may be asked - in fact, always is asked - What of the transition to the ordinary spelling? In not one of these schools has the transition given anything like the trouble that was anticipated. I recently visited the Dens Road class, now in the transition stage. I heard the class do a bit of unseen reading from a book in the ordinary spelling. The fruits of the consistent training in the relation of sound and symbol showed themselves in the grip and intelligence and readiness with which the pupils read the ‘nomic’ forms, which of course, to them were new. The combination of stress and intonation, and the ease of utterance, proved that the naming of the words was real pleasurable reading, and that the meaning was being caught as the words were uttered.

"I also recently spent an afternoon with the class in Clepington School in which are the subjects of the Simplified Spelling experiments of 1915. It is now two years and a half since they laid aside the *Ferst Reeder*. The two sections of the class were tested in the *Sekond Reeder*, just published, and new to all of them, and in the class reading book. The pupils who began on the Simplified Spelling method are still ahead of the other pupils in ease of utterance, and in the superior purity of their vowel sounds. *The foundations of good speech have been laid firm and sure*. No difference revealed itself in the spelling of the two sections.

"My experience gives me confidence in claiming that the use of Simplified Spelling, or any form of consistent spelling throughout the school course, would save a whole year of the child's school life; would help the training of the ear, eye, and speech organs; would give increased facilities for the cultivation of self-expression and thought development, and would permit language teaching generally to be conducted in accordance with the laws of mind growth to a degree absolutely impossible with the present spelling."

V. - INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, BRIDGE OF ALLAN.

Report of the Head Master, Mr. Wm. Bennett, M.A., dated September 17th, 1924, on the use of Simplified Spelling as a Time-Saver in the Teaching of Reading:-

"In response to an advertisement which appeared in the *Scottish Education Journal*, in the early summer of 1919, I obtained permission from H. M. I. (Mr. W. G. Fraser) to try an experiment on the lines indicated by the title above. The experiment was begun in August, 1919, with three sets of books supplied gratis by the Simplified Spelling Society. All the entrants were put into the class, and a start was made with the *Ferst Reeder*. Preparatory training was given in the symbols. As there were no exceptions, progress was confident and much quicker than with the ordinary type of reader on the phonic method. Some difficulty was experienced at first, because the poems in the *Reeder* were too familiar. But that was got over by printing various lines on the blackboard, so as to take them out of their context. Now, we begin with the '*Jinglz*' because the poems there are not so familiar. The newer edition of the '*Jinglz*' builds up gradually on more conventional lines, but leads rapidly to literature which the children read for its own sake.

"In six weeks' time the pupils were reading 'Little Boy Blue, come blow up your horn,' whereas, at the same date in the previous year, they had been reading (from Chambers' *Effective Readers*, First Primer):-

My fat cat has a kit.
Sam hit the kit on its leg.
Can the mit fit on the rag?

and other equally 'classical' literature."

"The children were keen and confident because they encountered no illogical obstacles, and H. M. I., at a visit in the late autumn, expressed himself as greatly pleased, asking to be informed when the transition to conventional spelling was to take place.

"This transition - dreaded as a period of difficulty - really occurred naturally, and with no special difficulty. The teacher hurried into my room to say that she found the pupils reading from one of Chambers' Effective Reading Sheets (illustrated), which hung in a corner, their idea being to get some explanation of the picture. In their minds reading was not a labour for the sake of learning to read, but for the sake of the content of the reading matter; therefore they were eager to read everything in print.

"A moment's reflection will show why there should have been no fear of the transition. For at the period of the transition their intelligence had been much developed, and the words encountered in ordinary spelling were all carefully chosen words of one syllable, spelt phonetically. The teacher

merely explained that the class had hitherto spelt words in an easy way, and that now they were going to spell just like grown-ups. That alike flattered and pleased them.

“By Easter (*i.e., after seven months’ tuition*), the experiment was over, and the children passed on to Chambers’ *Effective First Infant Reader (not Primer)* a full term ahead. Never in any previous year had this book been attempted till the beginning of the second year of School life. H. M. I. (Mr. Fraser) again visited the School - at the end of June, 1920 - and after examining the teachers’ records, and testing fully every branch of the class work, he reported as follows:-

“At one School the attempt is being made to teach the initiatory stages of Reading by means of Simplified Spelling, the text book used being that published by the Simplified Spelling Society. The plan adopted is to use this book for the first six months of School life, and then to pass on to books in the ordinary spelling. This transition is clearly the critical stage, and it may be said, as the result of experience, that it has caused no loss of time. For, though no extra time has been given to reading, *the children at the end of the year are much better readers than they used to be under the old system, both of their text books and of unseen matter*. The confusion that might have been apprehended had not been produced. The Head Master’s view of this is interesting, viz.: that *children of five or six are less easily confused by such apparently illogical proceedings than would be children of eight or nine*.

“At first sight it would seem that the facts constitute strong evidence of the superiority of the new method. But when it is noted that the improvement in reading has been accompanied by improvement in spelling, writing, and arithmetic it becomes evident that we must use caution in forming a judgment. It is hard to see how a method of teaching reading can of itself help arithmetic. Is it not possible that the interest of a new experiment has had a stimulating effect on the teachers, which is reflected in the results in all subjects? And if this be so, how much of the improvement in reading is due to this stimulus, and how much to the method itself?

“But, though we cannot as yet definitely decide as to the value of the method, one welcomes the experience of this School as confirmation of what one has always felt, viz.: that experiment is good for a School provided the head of the School is at once sympathetic and judicious.’ - (General Report for the year 1920, by F. R. Jamieson, Esq., M.A., one of H.M. Chief Inspectors on the Schools in the Southern Division of Scotland, dated Edinburgh, December 31st, 1920.)

“The Inspector could not then see how a method of reading could improve all the other work. The answer is complete. (1) The improvement was no mere ‘flash in the pan,’ for it has continued to date. (2) The children’s logical facility was never upset by having to trust continually to a grown-up to tell them when words obeyed rules and when they didn’t. Self-help and self-effort were encouraged by interesting matter read from the first, and never discouraged by confusing anomalies. (3) The late Sir Wm. MacEwen, the great surgeon and brain specialist, affirmed at a meeting of experts (the British Association) that *‘scientific study in any branch of knowledge prepared the way for rapid advance in any other branch of knowledge.’*

“In the second year of School life the *First Infant Reader* (Chambers’), is revised during the first fortnight. Then the *Second Reader* is tackled and finished in two months (*i.e., by the end of October*). In former sessions the two Infant Readers, with a supplementary reader or so, completed the second year’s work. Now very much more is professed.

“After the two Readers are finished a supplementary reader - like ‘Rumpelstiltskin’ or ‘Cinderella’ is read. Then comes Gibson’s *Phonic Reader IV*, one of the stiffest possible books. Another supplementary Reader follows this. Then Nelson’s Introductory Reader to the *Highroads of Literature*. This is regarded as a holiday. After that there is a final run over Gibson’s *Reader IV* again, to make them quite strong in the stiffest spelling an Infant class can get. All through there is a great deal of blackboard work in order to familiarise the children with the various rules and anomalies of conventional spelling. Those who know will agree that a great deal of reading has been done, and that, given mastery of the books professed, the spelling will be a ‘strong’ subject. That is so: our *children now spell better than ever before, and they are eager readers*.

"We still use this method after five years of trial. It is a METHOD and no longer an EXPERIMENT. Our teachers declare that they will not willingly go back to the old method. In proof of this last statement, I may say that when our Authority, under the impulse of the Geddes Axe, made a list of text-books to be used in their schools, I suggested to my teachers that the S.S.S. text-books were worn, that it would be useless to ask the Authority for a new set, and that perhaps it would be advisable to go over to ordinary readers. The teachers forthwith said they would prefer to buy a new set for themselves. This was avoided by replacement of worn copies from old stock held by the Society. But the incident speaks for itself.

"I appeal then, to my fellow teachers to try this method for themselves. In the first two years it saves from three to six months of school time, and calls for no special skill in teaching. It makes work easier and happier for teacher and taught. It encourages reasoning power and fosters self-help because from the first it presents interesting matter told in language natural to a child and not distorted or twisted to suit the difficulties of spelling, as must be the case with the best of 'phonic' readers. It increases keenness and creates a taste for reading. In five months' time the children will 'burst into writing' as naturally as Italian children would do. It gives confident and clear articulation and enunciation, owing to the complete absence of anomalies and exceptions, and therefore, tends to improve speech. The children read in a natural, happy, and interested tone, quite different from the conventional school shout or drawl. The experiment 'consumes its own smoke,' as it is all over in from seven to nine months. It affects the Infant Room only. It does not affect spelling adversely - rather the reverse - and can call for no criticism from anyone. Parents can be told that the method has been reported on officially, and has proved successful in other schools. If adopted throughout the school it would save from one to two years of school life, and would provide a great release of time and energy for other things.

"Against a great many reforms advocated at the present moment it is urged that they are Utopian, or that they cost money and are therefore out of court in these difficult days. This reform would cost nothing, since it could be very gradually adopted as school books were worn out. Old people could learn to read it in half-an-hour, and could continue to spell in their own way. Costly standard works could still be read though in present conventional spelling, and only gradually need new plates be stereotyped for more up-to-date editions. Teachers can help on the cause, for they are at the very source of the training of the new generations and could influence many parents. Multitudes yet unborn would arise and call them blessed, were they to rise as a body and demand this long overdue reform."

Wm. BENNETT.

Name of School: Intermediate School, Bridge of Allan, Stirlingshire.

Teachers concerned: First year - Miss Mary Bain; Second year - Miss Elizabeth Bain.

Head Master: Wm. Bennett, M.A.

VI. - HONEYWELL ROAD SCHOOL, BATTERSEA, LONDON.

Miss Walsh, late Head Mistress of the School, presented a Report on the working of the experiment in this School, from which the following is extracted:-

"My experience is that children delight in seeing and learning the sounds of the symbols which represent words that they themselves use.

"Plenty of Blackboard Exercises on familiar words always spelt as pronounced will prepare the children for the use of the Preliminary Reader: 'Jinglz and Storiz in Simplifyd Speling,' supplied by the Simplified Spelling Society, in which 'one symbol, one sound' is fully worked out.

"Children using these books make remarkably rapid progress very happily - and happiness is certainly essential, especially in the early stages of learning to read - because they are never confused by various sounds being used for the same letter nor by the use of various letters to

represent the same sound, and having perfect confidence in the symbols, *the children soon discover their own power of building new words without the help of their teacher, and they delight in exercising this power, because they are never disappointed by being wrong, and they are never afraid to attempt to pronounce an unfamiliar word for the same reason.*

"Two classes of little people in my own school - average age five years eight months - began learning to read on the Simplified Spelling Plan, and at the end of the ninth month they had mastered the *Ferst and Sekond Reeder*s in Simplified Spelling.

"In all my experience of school work, *I have never seen little children so keen on any lesson*, not, as far as I could judge, because they were different from other children, nor because they wished to excel, but simply because *they thoroughly enjoyed discovering new words for themselves.*

"*The Transition Stage, i.e., the passing over from Simplified Spelling to the orthodox spelling.* At this stage my teachers and I expected to meet with difficulties, but we considered that the children being nine months older and having learnt to concentrate their thoughts to a certain extent, to handle their books properly, and to read regular words - common to both methods - would be much better fitted to grapple with the inconsistencies of our language, than they were, when they began school life, and we were agreeably surprised at the way in which the children grasped the changes. The majority took no notice of slight alterations, hesitated at others, but, of course, were completely non-plussed by some of the anomalies.

"*At the end of two years the classes referred to above were tested by an impartial and experienced judge, and the results obtained in spelling and the mechanical art of reading proved that these children (average seven years eight months) were considerably in advance of their age in those two subjects, and that they could read and spell better than classes of children of the same age and in the same school, instructed by the same teachers under similar conditions - but taught entirely on the usual methods.*

"The teachers of the classes and I had convincing evidence that learning to read on the Simplified Spelling plan was far the happier experience for the little child beginning its school career, and that the children taught on the Simplified Spelling Method, being able to read intelligently nine months earlier than those trained on orthodox lines, *had extra time for silent reading, and their use of the Classroom Library showed that the power to read created a love of reading even in young minds.*"

At the Meeting of the Simplified Spelling Society at University College, London, on January 2nd, 1919, at which Demonstration lessons were given to classes of children taught to read and write on phonetic principles, Miss Walsh said:-

"I have been asked to give you a brief outline of the way in which we are dealing with simplified spelling at Honeywell Road Infants' School. After reading, with great interest, the experience and opinions of several teachers in Scotland, and much literature on the subject, I strongly desired to introduce simplified spelling into my own school, in order to see if it really were a simpler and happier method of teaching little people to read. Two members of my staff - Miss Parker and Miss Renwick, both experienced teachers - at once fell in with my suggestions to try simplified spelling for a certain period, and they undertook the work. Both Miss Parker and Miss Renwick have given two word-building lessons and two reading lessons each morning - to one class on the orthodox method, and to the other class on the simplified spelling plan. In this way we hoped to arrive at as fair and true a comparison as could possibly be obtained - the classes being composed of children of the same type, taught by the same teachers, under similar circumstances, and in the same surroundings. Circumstances over which we have no control - such as weather, health, and attendance - must, of course, be taken into consideration when the final balance is adjusted. The children who will come before you this evening have received, on an average, one hundred word-building lessons of fifteen minutes and one hundred reading lessons of twenty minutes' duration. The younger group - average age, six years - in charge of Miss Renwick - are still working entirely with simplified spelling, but the older group - average age, six and a half years - under Miss Parker's care - have just arrived at the transition stage; therefore, neither my teachers nor I can yet

speaking definitely about the time saved by this method. *But we are fully convinced that learning to read on the Simplified Spelling Plan is much the happier experience for a little child at the beginning of its school career;* because, as each symbol always represents the same sound, the child is not disappointed or confused by continual failure to pronounce the printed word correctly; neither is he afraid to attempt unfamiliar words."

VII. - ST. KATHERINE'S INFANT SCHOOL, TOTTENHAM.

The Head Mistress, Miss McLeish, reported in 1923:-

"A few years ago an experiment in the use of Simplified Spelling by little children, as an approach to reading, was initiated with a small group of 25 children in St. Katharine's Infants' School.

The success attending the experiment was a great surprise to all concerned.

"In six months, not only were twenty-two out of the twenty-five children reading fluently from the conventional spelling, but they had attained a clearness of speech and a fluency and originality of expression in written composition hitherto unapproached by children of the same age in the school.

"It was suggested at the time that the evil effects of the Simplified Spelling might re-assert themselves as the children progressed through the Senior Schools and writing was made more use of.

"I am now in a position to say that such is not the case, and those responsible for the same children now in Standard IV, are not only delighted with the ease with which they make use of the conventional spelling, but are among the most ardent supporters of the method.

"The success of this first experiment emboldened us to continue experimenting.

"We have modified our plan of working considerably, and by making use of the new edition of *Jinglz and Storiz*, with its excellent grading, have embodied reading by means of Simplified Spelling as a definite step in the school reading scheme.

"As soon as the children are able to discover words of one syllable from sounds - with ease - they are allowed to make use of the *Jinglz and Storiz* with its carefully graded preparatory pages.

"Here the principle of *one* sign for a sound is strictly adhered to.

"Great care has been taken before this stage that the children attach the *correct* sound to each sign as it is met. Consequently, once the discovery has been made by the child, that certain sounds in sequence produce words in his own vocabulary, a tremendous incentive to investigate further is provided.

"A recent visitor to the School (Sir Mark Hunter) was considerably interested in a *little girl, who was absorbed with her book*, and was surprised to learn that *only the day before had the discovery of words come to her*.

"Once this stage is reached, nothing hinders progress. The signs are there - the child attaches the correct sound - the word is discovered, and word following word reveals meaning.

"It is here, I think, that the secret of the success of the method lies.

"The children are always reading for 'meaning and sense.' The signs, or letters representing the 39 sounds of their own vocabulary soon become familiar, and, after repeated use, mechanical, so that the subject matter alone stands out.

"At the transition stage from the Simplified Spelling to the Conventional - this habit of reading by 'sense' stands the child in good stead.

"Slight differences in the forms of words are unnoticed, others, less like the Simplified forms, intelligently guessed at, and only the most glaring anomalies prove hindrances.

"Our experience has been that no child who has been allowed sufficient time to become fluent when reading from Simplified Spelling has failed to transfer that fluency when reading from the orthodox.

"When writing, *one* sign for each sound of the child's vocabulary, provides *him* with a means of intelligible expression, and *us* with a sure evidence of his exact speech.

"He is able to write - phonetically exactly what he wishes to say, and has not to alter his own phraseology to include only those words with the spelling of which he is familiar.

"Natural and childlike compositions are possible.

"As soon as the children are thoroughly at home with the 39 letters or signs - the use of them soon becomes mechanical and *thoughts* are allowed free play, unhindered by the burden of remembering the *forms* of the various words.'

"It is obvious then, that more attention can be given to developing forms of expression and sequence of thought than would otherwise be the case.

"The *form* of a word as a whole in Simplified Spelling is never *given* to a child. Once the signs or letters are known, each one can reproduce his own speech.

"This reproduction has been *of great value in enabling us to detect hitherto unsuspected speech defects and inaccuracies.*

"The common use of *v* for *th* in *mother, father*, etc., the substitutions or omissions of sounds, as *taiboo* for *taibl*, *hanz* for *handz*, *flourz* for *flouerz*, *cau* for *caul*, *widoe* for *windoe*, have been revealed; also inaccuracies due to the yet undeveloped speech of little children as *chesh ov drauz* for *chest ov drauerz*, *sisd* for *sister*, *fendh* for *fender*, among others.

"Other interesting inaccuracies have appeared in *jrum* for *drum*, *chrumpet* for *trumpet*, *chrain* for *train*.

"In all these cases the ability of the child to represent his own speech accurately has been demonstrated, even in the case of *jrum* and *chrumpet*, to an appreciation of the voiced *j* and the voiceless *ch*, which in his speech were substituted before *r* for voiced *d* and voiceless *t*.

"Once having detected these inaccuracies, the correction is an easy matter.

"The word presented to the child in Simplified Spelling enables him to cover the correct form for himself, and so learn by the eye what he had failed to learn by the ear.

"Children whose speech is in any way defective, derive great benefit from the method of reading by Simplified Spelling.

"The longer time devoted to the *sounds* of words, instead of to the variety of their forms, enables many of these defects to be overcome.

"We have had many instances in which children's speech has been entirely transformed.

"At present we have under observation a little girl of six, whose ordinary conversational speech is practically unintelligible, but she reads from the *Storiz and Jinglz*, enunciating perfectly. Her compositions, which are quite fluent, reveal the many inaccuracies of her ordinary speech, and

enable us to deal with them; while her reading encourages us, by revealing what it may eventually become.”

VIII. - YORK ROAD SCHOOL, LEEDS.

Mr. Ezra Sykes, in 1918, reported on the experiment conducted in this school:-

“The York Road School may be described as a typical poor district school in the heart of Leeds. The children are sturdy little Britons, charming personalities, but obscured and handicapped by a sordid environment. Their speech is a mixture of broad Yorkshire dialect and slovenly English. School speech to them is a strange tongue, interspersed with a few familiar words. Very few of the children possess such a luxury as a book: the play books, picture books, and story books that delight children in better circumstances are unknown to them, and the only books they ever see are the school books. I mention these facts in order that you may realise the difficult conditions under which the experiment has been made. The difficulties, however, enhance the value of the experiment; because, if success can be achieved in such adverse circumstances, one may imagine what the results would be under more favourable conditions.

“Now, at the beginning of the experiment, the children had all passed through the babies’ class, and had a slight acquaintance with the simple letters.

“Such was the class with which the experiment began on the 1st of May, 1917. For the first two weeks, in order to give the experiment a good start, by the courtesy of the Head Mistress, I spent much time with the class, assisting the class teacher with each reading lesson. The teacher was capable and sympathetic, and, owing to her splendid efforts, the class made remarkable headway.

“*At the end of six weeks* I was able to report: The work is making satisfactory progress, the children are already beginning to read easy sentences. That means *they are two or three months ahead of what they would be doing under normal spelling*. Now I felt that I could safely leave the work to the class teacher, who was by this time familiar with the scheme and quite enthusiastic because of the rapid progress that had been made. Within a fortnight, however, that is towards the end of June, the teacher fell ill, and had to undergo an operation, and she did not return to duty until the 1st of November. From the end of June to the summer holidays in August the class was left to the tender mercies of supply teachers, who knew nothing of Simplified Spelling, and who had no sympathy with it. In September, after the summer holiday, a new teacher was put in charge. This teacher was not unwilling to take up the experiment; but, not knowing the scheme or its possibilities, felt somewhat nervous, and diffident. The Head Mistress decided to stop the experiment, and for a time it was in abeyance. *The local Inspector, however, when appealed to, decided that the experiment must go on, and the teacher must do her best*. I again visited the class about the middle of October, to give the new teacher assistance, and I found the work almost at a standstill, and very little in advance of what it was at the beginning of July. The new teacher was an excellent embodiment of perseverance and sympathy, and only needed confidence and assurance. She soon picked up the scheme and set to work with commendable spirit. From this point the work again began to show signs of rapid progress.

“By the end of November, the *brighter children needed little or no teaching*. *They were able to discover words for themselves, and to make out the stories in the Ferst Reeder*. This self-help feature of the Simplified Spelling, by which the child of its own initiative discovers the words and, unaided, reads and understands sentences, did more to convince the class teacher of the immense advantages of Simplified Spelling than any amount of theorising could have done. Here was practical proof, and both the Head Mistress and the class teacher expressed surprise at the amount of work accomplished beyond anything they had expected or hoped for. Even the little girl who named every letter ‘ber’ at the beginning is now able slowly to make out words, and to read the simpler parts of the book; and the dullest children in the class have all read once through the whole of the *Ferst Reeder*. Some of the brighter children have almost finished the *Sekond Reeder*. If you will consider the difficult words which appear in the *Ferst Reeder*, I think you will agree that

for the whole class to read it through once is no mean accomplishment. Such words are to be met as 'afterwards, gathered, squirrels, curtains, violin, twinkle, together, journey, mountain, northern, music, pleasure, and feather.' Not a bad selection for five-year-old children.

"Thus far our experiment has gone. We have not yet reached what we anticipate will be the most difficult stage - the transition from the Simplified to the normal spelling; and, in the light of this experiment, it seems a pity that such a transition should ever have to be made. Everything in the experiment points to the fact that, whereas learning to read under normal conditions is a long and tedious process, extending more or less throughout the whole of school life, under the Simplified Spelling scheme a complete mastery of reading - except for the meanings of new and unfamiliar words - would be accomplished in the first two or three years. *When once the children have overcome the initial difficulties of associating sounds with signs there is nothing more to learn. The children can proceed on their own initiative to decipher any and every word.*

"So far, our experiment has been made mainly on the 'reading' side. The saving of time, and encouragement of individual initiative and self-reliance of the children, have been amply and practically proved. Yet, to my mind, the greatest advantage of Simplified Spelling lies in the writing or reproductive side. Reading appeals to the eye. Each word, regardless of its spelling, becomes a word picture. It is possible for me to recognise at a glance a person, place, or object, from a drawing; yet I may be quite incapable of reproducing that drawing even approximately. So it is with reading and spelling. The child may easily recognise a word in reading and yet be quite incapable of reproducing the word accurately in writing or spelling. To acquire this power of reproduction with the normal spelling the child has to undergo a course of spelling drill, with innumerable dictation exercises. Dictation exercises are at present a necessary but sinful waste of childhood and of teachers' time and effort. *Simplified Spelling ensures not only that a child recognises a word, but it gives him the power to reproduce the word without the wasteful drudgery and necessity of spelling drill, as it calls to his aid both visual memory and reason. In the old spelling, he who reasons is lost. During this experiment it has been repeatedly demonstrated and found possible for children to write correctly words which they had never before seen. How may people dare do that in the old spelling?*

"To sum up: the experiment, so far as it has gone, has been a decided success, realising all the expectations we hoped from it. The class teacher - to whom, it will be remembered, the scheme was strange, and who was nervous about undertaking the work - has now only praise to bestow upon Simplified Spelling. Her diffidence has vanished, and in its place there is a cheerful confidence. The teacher is now hopeful, and firmly convinced that during the next few months the class will advance far beyond the possibilities of work under normal spelling. The progress that has already been made clearly indicates that if Simplified Spelling were officially recognised and adopted, all spelling difficulties would be overcome by the time children had passed out of Standard I, which is the time under the old spelling when the real difficulties begin. *Spelling lessons could with safety be omitted from the time-table*, and as spelling occupies so much time in dictation and spelling exercises, in composition and in reading, think what a saving of energy and time there would be in the child's short school life. No longer need the child rely on his teacher or his spelling book: his own intelligence is sufficient."

Mr. P. L. Gray, H. M. I. reporting on the work done at this School by "two similar classes of very ignorant children, aged about five, one taught on ordinary lines, the other on Simplified Spelling," says: "It certainly appeared at the end of a year that the Simplified Spelling class could read more fluently and more advanced reading matter, than the ordinary class."

IX. - ELLERSLEA PRIVATE SCHOOL, VICTORIA PARK, MANCHESTER.

The following is a Report from Miss R. Lobel, dated 12th March, 1924:-

"We have used your method for teaching reading for some twelve months now, and I must say we *are more than delighted with it*. Quite apart from being quicker, *the methods interest the children*

much more and they enjoy their reading. The change from the Simplified to the usual method comes quite simply, and the children seem to forget all about the former, so that there is no danger of it interfering with their spelling.

"It may, perhaps, interest you to know that we had a good deal of opposition from parents at the beginning, and so we allowed them to choose which they would have, then. Now, however, after proving the simplified method, we have adopted it for all."

X. - LYONS COUNCIL SCHOOL, HETTON-LE-HOLE, DURHAM.

The sympathetic interest of Miss B. Davison enabled an experiment to be made in this School. Miss A. E. Thompson, who taught there, reported as follows on the experiment at this school:-

"We began our experiment on the 5th November, 1917, with a class of fifty children, whose ages ranged from six to seven years. Up to the time of beginning the experiment, the children had practised sounds from the Dale Reading Primers, so that they already knew many sounds common to both Simplified and Standard reading up to that stage.

"To begin with we made charts containing the vowels, consonants and digraphs, and the children worked at these till they knew them. This took two weeks. The children made good progress in remembering these sounds. As the number of spellings required for Simplified reading is much smaller than the number required for ordinary reading, the children always read all the sounds in one lesson, instead of spending the usual length of time necessary in the ordinary spelling.

"The children now began syllable-building with the sounds already learnt. Simple stories, simple poems, connected with the ordinary every-day life of the children, were printed on the blackboard. *The children made rapid headway and thoroughly enjoyed reading them.*

"The secret of their success lay in the fact that the children found they could easily make up their words and actually read as soon as they could do so. The moment when a child finds he can read and make words without any help is a great moment for him, for he knows he can proceed further himself and enter into storyland himself to find what is there. The children also had little Montessori games, which proved most interesting, for they found they could proceed alone, making up each word without help.

"On the 22nd of November we began reading from the *Ferst Reeder in Simplifyd Speling*, still practising the sounds from the sound chart at intervals. There was great excitement at the introduction of the *Ferst Reeder*, and the children were very keen indeed to read from it. This they did remarkably well. To the upper section of the class it presented no difficulty at all, by the lower section some of the longer words were slowly made, but every child could make the shorter words - and the longer ones only needed practice.

"At this point the children were greatly helped by the introduction of Manuscript Writing. The children printed exactly as they spoke as well as read exactly as they spoke, and at once they could do dictation.

"There was a drawback to this. The children in this district do not finish their words when speaking. It is a common fault to drop final letters and endings of words - for example, the children invariably wrote *an* for *and*, *singin* for *singing*, and so on. *The method of Simplified Spelling does a great deal to improve the ordinary speech of the child, and we have noticed a great improvement in that direction. Simplified Spelling, in fact, bringing the eye to the assistance of the ear, makes it possible to correct such mispronunciations in a systematic and scientific manner.*

"We finished the *Ferst Reeder* by the beginning of January, the children reading well - very well indeed, and they were ready for the *Sekond Reeder*. *The brighter children of the class needed no help in their reading.* This is one of the great advantages of a Simplified System, the child can

discover for himself, can read unaided; the dullest child of all being able to do this to some extent. A new world of interest is opened out to the child as soon as he can read unaided, and he finds he can do this very soon when the Simplified Method is taken - much sooner by far than in the ordinary method with its many hindrances, exceptions and difficulties. The old 'look and say' method entirely disappears, *the child can make every word, and finds himself master of every word, by his own intelligence and his own effort.*

"I often wondered, as the children made progress under the new method, how they would transfer to the ordinary spelling. We are just entering the transition stage. I have great faith now that it will be a great success. Several children have already told me they can read their story-books at home, and so now we give them ordinary story-books to read from. I quite believe the thorough training which Simplified Spelling gives the children will make the transition stage easy. They acquire a firm foundation - *know how to use their own power of building up words, speak much more clearly and read more fluently.*

"The experiment has been, and is, one of very special interest, and both children and teacher have been very happy in making it, which goes to prove the success of it as far as it has gone."

A further report was received from the same school:-

"The class was now divided for sectional work. On examination I found that there were two sections, two-thirds of the class reading very well and fluently from the Simplified Spelling Readers and from the blackboard in Simplified Spelling. Amongst this section were several children who at the beginning of the experiment in November made no attempt. This is worth noticing.

"The remaining third was composed of children who had been absent from school for long periods at a time on account of illness, and including two children who seem incapable of benefiting by mental training.

"The upper section were now given ordinary story-books and were allowed to read them alone, while the lower and smaller division continued with the Simplified Spelling Method.

"As the children in the upper division could read, and very fluently too, from the Simplified Readers, they at once tried to do the same from the ordinary book, in a way which was amazing to the teacher. The children had never been taught the ordinary spelling of a long sound, such as *gate, nice, rose, use*, etc., or such exceptional words as *might, brought, would*, etc., yet they did not hesitate to tackle them. Very often, as the child proceeded, the sense of the reading seemed to give the children the clue to these difficult words.

"As the children in the lower division reached the stage when they could read fluently from the Simplified Readers, they joined the upper division and proceeded on their own. It was found that these children who were behind on account of absence from school - a few really dull - only needed practice in reading to read fluently from the Simplified Spelling. Several of these children who reached the transition stage, after having a little further practice from the Simplified Method, then joined the upper division.

"The remaining two or three who have not yet reached this stage include a boy who had just returned after eight weeks, the two very dull boys referred to above - and now even they can make a fair attempt with the Simplified Spelling - and a little girl who has infantile paralysis.

"None of the children have had any practice in the various spellings of long sounds, peculiar words, etc., in the ordinary reading. There are none of these in the Simplified Method, yet the children can read fluently and well now from ordinary reading-books.

"The children have learnt to read in eight months, from November, 1918, to June, 1919, by first reading fluently from the Simplified Method, then transferring to the ordinary spelling, and being allowed to proceed on their own with the latter.

“The results can be summed up as follows:-

“The children can now read fluently, with the exception of two or three children, and a great number of the former read very fluently indeed, from books in the ordinary spelling, the transition stage having been more than successfully passed over. And these results, in spite of the fact that there have been many drawbacks on account of children’s absence from diseases, more than ordinary.

“And another important side, not to be neglected, is the amount of time saved on the part of the children and teacher - *less drudgery for the teacher, more interesting work for the children* - who find they can read sooner; even if the reading seems different from the ordinary, this does not matter to them, as at this age the child is only concerned with wanting to read, not of how the words appeal to him. There is a real saving of time which can be much more profitably spent . . . *In just over a month we have gone through the course, which by the other spelling takes at least a year.* The average age of the class is six years.”

XL. - NEW VILLAGE COUNCIL SCHOOL, WEST RIDING.

The Head Mistress wrote:-

“Many thanks for the Readers. We have tried the System for about three months *with splendid results*. With the help of the Readers we expect the progress will be doubled whilst the preparation will be halved.”

XII. - GRAMMAR SCHOOL, HALESOWEN, BIRMINGHAM.

Miss Eveline Matthias, a teacher in this School, wrote:-

“I have great pleasure in saying that I have found the experiment with Simplified Spelling most successful. I find it follows on so excellently after the learning of the Montessori Sounds, and it is possible with this method for children to do, as Dr. Montessori says they should, ‘burst into reading.’ I find *that children learn to read much more easily and much more quickly than children taught in the old way*. They are also able to reproduce their stories and poems in writing much earlier than children who have to wait until they have mastered the difficulties of English spelling.”

XIII. - ST CLEMENT’S SCHOOL, LONGSIGHT, MANCHESTER.

Mr. F. Ashworth, Chairman of District Committee No. 7, Manchester Education Committee (August, 1924), wrote:-

“I am pleased to confirm the success of the experiments we have conducted in the use of Simplified Spelling as an aid to reading.

“We continue to use the books of the Simplified Spelling Society, which we find helpful as preliminary to ordinary Readers.

“The reform of our spelling by the removal of even a few of its glaring inconsistencies would remove from the schools a difficulty which necessitates a wasteful expenditure of time and energy, and which is a constant source of irritation to all concerned.”

XIV. - THOMAS STRATTON INFANTS' SCHOOL, HULL.

Miss M. Brook, Head Mistress, wrote (August, 1924):-

"In reply to your letter of 20th August, asking for the result of my experiment in the use of the Simplified Spelling System as the basis of teaching reading, I have to say that, like others who have tried it, *I have found it thoroughly successful*. More than that, *the effect on the development of the children's character and capacity has been shown in greater self reliance, wider reasoning power, and stronger and more stable memory*. These results I did not expect when I began the experiment. *The changing over to the ordinary reading presents really very little difficulty, and the children certainly enjoy reading*. The teachers also like the system, and would be very sorry to have to go back to the old method.

"His Majesty's Inspector was not by any means prejudiced in its favour when he gave me permission to try the experiment, but when he tested the reading of the children who had just changed over, he said the result was 'eminently satisfactory.'"

XV. - BODENHAM SCHOOL, HEREFORD.

The following letters written in 1922, and 1924, by Mr. Wm. Mellers and Mr. C. F. Grant, show the successful results of the experiments in this school:-

From Mr. Wm. Mellers, Schoolhouse, Bodenham, Herefordshire, 10th October, 1922:-

"Next week we re-open, after six weeks' holiday for hop-picking, to commence work in earnest. Mr. Jackson may be interested to know that I am introducing his Simplified Spelling method of teaching Reading for *I think it is topping*. *Everyone who has seen its results says, 'How wonderfully well the children read.'* My own kiddie, a girl of six years old, can read an ordinary Standard II Reader (for eight years), intelligently and fluently, after passing through the S.S. course. Another schoolmaster here has enthusiastically taken it up after seeing the results."

From Mr. Wm. Mellers, 9th January, 1924:-

"Our Reading is progressing splendidly under the S.S. System. An Inspector said he had never in his experience seen children so advanced with their reading - *children seven years old reading books intended for children of nine*. We have also had a party of students from our local Training College, sent to see our methods - the first time this has taken place in the County."

From Mr. Wm. Mellers, 25th February, 1924:-

"Simplified Spelling as a time saver."

"In our Rural Schools the children in the Infants Class (range, five to seven years of age) are in the charge of a teacher without any scholastic qualification. Please note that. In the first school I introduced S.S. I found that after *twelve months of S.S. they were six months ahead of the standard required in City schools for that age; after two years - one year three months ahead, and after three years (or on completion of Infants' course), they were two years ahead*. They had covered Readers fluently and intelligently, which, in the ordinary course of events according to the publishers' age standard, would not have been completed until two years had passed. This is with a class of three sections, and I have often wondered how much progress could be made if a teacher had only one class.

"Since coming here I have had three changes within eighteen months, and, strange to say, the rate of progress is only two months behind the Lingen rate, and in two more years I am certain we shall equal if not pass, the Lingen standard.

"An Inspector told me he had never in the whole of his experience seen children so advanced in reading. The children were in no way exceptional. They live in thatched cottages, thrive on bread, cheese and cider (a family to be brought up on 23s. per week). It is the METHOD that is exceptional. Now as to our method. The Charts were taken in their set order, but special attention is given to 'ringing the changes' for a few minutes before a new lesson is commenced, for this practice acts as revision of previous lessons, and prepares the vocal organs for the pronunciation of new combinations of sounds. Then the transition stage. The teacher privately reads over the chapter for the day, and makes note of exceptions to the phonetic rule. Individual children are asked to read, and very often the exception is pronounced correctly - possibly because the child knows from the context what the word should be, but at the same time the unusual formation of the word makes an impression on the child's mind, and when silent reading takes place (at least once a day) the child looks up that funny word. If no error is made, there is no comment by the teacher, but if an unreasonable pause is made the teacher tells the word, and writes it on the blackboard with, perhaps, four or five others of a similar nature (e.g. wrote, write, wrap, wrong). These are then placed in sentences to make sure they understand the word. The children who can read them in any order later in the day are, perhaps, allowed out to play or home a few minutes before time. It is surprising how quickly they pick up the exceptions. Oe was the combination which caused trouble - goe for go, and groe for grow, and thoez for those.

"Until I can find a method which can show greater progress than the above, S.S. is the method by which Reading will be taught in any school under my control, and I wish to thank you very very much for introducing me to it in 1919."

From C. F. Grant, Bodenham School, 29th January, 1924:-

"When first I became acquainted with S. S., I was not favourably impressed, but now I should not care to be in an Infant School where the method was not in use. My interest was aroused when, after a few weeks, I saw what a delight the children took in the subject. The Reading lesson has now become a pleasure to all, instead of the drudgery with which it is regarded in schools in which I have been, where the old method of spelling is a wearying task to both teacher and taught.

"The progress of the dull child has revealed to me the superiority of teaching by the Simplified method. Working at his own pace, the dull child makes progress, while by the spelling method he loses interest because he cannot keep up with his brighter companions.

"As regards spelling, it is surprising how quickly the little ones forget the phonetic way. Mistakes do arise, sometimes through carelessness, but more often because the child is not thoroughly acquainted with the word. I have noticed that generally the word written wrongly is put as the child would sound it.

"It may be of interest if I add that on coming to Bodenham School, ten months ago, I was inexperienced as regards the teaching of Infants, and therefore felt nervous of the undertaking. However, the progress made in Reading (being more rapid than I had known elsewhere) seemed to awake in the little ones a deep interest, not in this subject alone, but in other branches of their work, and therefore half of the difficulties anticipated by myself were overcome."

XVI. - SOUTHALL STREET SCHOOL, MANCHESTER.

Miss M. Warrener, Head Mistress, wrote as follows, in September, 1924:-

*"Simplified Spelling, as arranged by your Society, has been in use here for about four years, and I have not yet found any other method to equal it as a means for teaching young children to read easily and fluently. For varying periods, according to the intelligence of the children, the classes read from *Jinglz* and *Storiz* and *Ferst Reeder*. When they take up the books printed in the ordinary spelling they seem to find no difficulty in reading at sight. I am amazed at the ease with which the*

transition is made, and I appreciate fully the saving in explanations and memory work which so often, in other methods, render the first lessons in reading dull and uninteresting. Our children like to read; they are reading fairy tales in the Simplified Spelling at a time when other children are trying to memorise words. The age for beginning is about 5½ years. Before the seventh birthday they can read with ease."

Footnotes

[1] It differed from this in the following respects: *ai*, *y*, *eu* and *er* were written for *ae*, *io*, *ue* and *ur* respectively, final *y* was written *i*, *oo* was used for the long *uu* as well as for the short *oo*, and in some of the experiments *th* was written for *dh*.

[2] See, for instance, R. Jackson, *Phonetics and Phonetic Texts in the Teaching of Reading*, in *Miscellanea Phonetica* published by the International Phonetic Association (1914).

[3] The late Mr. Robert Jackson, who was at the time Lecturer in Phonetics at the Training College, Dundee.

ALFABETIKAL LIST OV DHE NUE SPELING

a	- at; karry	ngg	- angger
aa	- faadher	nk	- think
ae	- aed, aer	o	- on, swon; sorry
ar	- star; stary	oe	- goez, loer
au	- aul	oi	- oil
b	- bat	oo ⁴	- good, poot
c	- (widhout <i>h</i> , oenly in proper naemz)	or	- or, dor; story
ch	- chat	ou	- out, sour
d	- dot	p	- pet
dh	- dhis	q	(oenly in proper naemz)
e	- end	r	- rat
ee ¹	- eel, kweer	s	- set
er ²	- sister	sh	- shut, akshon
f	- far	t	- ten
g	- get	th	- think
h	- hat	u	- us; hurry
i	- it	ue ⁵	- hue, kuer
ie ³	- fien, fier	ur	- bum, furst; sturing
j	- jet, loj	uu	- fuud, ruul, puur
k	- kat, kiten	v	- van
kh	- Scotch lokh	w	- wet
l	- let	wh	- when
m	- met	x	(oenly in proper naemz)
n	- net	y	- yet; empty, emptying
ng	- sing, singer	z	- zeel, goez
		zh	- vizhon

¹ Reduest fomaz in *be*, *dhe*, *he*, *nze*, *she*, *we*.

² Sheshal ues in *wer*.

³ Reduest form in *l*.

⁴ Reduest form in *to*.

⁵ Reduest form in *U* = you).

N.B. - Dhe sekond komponent ov *as*, *ee*, *ie*, *oe*, *ue* iz dropt befor anudher vouel: *saing*, *seing*, *liing*, *going*, *duing*.
R iz dubld aafter short *a*, *o*, *u*: *karry*, *sorry*, *hurry*.