

a dress of serge and striped material, which may be copied in silk, satin, or cashmere, or may be used as a model for retrimming an old dress of a past fashion. The young girl standing up shows the fashionable "visite"-shaped mantle for walking, and also for opera and carriage mantles. The model is made in a checked melton cloth, with bright threads of colour. They may be trimmed with bands of fur and feather trimming, but the most lady-like way of finishing them is to put on a wide band of plain velvet, to match the cloth in colour. The model shown is made with the new "sling," or "Bernhardt sleeves," which fall from the neck like a pair of bags. It will be noticed that in this illustration I have carefully avoided giving the too-much worn "Henri III.," or "French hat," but have selected instead felt, or smooth silk plush, like a riding-habit, turned up at the side and placed upon the head—not at the back of it—as the French hats are now worn. To tell the truth, now that young girls have donned their fur capes, if they wear the hat at the back of the head, and do not hold themselves well, the effect of the figure is shocking on all sides except the front. Very few girls hold themselves as well as the young lady on the extreme left; but there is generally nothing but laziness to prevent a girl holding herself as erect as a Greek goddess.

Winter jackets are both pretty and moderate in price. The prettiest are perhaps those made in ottoman cloths, in indigo bronze, and dark crimson, with collars, cuffs, and flaps for the pockets in velvet. The edges of the smooth cloths are often scalloped and bound. Dark crimson jackets, mantles, visites, and jerseys are quite new, and look warm and comfortable. The jerseys have a thick rib, and may be worn as out-of-door jackets, and they have cords looped across, from shoulder to shoulder in front, and interlaced cords behind. Cords are used in the same way on redingotes of thick serge, matelassé and ottoman; but I must not forget to say that they are not used this winter in velvet or brocade silk, but they are nearly always of a woollen material, which may be fur or feather-trimmed, or have bands of velvet. They are not opened at the back, but have lots of fulness added by pleats, and the sleeves are large and open. There is usually a cape to them, but this is quite optional.

Stripes are the most fashionable design in woollen materials, and they are of rather uncertain outlines, but in silks and in skirtings for petticoats they are very well defined and marked in colour; blue and dark-red, and yellow and black being favourite mixtures. Large spots, or "wafers," are also new; and then there is a pretty uncertain-looking cashmere, with palm leaves and pines, called (I believe) Lackmé. Cashmere and satin-cloth are both popular, without any trimming except feather bands to match. Cross-stitch embroidery cloth, the patterns of which are carried out in that stitch, woven in the material, are very pretty, and should be trimmed with a plain material of the same kind.

By this time I must say a little about colours. For this winter they are more popular than they ever have been, and they are certainly prettier than we have had them for a long, long time. Green is the most fashionable hue; but this month I notice a great evidence of feeling in favour of the new smoky greys, which are called by most of the first-class drapers "London smoke;" a very elegant colour, becoming to most people, and likely to wear satisfactorily, and look well for a long time.

Many yellows are also worn, both in dress and millinery. A deep yellow called "Mandarin" is very handsome; and so is another called "*flamme de feu*," which is really an

orange, with the deep-red firelight-hue on it. The list of greys which I have seen shows how fashionable this colour is likewise in all varieties, as well as "London smoke," "Wrought iron," "flint," "poppy-seed," are all names that explain themselves, as they are very descriptive. "Devonshire earth" and "tomato red" are both warm-looking, and pretty; and there are several new browns, such as "chamois," "Norwich pippin," and "dun-colour," which will be useful in winter wear.

I must give a few words to ladies' umbrellas, which may be seen in endless varieties as to handles, but the coverings are usually of black or dark brown silks. Large balls are much used for handles, in onyx, carnelian, or painted porcelain. "Barbotine" painting is, I fancy, the latest introduction. Then there are silver balls, and crooks of considerable size; and a large ring-handle in silver, which is very popular, and worn on the wrist.

The newest dress-buttons are very tiny, and are made of bone, pearl, or metal. If black buttons be used, they should be dull in colour, and of the size of a pea.

Gauntlet gloves are still very popular, but the gloves most generally worn appear to be the long stout chevette gloves, in tea-colour and yellow. Slate-coloured *gants de Suède* are worn very extensively with black costumes. In general, the gloves are drawn over the dress sleeve, and the most fashionable ladies have their gloves of silk and suède to match the dress in hue, grey only being worn with black dresses.

In stockings there are mixtures of various colours to match the dress, and these are in wide ribs, or else quite plain. The checked stockings to match the dresses in the new plaids I do not fancy at all, nor do I think they will be popular. For the evening, silk stockings to match the shoes are worn, or if the dress be white, then both must be white. Bronze silk stockings are worn with bronze kid shoes, and long bronze silk or Suède gloves may go with them. However, white kid gloves seem now to be universally preferred at night.

In my two small illustrations I have endeavoured to give an idea of bonnets which should be a little novel, and out of the usual "princesse" style. The figure with her back turned to us, and wearing a fur cape, wears also a straw bonnet, which I have had drawn more especially that our girl-milliners may make bonnets easily from it. The newest straw bonnets for the autumn and winter are shot, and these are trimmed, like my illustration, with dark velvet of the same colour as the darkest shade of the straw. The brim is lined with plain velvet, and the outside edge may be plain, or filled-on in box-pleats. Two or three small coloured tips are placed at the top, or else some of the new velvet leaves may be used. The other bonnet, with the open front, is lined with black or coloured velvet; the bonnet itself being of felt. The crown is of velvet laid in folds, and the strings are of velvet also. The only extra trimming consists of the three feather tips. The seated figure shows a striped evening bodice and overskirt; with a full plastron, and *ruche* of black lace.

We find both velvet and velveteen are very largely employed this year for mixing with woollen costumes, as bias trimmings laid on flatly, or as entire costumes in all colours of the rainbow; but in the best shops I notice that only "London smoke" and browns are being made up; with the exception of a few greens, not even black being liked for making up into a whole dress.

And now my last lines must be devoted to the home dressmaking, which is sure to be going on very largely this month; and I must try to help it on its way successfully by various suggestions which may be of use. The new

dress-skirts are much easier to make than those that preceded them, as the stuff is used much plainer and is not puckered nor *plissé*. The skirts in general are simpler than they were, and hang in longer and more graceful lines—many of them being made up quite straight, without any foundation; others have box-pleats at intervals; others are plain all round, save at one place at the side, where they are opened to show several box-pleats beneath. Some skirts are made with three box-pleated flounces, others with four; but a great deal of skirt is shown however they may be made, as the overskirts are very short and the polonaises are draped high at the back as well as at the front. Neither the folds nor drapery of any skirts are full or bunched, and the back drapery hangs down, in some instances, quite straight, in others in loops of simple form. Kilted skirts are still worn in stripes and plaids; and for some light and thin woollens I have seen three bias flounces made, which were edged with velvet. Ribbon-velvet is still run on in rows along the edge of deep kilts; from three to five rows being used, and placed very closely together. The same style is adopted for the edges of polonaises, which are made of woollen materials. The last-named article of dress is increasing greatly in favour, and there is an immense variety of shapes. Those with plastrons, and those without; those with waistcoats, "Fedora bibs," and cross-cut fronts; and there are some raised very high on the hips, like a Watteau tunic. All bodices are cut very short in front, and very short also over the hips; and there is very little back-drapery—merely a habit-back. In the first figure in the large illustration the basque is put on at the waist, and extends from the back nearly to the front points, and is finished by two narrow ribbon sashes, which are tied in front in a loose bow and ends. Braided serge is in high favour for walking and travelling dresses, and when braided the bodices are quite plain, otherwise not full in front, nor made with a waistcoat. Sleeves are still worn rather short, not less than two or three inches above the wrist. They are cut in a plain coat-shape, and are small at the wrist.

Most people are glad to find that time brings no increase in the size of the crinolette; and that they need not fear the introduction of the full-blown crinoline. From the first the use of an outrageous, or "loud" crinolette has marked the person as vulgar and extreme in taste; and lately, two steels only have been put into the top of the dress-skirt by the best houses; and at the top, under the basque, a small pad, or mattress of horsehair, is added to lift up the weight of the dress-gathers. Few people who care for their looks wear the ordinary "dress improver," but have the steels put into their dresses, or in their petticoats.

To my mind, dress was never more elegant, or less obtrusive and extreme, than at present. Whenever we see extremes, we may set their ugliness down to the lack of taste of the wearer; not to the fault of Dame Fashion, if rightly and modestly followed, and at that distance which ensures self-respect, and a due regard for our circumstances and positions in life.

COMMON ERRORS IN DAILY LIFE.

By JAMES MASON.

II.—ERRORS IN SPELLING.

MANY of us, girls, otherwise well educated, are decidedly weak in our spelling, and experience much the same difficulty as the old lady who declared that she knew her letters well enough, but it was the putting them to-

gether that bothered her. Very few can even pass successfully through that time-honoured ordeal of a winter's fireside when, after conundrums are played out and all are tired of round games, someone says: "Can anybody spell 'It is remarkable to perceive the unparalleled embarrassment of a harassed pedlar gauging the symmetry of an ecstatic pony eating peeled potatoes?'"

At the same time, it is generally allowed that not to spell well is disgraceful, and when Jane said to me yesterday of Josephine, "She can't even spell!" she meant, and I quite understood, that on Josephine's character there was a blot impossible to overlook and difficult to excuse. Errors in spelling are amongst those mistakes which good breeding often forbids our pointing out, but don't take up the notion that what we are not told of we need take no pains to mend. You have no idea how the ill-natured chuckle among themselves when some dear friend writes "vegetables" with a *d* or drops a *b* out of "cabbages."

But, whilst it is held to be a shame to spell ill, truth compels one to own that spelling is about the weakest point in modern education. When this is considered, society should see a good reason for changing its tune, and for only holding it a shame to spell *very* ill. It is not so long ago that out of one thousand nine hundred and seventy-two failures in the Civil Service Examinations, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six candidates were plucked for spelling; that is to say, out of every nineteen who failed, eighteen came to grief in the subject of which we are speaking.

There is no doubt about it: to spell rightly is exceedingly difficult. You ask, why? Well, girls, to begin with, we have an insufficient alphabet. In English there are thirty-eight different sounds, but to represent these we have, as you know, only twenty-six letters. Then three of these letters, *c*, *g*, and *x*, are useless: *c* can be replaced by *s* or *k*; *g* by *kw*; and *x* by *ks*. This reduces the number of useful letters to twenty-three, and we can only get these to represent all the sounds of the language either by combining them or by making a single letter do duty for two or more sounds.

In managing this, caprice has been much more active than common sense. There is no end to the eccentricities of English spelling, and the most ludicrous discrepancies exist between words as they are written and as they are pronounced. After hearing a word no one can tell with certainty how it is spelt, or on seeing it spelt tell how it is to be sounded. It has been said by an authority on the subject, that out of the fifty thousand words in most common use it is questionable whether fifty of them are spelt as they are spoken, or whether more than two thousand or three thousand altogether observe any moderate degree of uniformity between their construction and pronunciation.

Long ago there was no fixed mode of spelling; every writer and every printer trusted to his own ear and followed his own fancy. In some old books we even find the same word spelt two or three different ways in the same page. John Tyndale, the translator of the New Testament, spelt "it" in no fewer than eight ways:—*hyt*, *hytt*, *hit*, *hitt*, *it*, *itt*, *yt*, *ytt*. Another author gave his readers the choice of five ways of spelling "tongue": *tung*, *tong*, *tunge*, *tonge*, *tounge*. Gradually, however, one form came to be the standard for each word, and it is a great pity that that form seems in many cases to have been the choice either of chance or ignorance.

In studying spelling, then, do not be surprised to find that eccentricity runs riot, and that rules are often rendered almost useless by the number of exceptions. It might be worse;

however, and what can't be cured, you know, must be endured.

Some people, however, are not so patient, and regard the lawlessness of our spelling with disgust and indignation. "Why," says one writer, "but one *p* in *copy* and two in *sloppy*? One *n* in *proper* and two in *copper*? One *l* in *ply* and two in *ditty*? One *l* in *control* and two in *enroll*? One *z* in *lizard* and two in *izzard*? One *f* in *clef* and two in *cliff*? Why one *l* in *propel* and two in *foretell*, and two with an *e* in *gazelle*? Why an *o* in *prison* and none in *prism*? Why a *b* at the end of one's *thumb* and none in *drum*? Why *ea* in *speak* and *ee* in *speech*? Why is there a *t* in *witch* and none in *which*? Why an *o* in *touch* and none in *much*? Why an *ou* in *scourge*, *u* in *urge*, *i* in *dirge*, and *e* in *merge*? Why *z* in *breeze* and *s* in *cheese*? And why the letter *e* three times to one sound of *e* in either word? Of what use the *y* in *play*, the *o* in *people*, the *ea* in *beauty*, the *o* in *you*, the *w* in *flow*, the *e* in *foe*, the *i* in *friend*, the *u* in *guide*, the *o* in *double*, the *ch* in *schism*, the *e* in *true*, the *ue* in *plague*, the *b* in *doubt*?"

There are nowadays not a few reformers (Mr. Isaac Pitman, of Bath, the inventor of phonography, for example, to name one of the most thorough going) who advocate a complete revolution in spelling. Convinced that the present system is, as Max Müller says, "unhistorical, unsystematic, unintelligible, and unteachable," they would have people adopt a new method, based on fixed principles, in which every sound would be represented in a way impossible to mistake. I am not going to discuss that system here, but it may prove interesting to give an example of it. The following sentences, however, are only printed in the reformed spelling, to a certain extent: to represent many of the sounds phonetically would require new letters.

"Wün ov the weizest sayinz ei hav met with iz thát ov a filosofer, himself famús for invenshonz, who sed he shud leik sümthing niu everi day. This degree ov hapines it iz not given tu mortalz tu enjoi. We may, perhaps, hope for it in the futiur leif. Ei nó ov nütting hwich more heitzenz the joi ov leif than disküveriz and invenshonz—sümthing niu and true and useful, and espheshali hwen we hav a hand in it ourselvz."

The difficulties of English spelling are brought home to the foreigner learning our language in a way which we, who have been familiar with them from our earliest years, seldom think of. The simplicity of the grammatical structure of English would make it one of the easiest languages to learn, if it were not for the absurdities and contradictions of its spelling. A dialogue between a Frenchman at his studies and his tutor used often to be quoted by way of excuse for a foreigner's bad English, and it illustrates the subject so well that I insert it here:

Frenchman. Ha, my good friend; I have met with one difficulty—one very strange word. How do you call h-o-u-g-h?

Tutor. Huff.

Fr. Très bien, huff; and snuff you spell, s-n-o-u-g-h, ha!

Tutor. Oh, no; snuff is s-n-u-double f. The fact is, words ending in ough are a little irregular.

Fr. Ah, ver' good. 'Tis beautiful language. H-o-u-g-h is huff; I will remember; and c-o-u-g-h, cuff. I have one bad cuff, ha!

Tutor. No, that is wrong. We say kauf, not cuff.

Fr. Kauf, eh bien. Huff and kauf; and, pardonnez moi, how you call d-o-u-g-h—duff, ha!

Tutor. No, not duff.

Fr. Not duff? Ah! oui; I understand: is dauf, hey!

Tutor. No, d-o-u-g-h spells doe.

Fr. Doe! It is ver' fine; wonderful lan-

guage; it is doe; and t-o-u-g-h is toe, certainement. My beefsteak was ver' toe.

Tutor. Oh, no, no; you should say tuff.

Fr. Tuff? and the thing the farmer uses, how you call him, p-l-o-u-g-h, pluff? Ha! you smile; I see I am wrong; it is plauf? No? Ah, then it is ploe, like doe; it is beautiful language, ver' fine—ploe.

Tutor. You are still wrong, my friend; it is plow.

Fr. Plow! Wonderful language! I shall understand ver' soon. Plow, doe, kauf; and one more—r-o-u-g-h, what you call Bismarck; rauf and ready! No? certainement it is row and ready!

Tutor. No; r-o-u-g-h spells ruff.

Fr. Ruff, ha! Let me not forget. R-o-u-g-h is ruff, and b-o-u-g-h is buff, ha!

Tutor. No, bove.

Fr. 'Tis ver' simple, wonderful language; but I have had what you call e-n-o-u-g-h! Ha! what you call him?

No wonder the Frenchman was puzzled by the sound of ough. It illustrates indeed a striking inconsistency of the English language. Instead of having always the same sound, it has a different one in nearly every word in which it occurs. Take, by way of a spelling exercise, the following cheerful couplet:—

"Though the rough cough and hiccough
plough me through,

O'er life's dark lough my way I will pursue."

One of the first difficulties of spelling is in connection with useless letters: letters which, for all the influence they have on sound, might as well be away. To write them seems only a waste of power. They do not assert themselves, and, like girls whose bashfulness keeps them in the background, they are apt to be overlooked and forgotten. In head, health, wealth, we have examples of silent *a*'s; then we have silent *u*'s in climb, crumb, dumb, numb, debt, doubt, subtle, and a host of other words.

C's, to give a few more illustrations, are superfluous in such words as scene, scent, sceptre, scissors, and victuals; *ch*'s in drachm, schism, yacht; *e*'s, when following a short vowel, in such words as have, give, fertile, infinite; *g*'s in gnat, gnash, gnome, feign, sovereign, consign, design, resign, impugn, phlegm; *gh*'s in neighbour, blight, delight, fight, night, fraught, bought, thought; *h*'s in rhapsody, rhetorical, rheumatism, rhinoceros, rhubarb, rhyme, shepherd, Thomas, Thames; *k* in knave, knee, knife, knit; *l* in could, calf, half; *n* in autumn, condemn, hymn, solemn; *o* in arduous, double, trouble; *p* in psalm, pseudo, corps, raspberry; *s* in aisle, island, viscount; and *w* in wrap, wrought, wren, wrinkle, and wriggle.

The next difficulty to be alluded to is when the same sound is represented by different letters or different combinations of letters. We have examples of this difficulty in such words as complete and repeat, peach and speech, concrete and discreet, conceit and receipt, proceed and recede. *O* again is represented several different ways, as in *note*, *boat*, *crow*, and *toe*; and as for *e*, the most frequent sound in the language, it may be given in at least twenty distinct forms: *He*, *meal*, *heave*, *league*, *intrigue*, *meet*, *replete*, *sleeve*, *receive*, *conceit*, *people*, *key*, *foetus*, *machine*, *invalid*, *grief*, *grieve*, *quay*, *mosquito*, together with the singular caprices of *Beauchamp* and *Caius College*.

The greatest pains should be taken to master this difficulty. Sound, you see, is very misleading so far as spelling is concerned. The provincial magistrate found that out who one day at a public dinner gave as a toast "the two K's," meaning the King and the Constitution.

A great many whole words are pronounced alike, but differ in orthography as well as in signi-

finance, and these must be mastered if one wants to be a good speller. It is confusing, however, when one has to spell the same sound say three different ways, as when writing that "It is easy to *pare* an apple or a *pear* with a *pair* of scissors." Vale, vail, veil, are words of this sort; so are waste and waist; you, yew, and ewe; so, sow, and sew; rite, right, and write; mite and might; lade and laid; high and hie; gate and gait. Unless we are very careful there is always a danger in such words of representing the right sound by the wrong spelling.

Next, it must be pointed out, there are some troublesome words which, although they differ in meaning, pronunciation, and spelling, often give rise to mistakes. A few of these are the following:—

accept	for	except
accede	"	exceed
currant	"	current
dissent	"	descent
eruption	"	irruption
lineament	"	liiment
missal	"	missile
monetary	"	monitory
ordnance	"	ordnance
spacious	"	specious
tract	"	track

Of some words the orthography is still unsettled, and we enjoy a choice of spellings. Usually, however, we can point to one way or another as that sanctioned by the majority, and to that it is always safest to adhere. To cast in one's lot with the minority is, in matters indifferent, usually a mistake. Sail with the stream is a sure rule for an easy life. In everything? No, I do not say that.

"In words, as fashion, the same rule will hold,

Alike fantastic if too new or old;

Be not the first by whom the new are tried,

Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."

In words ending in *our* the *u* is often dropped, as in honor, favor, neighbor. Is this practice right, or is it wrong? The innovation has taken such fast hold that everyone may drop the *u* or retain it, just as it pleases herself. It is useless to the orthography; but in that it is no worse than a great many other letters are at odd times, as we have seen.

The *u*, of course, is dropped by everybody when such words are written as honorary, humorous, humorsome, laborious, rigorous, valorous, and vigorous.

We now come to speak of the terminations *ise* and *ize*, and on this subject I shall quote the author of "The Queen's English." "How are we to decide," says Dean Alford, "between *s* and *z* in such words as anathemat(i)s or z)e, cauteri(s or z)e, critici(s or z)e, deodori(s or z)e, dogmati(s or z)e, fraterni(s or z)e, and the rest? Many of those are derived from Greek verbs ending in *izo*, but more from French verbs ending in *iser*. It does not seem easy to come to a decision. Usage varies, but has not pronounced positively in any case. It seems more natural to write *anathematize* and *cauterize* with the *z*, but *criticize* is commonly written with the *s*. I remember hearing the late Dr. Donaldson give his opinion that they ought all to be written with *s*. But in the present state of our English usage the question seems an open one."

The same writer has a word to say on the doubt which exists in the public mind as to how to spell the two words *ecstasy* and *apostasy*. "The former of these, especially," he remarks, "is a puzzle to our composers and journalists. Is it to be *extasy*, *extacy*, *ecstasy*, or *ecstasy*? The question is at once decided for us by the Greek root of the word. This is *ecstasis*, a standing, or position, out of, or

beside, one's self. The same is the case with *apostasy*. The root of this is *apostasis*, a standing off or away from a man's former position. Consequently *ecstasy* (or if we prefer it, *extasy*) and *apostasy* are right, not those forms which end in *cy*.

Here are some other words of unsettled orthography; the form put first is the more common of the two:

Abetter, abettor; abridgment, abridgement; almanac, almanack; ancient, antient; apothegm, apophthegm; brazier, brasier; carbine, carabine; centipede, centiped; checker, chequer; chemist, chymist; clarinet, clarinet; corpse, corse; despatch, dispatch; endorse, indorse; ensure, insure; expense, expence; foundry, foundery; jail, gaol; gipsy, gypsy; gray, grey; harebrained, hairbrained; hiccup, hiccup; immovable, immoveable; endure, indure; inquire, enquire; judgement, judgment; licence, license; movable, moveable; potato, potatoe; rosin, resin; sergeant, serjeant.

There are scarcely any words, to speak of another class of errors, in which a mistake is more frequently made than in *peas* and *pease*, yet the distinction between them is simple and well defined. *Peas* is the plural of *pea*, and consequently only follows numeral adjectives; as "ten peas," "a hundred peas," a "few peas," "many peas;" but *pease* is used when speaking of the legumen in the aggregate or generally. Thus, we correctly say, "*Pease* are dear this year;" "*pease* were plentifully supplied to the horses." *Pease* is also used adjectively; as, *pease*-pudding, *pease*-soup, or *pea*-soup."

The next common error to be noticed is connected with the use of *ei* and *ie*, which are very often wrongly substituted the one for the other. The rule is this: If the diphthong have the sound of *ee*, after *c* comes *e*, and after any other letter *i* comes first, except *either*, *neither*, *seize*, *leisure*, *weird*, and most proper names. Of course if you pronounce *either* and *neither* *i*ther and *n*iher, and *leisure* *lezure*, these words are withdrawn from the list of exceptions.

Beware of falling into this error, for the rule is so simple and the exceptions are so few, that one is left without excuse. I remember a young man who took a violent fancy to a girl much beneath him in position. Chance separated him from her for a time. During his absence she wrote to him, at his own earnest request; and every one of her letters ended, "Dear Tom, beleive me, etc." Now that "ei" did more than all the entreaties of his friends and all the warnings of his parents. It opened his eyes to the fact that she would never do for him, and fortunately he had not gone so far but that he could retire without disgrace.

Those of you who are given to using interjections are sometimes puzzled as to the use of "O" and "Oh." *Oh* should be used to express surprise, pain, sorrow, or anxiety. When the interjection, however, is followed by a proper name or an exclamation of wishing, then the "O" should be employed simply, thus: O, my dear Molly! O, that I could make up my mind what to do!

Words ending in *o* are sometimes troublesome, and it is as well to remember that the rule is that when the *o* is preceded by a vowel they take *s* in the plural, as *cameo*, *cameos*; *studio*, *studios*; *folio*, *folios*. But when the *o* is preceded by a consonant they generally take *es* in the plural; for example—*echo*, *echoes*; *fresco*, *frescoes*; *motto*, *mottoes*; *volcano*, *volcanoes*. Unfortunately, this rule has about thirty exceptions, which take *s* only.

Speaking of plurals reminds one of the difficulty connected with the plural of nouns ending in *y*. Here there is a rule, about which there is no trouble: if the *y* is preceded by a vowel the plural is formed by

simply adding *s*, as *money*, *moneys*; *attorney*, *attorneys*; *donkey*, *donkeys*; *valley*, *valleys*. But if the *y* is preceded by a consonant, the plural is formed by changing the *y* into *ies*, as *city*, *cities*; *daisy*, *daisies*.

Double letters, in forming the past participle of a verb, are a stumbling-block to most people, and to write *benefitted* for *benefited* is a common error. "The fact is," says one writer, "that this doubling only takes place in a syllable on which the accent is laid, and the purpose of it is to ensure the right pronunciation. If the participle of quit were spelt *quited*, it would be pronounced as in *requited*, and would lose the sound of its verb; whereas by spelling it *quitted*, that sound is retained. And so of fit, rebel, abhor, and other words of the same kind. But when the syllable has no accent on it, the reduplication is not needed, for there can be but one way of pronouncing it; we might as well make the participle of remember, *rememberred*, as that of benefit, *benefitted*."

In writing words beginning with the prefix *dis* or *mis*, mistakes are sometimes made either by the omission or the insertion of an *s*. Such errors may be easily avoided by considering whether the word to which *dis* or *mis* is prefixed begins with *s*. If it does, of course the *s* of the prefix must be retained, and there will be two *s*'s, as in *dissolve*, *dissipate*, *misspell*, *misshapen*. Should the word not begin with *s*, there will just be one *s* when the prefix is added, as *disarm*, *disease*, *mistake*, *misconstrue*, *misdeameanour*.

Errors are often made in the spelling of proper names. At one time, indeed, in the history of our country the strangest discrepancies existed in the names of persons, not only as written by their friends, but by themselves. Disraeli, in his "Amenities of Literature," mentions that Queen Elizabeth's favourite, Leicester, spelt his name no fewer than eight different ways. The name Villiers is spelt fourteen different ways in the deeds of that family. "The simple dissyllabic but illustrious name of Percy, the Bishop of Dro-more found in family documents they had contrived to spell in fifteen different ways."

But these variations are nothing compared with those which have been discovered in authorized documents of the name of the family of Mainwaring, of Power. There are one hundred and thirty-one of them, while Shakespeare's name has been spelt in thirty-four different ways.

Here we must pause, girls, though the study of spelling is far from exhausted. Enough, however, has perhaps been said to show that the subject is one both interesting and useful, and to send you to books in which it is treated at length. Remember, however, that spelling is not to be learned by committing many rules to memory. They but confuse your head, and you get into a worse fog by means of the exceptions.

The surest road to spelling well is to read and to write much, and to find out for yourselves the derivations of the words. Whoever lives in the society of books is not likely to go very far wrong with her orthography. Even should she put down a word wrongly, she is pretty sure to recognise the error. She may not be able to tell exactly how the word is wrong, but that it is wrong she has no doubt, and in that case the only way is to refer to the dictionary.

But, even though you grow the best speller in the world, never grow conceited about it. Pride comes before a fall, and I remember once calling at a house where the father (if the family was delivering a lecture to his daughters on spelling, and pointing to himself as an example worthy of imitation. Alas! the very next day I had a note from him asking me to meet him at the Crystal Palace, and he spelt Crystal with a "Ch"!