Society for Pure English Tract 4 eBook

Society for Pure English Tract 4

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Society for Pure English Tract 4 eBook....1

Contents....2

Table of Contents....4

Page 1....5

Page 2....7

Page 3....8

Page 4....9

Page 5....10

Page 6....11

Page 7....12

Page 8....13

Page 9....14

Page 10....15

Page 11....16

Page 12....17

Page 13....19

Page 14....20

Page 15....22

Page 16....23

Page 17....25

Page 18....26

Page 19....28

Page 20....30

Page 21....32

Page 22....34

Page 23.....36
Page 24.....38
Page 25.....40
Page 26.....42
Page 27.....44
Page 28.....45
Page 29.....46
Page 30.....48
Page 31.....50
Page 32.....52
Page 33.....53
Page 34.....54
Page 35.....55
Page 36.....57

BOOKRAGS

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Start of eBook	1
	1
THE PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH WORDS DERIVED FROM THE LATIN	1
WITH PREFACE AND NOTES BY H. BRADLEY	1
ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH WORDS DERIVED FROM LATIN	1
MISCELLANEOUS NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE	25
THE SKILFUL LEECH	26
DIFFERENTIATION OF HOMOPHONES	28
METAL, METTLE: AND PRINCIPAL, PRINCIPLE	28
CORRECTION TO TRACT II	29
HERAUSGEGEBEN	29
DER “ASSOCIATION PHON[’E]TIQUE INTERNATIONALE” GEWIDMET	29
SOME LEXICAL MATTERS	29
BRATTLE	29
BICKER	30
BRANGLE	31
SURVIVALS IN LANCASHIRE SPEECH	31
FEASIBLE	31
PROTAGONIST	32
AMERICAN APPRECIATION	33
’THE CAMPAIGN FOR PURE ENGLISH	33
REPORT	34
LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS	35
FINIS	36

BOOKRAGS

Page 1

Title: Society for Pure English Tract 4 The Pronunciation of English Words Derived from the Latin

Author: John Sargeaunt

Annotator: H. Bradley

Release Date: March 15, 2005 [EBook #15364]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

*** *Start of this project gutenberg* EBOOK *society for pure English tract* 4 ***

Produced by David Starner, William Flis, and the Online
Distributed Proofreading Team.

Transcriber's Note: Phonetic characters are represented by the following symbols:

[`x] = any letter "x" with grave accent
['x] = any letter "x" with acute accent
[:x] = any letter "x" with superior double-dot (dieresis)
[^x] = any letter "x" with superior circumflex
[=x] = any letter "x" with superior macron
[)x] = any letter "x" with superior breve
[e] = inverted "e" or schwa
[ae], [oe] = ae, oe ligature characters
[=xy] = any pair of letters "xy" with joining macron, except
[=*oe*], [=ae] = *oe*, ae ligature characters with macron and
['oe], ['ae] = oe, ae ligature characters with acute accent and
[)xy] = any pair of letters "xy" with joining breve, except
[)*ae*], [)ae], [)*oe*], [)oe] = *ae*, ae, *oe*, oe ligature characters with breve
[^1] = raised "1", *etc*.

S.P.E. TRACT NO. IV

THE PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH WORDS DERIVED FROM THE LATIN

BY JOHN SARGEAUNT

WITH PREFACE AND NOTES BY H. BRADLEY

Correspondence & miscellaneous notes by H.B., R.B., W.H.F., *And editorial*

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS MDCCCCXX

ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH WORDS DERIVED FROM LATIN

[This paper may perhaps need a few words of introduction concerning the history of the pronunciation of Latin in England.

The Latin taught by Pope Gregory's missionaries to their English converts at the beginning of the seventh century was a living language. Its pronunciation, in the mouths of educated people when they spoke carefully, was still practically what it had been in the first century, with the following important exceptions. 1. The consonantal *u* was sounded like the *v* of modern English, 2. The *c* before front vowels (*e*, *i*, *o*, *[ae]*, *[oe]*), and the combinations *t[)i]*, *c[)i]* before vowels, were pronounced *ts*. 3. The *g* before front vowels had a sound closely resembling that of the Latin consonantal *i*. 4. The *s* between vowels was pronounced

Page 2

like our *s*. 5. The combinations *[ae]*, *[oe]* were no longer pronounced as diphthongs, but like the simple *e*. 6. The ancient vowel-quantities were preserved only in the penultima of polysyllables (where they determined the stress); in all other positions the original system of quantities had given place to a new system based mainly on rhythm. Of this system in detail we have little certain knowledge; but one of its features was that the vowel which ended the first syllable of a disyllabic was always long: *p[=a]ter*, *p[=a]trem*, *D[=e]us*, *p[=i]us*, *[=i]ter*, *[=o]vis*, *h[=u]mus*.

Even so early as the beginning of the fifth century, St. Augustine tells us that the vowel-quantities, which it was necessary to learn in order to write verse correctly, were not observed in speech. The Latin-speaking schoolboy had to learn them in much the same fashion as did the English schoolboy of the nineteenth century.

It is interesting to observe that, while the English scholars of the tenth century pronounced their Latin in the manner which their ancestors had learned from the continental missionaries, the tradition of the ancient vowel-quantities still survived (to some extent at least) among their British neighbours, whose knowledge of Latin was an inheritance from the days of Roman rule. On this point the following passage from the preface to [AE]lfric's Latin Grammar (written for English schoolboys about A.D. 1000) is instructive:—

Miror ualde quare multi corripiunt sillabas in prosa quae in metro breues sunt, cum prosa absoluta sit a lege metri; sicut pronuntiant *pater* brittonice et *malus* et similia, quae in metro habentur breues. Mihi tamen uidetur melius inuocare Deum Patrem honorifice producta sillaba quam brittonice corripere, quia nec Deus arti grammaticae subiciendus est.

The British contagion of which [AE]lfric here complains had no permanent effect. For after the Norman Conquest English boys learned their Latin from teachers whose ordinary language was French. For a time, they were not usually taught to write or read English, but only French and Latin; so that the Englishmen who attempted to write their native language did so in a phonetic orthography on a French basis. The higher classes in England, all through the thirteenth century, had two native languages, English and French.

In the grammar schools, the Latin lessons were given in French; it was not till the middle of the fourteenth century that a bold educational reformer, John Cornwall, could venture to make English the vehicle of instruction. In reading Latin, the rhythmically-determined vowel-quantities of post-classical times were used; and the Roman letters were pronounced, first as they were in French, and afterwards as in English, but in the fourteenth century this made little difference.

Page 3

In Chaucer's time, the other nations of Europe, no less than England, pronounced Latin after the fashion of their own vernaculars. When, subsequently, the phonetic values of the letters in the vernacular gradually changed, the Latin pronunciation altered likewise. Hence, in the end, the pronunciation of Latin has become different in different countries. A scholar born in Italy has great difficulty in following a Frenchman speaking Latin. He has greater difficulty in understanding an Englishman's Latin, because in English the changes in the sounds of the letters have been greater than in any other language. Every vowel-letter has several sounds, and the normal long sound of every vowel-letter has no resemblance whatever to its normal short sound. As in England the pronunciation of Latin developed insensibly along with that of the native tongue, it eventually became so peculiar that by comparison the 'continental pronunciation' may be regarded as uniform.

It is sometimes imagined that the modern English way of pronouncing Latin was a deliberate invention of the Protestant reformers. For this view there is no foundation in fact. It may be conceded that English ecclesiastics and scholars who had frequent occasion to converse in Latin with Italians would learn to pronounce it in the Italian way; and no doubt the Reformation must have operated to arrest the growing tendency to the Italianization of English Latin. But there is no evidence that before the Reformation the un-English pronunciation was taught in the schools. The grammar-school pronunciation of the early nineteenth century was the lineal descendant of the grammar-school pronunciation of the fourteenth century.

This traditional system of pronunciation is now rapidly becoming obsolete, and for very good reasons. But it is the basis of the pronunciation of the many classical derivatives in English; and therefore it is highly important that we should understand precisely what it was before it began to be sophisticated (as in our own early days) by sporadic and inconsistent attempts to restore the classical quantities. In the following paper Mr. Sargeaunt describes, with a minuteness not before attempted, the genuine English tradition of Latin pronunciation, and points out its significance as a factor in the development of modern English.

H.B.]

* * * * *

It seems not to be generally known that there is a real principle in the English pronunciation of words borrowed from Latin and Greek, whether directly or through French. In this matter the very knowledge of classical Latin, of its stresses and its quantities, still more perhaps an acquaintance with Greek, is apt to mislead. Some speakers seem to think that their scholarship will be doubted unless they say 'doctr['i]nal' and 'script['u]ral' and 'cin['e]ma'. The object of this paper is to show by setting forth the principles consciously or unconsciously followed by our ancestors

Page 4

that such pronunciations are as erroneous as in the case of the ordinary man they are unnatural and pedantic. An exception for which there is a reason must of course be accepted, but an exception for which reason is unsound is on every ground to be deprecated. Among other motives for preserving the traditional pronunciation must be reckoned the claim of poetry. Mark Pattison notes how a passage of Pope which deals with the Barrier Treaty loses much of its effect because we no longer stress the second syllable of 'barrier'. Pope's word is gone beyond recovery, but others which are threatened by false theories may yet be preserved.

The *New English Dictionary*, whose business it is to record facts, shows that in not a few common words there is at present much confusion and uncertainty concerning the right pronunciation. This applies mostly to the position of the stress or, as some prefer to call it, the accent, but in many cases it is true also of the quantity of the vowels. It is desirable to show that there is a principle in this matter, rules which have been naturally and unconsciously obeyed, because they harmonize with the genius of the English tongue.

For nearly three centuries from the Reformation to the Victorian era there was in this country a uniform pronunciation of Latin. It had its own definite principles, involving in some cases a disregard of the classical quantities though not of the classical stress or accent. It survives in borrowed words such as *[=a]li[)a]s* and *st[)a]mina*, in naturalized legal phrases, such as *N[=i]s[=i] Prius* and *[=o]nus probandi*, and with some few changes in the Westminster Play. This pronunciation is now out of fashion, but, since its supersession does not justify a change in the pronunciation of words which have become part of our language, it will be well to begin with a formulation of its rules.

The rule of Latin stress was observed as it obtained in the time of Quintilian. In the earliest Latin the usage had been other, the stress coming as early in the word as was possible. Down to the days of Terence and probably somewhat later the old rule still held good of quadrisyllables with the scansion of *m[)u]l[)i][)e]r[)i]s* or *m[)u]l[)i][)e]r[=e]s*, but in other words had given way to the later Quintilian rule, that all words with a long unit as penultimate had the stress on the vowel in that unit, while words of more than two syllables with a short penultimate had the stress on the antepenultimate. I say 'unit' because here, as in scansion, what counts is not the syllable, but the vowel plus all the consonants that come between it and the next vowel. Thus *inf['e]rnus*, where the penultimate vowel is short, no less than *supr['e]mus*, where it is long, has the stress on the penultima. In *volucris*, where the penultimate unit was short, as it was in prose and could be in verse, the stress was on the *o*, but when *ucr* made a long unit the stress comes on the *u*, though of course the vowel remains short. In polysyllables there was a secondary stress on the alternate vowels. Ignorance of this usage has made a present-day critic falsely accuse Shakespeare of a false quantity in the line

Page 5

Cor[’i]ol[’a]nus in Cor[’i]oli.

It may be safely said that from the Reformation to the nineteenth century no Englishman pronounced the last word otherwise than I have written it. The author of the Pronouncing Dictionary attached to the ‘Dictionary of Gardening’ unfortunately instructs us to say *gl[’a]diolus* on the ground that the *i* is short. The ground alleged, though true, is irrelevant, and, although Terence would have pronounced it *gl[’a]diolus*, Quintilian, like Cicero, would have said *glad[’i]olus*. Mr. Myles quotes Pliny for the word, but Pliny would no more have thought of saying *gl[’a]diolus* than we should now think of saying ‘labo[’u]r’ except when we are reading Chaucer.

We need not here discuss the dubious exceptions to this rule, such as words with an enclitic attached, *e.g*. *prim[)a]que* in which some authorities put the stress on the vowel which precedes the enclitic, or such clipt words as ‘illuc’, where the stress may at one time have fallen on the last vowel. In any case no English word is concerned.

In very long words the due alternation of stressed and unstressed vowels was not easy to maintain. There was no difficulty in such a combination as *h[’o]nor[’i]fic[’a]bil[’i]* or as *tud[’i]nit[’a]tib[’u]s*, but with the halves put together there would be a tendency to say *h[’o]nor[’i]ficabilit[’u]dinit[’a]tibus*. Thus there ought not to be much difficulty in saying *C[’o]nstant[’i]nop[’o]lit[’a]ni*, whether you keep the long antepenultima or shorten it after the English way; but he who forced the reluctant word to end an hexameter must have had ‘Constantin[’o]ple’ in his mind, and therefore said *Const[’a]ntin[’o]polit[’a]ni* with two false stresses. The result was an illicit lengthening of the second *o*. His other false quantity, the shortening of the second *i*, was due to the English pronunciation, the influence of such words as ‘metropol[)i]tan’, and, as old schoolmasters used to put it, a neglect of the Gradus. Even when the stress falls on this antepenultimate *i*, it is short in English speech. Doubtless Milton shortened it in ‘Areopagitica’, just as English usage made him lengthen the initial vowel of the word.

Probably very few of the Englishmen who used the traditional pronunciation of Latin knew that they gave many different sounds to each of the symbols or letters. Words which have been transported bodily into English will provide examples under each head. It will be understood that in the traditional pronunciation of Latin these words were spoken exactly as they are spoken in the English of the present day. For the sake of simplicity it may be allowed us to ignore some distinctions rightly made by phoneticians. Thus the long initial vowel of *alias* is not really the same as the long initial vowel of *area*, but the two will be treated as identical. It will thus be possible to write of only three kinds of vowels, long, short, and obscure.

Page 6

The letter or symbol *a* stood for two long sounds, heard in the first syllables of *alias* and of *larva*, for the short sound heard in the first syllable of *stamina*, and for the obscure sound heard in the last syllable of each of these last two words in English.

The letter *e* stood for the long sounds heard in *genus* and in *verbum*, for the short sound heard in *item*, and for the obscure sound heard in *cancer*. When it ended a word it had, if short, the sound of a short *i*, as in *pro lege*, *rege*, *grege*, as also in unstressed syllables in such words as *precentor* and *regalia*.

The letter *i* stood for the two long sounds heard in *minor* and in *circus* and for the short sound heard in *premium* and *incubus*.

The letter *o* stood for the two long sounds heard in *odium* and in *corpus*, for the short sound in *scrofula*, and for the obscure in *extempore*.

The two long sounds of *u* are heard in *rumor*, if that spelling may be allowed, and in the middle syllable of *laburnum*, the two short sounds in the first *u* of *incubus* and in the first *u* of *lustrum*, the obscure sound in the final syllables of these two words. Further the long sound was preceded except after *l* and *r* by a parasitic *y* as in *albumen* and *incubus*. This parasitic *y* is perhaps not of very long standing. In some old families the tradition still compels such pronunciations as *moosic*.

The diphthongs *[ae]* and *[oe]* were merely *e*, while *au* and *eu* were sounded as in our *August* and *Euxine*. The two latter diphthongs stood alone in never being shortened even when they were unstressed and followed by two consonants. Thus men said *[=Eu]stolia* and *[=Au]gustus*, while they said *[)[AE]]schylus* and *[)OE]dipus.* Dryden and many others usually wrote the *[AE]* as *E*. Thus Garrick in a letter commends an adaptation of ‘Eschylus’, and although Boswell reports him as asking Harris ’Pray, Sir, have you read Potter’s *[AE]schylus*?’ both the speaker and the reporter called the name *Eschylus*.

The letter *y* was treated as *i*.

The consonants were pronounced as in English words derived from Latin. Thus *c* before *e*, *i*, *y*, *[ae]*, and *[oe]* was *s*, as in *census*, *circus*, *Cyrus*, *C[ae]sar*, and *c[oe]lestial*, a spelling not classical and now out of use. Elsewhere *c* was *k*. Before the same vowels *g* was *j* (d[ezh]), as in *genus*, *gibbus*, *gyrus*. The sibilant was voiced or voiceless as in English words, the one in *rosaceus*, the other in *saliva*.

Page 7

It will be seen that the Latin sounds were throughout frankly Anglicized. According to Burney a like principle was followed by Burke when he read French poetry aloud. He read it as though it were English. Thus on his lips the French word *comment* was pronounced as the English word *comment*.

The rule that overrode all others, though it has the exceptions given below, was that vowels and any other diphthongs than *au* and *eu*, if they were followed by two consonants, were pronounced short. Thus *a* in *magnus*, though long in classical Latin, was pronounced as in our 'magnitude', and *e* in *census*, in Greek transcription represented by [Greek: eta], was pronounced short, as it is when borrowed into English. So were the penultimate vowels in *villa*, *nullus*, *c[ae]spes*.

This rule of shortening the vowel before two consonants held good even when in fact only one was pronounced, as in *nullus* and other words where a double consonant was written and in Italian pronounced.

Moreover, the parasitic *y* was treated as a consonant, hence our 'v[)a]cuum'.

In the penultima *qu* was treated as a single consonant, so that the vowel was pronounced long in *[=a]quam*, *[=e]quam*, *in[=i]quam*, *l[=o]quor*. So it was after *o*, hence our 'coll[=o]quial'; but in earlier syllables than the penultima *qu* was treated as a double consonant, hence our 'sub[)a]queous', 'equity', 'iniquity'.

EXCEPTIONS.

1. When the former of the two consonants was *r* and the latter another consonant than *r*, as in the series represented by *larva*, *verbum*, *circus*, *corpus*, *laburnum*, the vowels are a separate class of long vowels, though not really recognized as such. Of course our ancestors and the Gradus marked them long because in verse the vowel with the two consonants makes a long unit.

2. A fully stressed vowel before a mute and *r*, or before *d* or *pl*, was pronounced long in the penultima. Latin examples are *labrum*, *Hebrum*, *librum*, *probrum*, *rubrum*, *acrem*, *cedrum*, *vafrum*, *agrum*, *pigrum*, *aprum*, *veprem*, *patrem*, *citrum*, *utrum*, *triplus*, *duplex*, *Cyclops*. Moreover, in other syllables than the penultima the vowel in the same combinations was pronounced long if the two following vowels had no consonant between them, as *patria*, *Hadria*, *acrius*. (Our 'triple' comes from *triplum* and is a duplicate of '*treble*'. Perhaps the short vowel is due to its passage through French. Our 'citron' comes from *citronem*, in which *i* was short.)

3. The preposition and adverb *post* was pronounced with a long vowel both by itself and in composition with verbs, but its adjectives did not follow suit. Hence we say in English 'p[=o]stpone', but 'p[)o]sterior' and 'p[)o]sthumous'.

Page 8

Monosyllables ending in a vowel were pronounced long, those ending in a consonant short. Enclitics like *que* were no real exception as they formed part of the preceding word. There were, however, some real exceptions.

1. Pronouns ending in _-os_, as *hos*, *quos*. These followed *eos* and *illos*.

2. Words ending in _-es_, as *pes*, *res*.

3. Words ending in *r*, as *par*, *fer*, *vir*, *cor*, *fur*. These had that form of long vowel which we use in ‘part’, ‘fertile’, ‘virtue’, ‘cordate’, ‘furtive’.

In, disyllables the former vowel or diphthong, if followed by a single consonant, or by a mute and *r*, or by *cl* or *pl*, was pronounced long, a usage which according to Mr. Henry Bradley dates in spoken Latin from the fourth century. Examples are *apex*, *tenet*, *item*, *focus*, *pupa*, *Psyche*, *C[ae]sar*, *f[oe]tus*. I believe that at first the only exceptions were *tibi*, *sibi*, *ibi*, *quibus*, *tribus*. In later days the imperfect and future of *sum* became exceptions. Here perhaps the short vowel arose from the hideous and wholly erroneous habit, happily never universal though still in some vogue, of reciting *er[’a]m*, *er[’a]s*, *er[’a]t*. There are actually schoolbooks which treat the verse *ictus*, the beat of the chanter’s foot, as a word stress and prescribe *terra trib[’u]s scopul[’i]s*. I can say of these books only *Pereant ipsi, mutescant scriptores*, and do not mind using a post-classical word in order to say it.

In disyllables the former vowel or diphthong, if followed immediately by another vowel or diphthong, had the quality, and if emphatic also the quality, of a long vowel. The distinction was not recognized, and seems not to be generally acknowledged even now. We seem not to have borrowed many words which will illustrate this. We have however *fiat*, and *pius* was pronounced exactly as we pronounce ‘pious’, while for a diphthong we may quote Shelley,

> Mid the mountains Euganean
> I stood listening to the paean.

English derivatives will show the long quality of the vowels in *aer*, *deus*, *coit*, *duo*. To these add *Graius*.

The rule of *apex* applies also to words of more than two syllables with long penultima, as *gravamen*, *arena*, *saliva*, *abdomen*, *acumen*. The rule of *aer* also holds good though it hardly has other instances than Greek names, as *Mach[’a]on*, *[AE]n[’e]as*, *Thal[’i]a*, *Achel[’o]us*, *Ach[’[ae]]i*.

Page 9

In words of more than two syllables with short penultima the vowel in the stressed antepenultima was pronounced short when there was a consonant between the two last vowels, and *i* and *y* were short even when no consonant stood in that place. Examples are *stamina*, *Sexagesima*, *minimum*, *modicum*, *tibia*, *Polybius*. But *u*, *au*, *eu* were, as usual, exceptions, as *tumulus*, *Aufidus*, *Eutychus*. I believe that originally men said *C[) [ae]]sarem*, as they certainly said *c[)[ae]]spitem* and *C[)[ae]]tulum*, as also *C[)[ae]]sarea*, but here in familiar words the cases came to follow the nominative.

Exceptions to the rule were verb forms which had *[=a]v*, *[=e]v*, *[=i]v*, or *[=o]v* in the antepenultima, as *am[=a]veram*, *defieverat*, *audivero*, *moveras*, and like forms from aorists with the penultima long, as *suaseram*, *egero*, *miserat*, *roseras*, and their compounds.

This rule was among the first to break down, and about the middle of the nineteenth century the Westminster Play began to observe the true quantities in the antepenultimate syllables. Thus in spite of 'cons[)i]deration' boys said *s[=i]dera*, and in spite of 'n[)o]minal' they said *n[^o]mina*, while they still said *s[)o]litus* and *r[)a]pidus*.

On the other hand the following rule, of which borrowed words provide many examples, still obtains in the Play. In words of more than two syllables any vowel in the antepenultima other than *i* or *y* was pronounced long if no consonant divided the two following vowels. Possibly the reason was that there was a syn[ae]resis of the two vowels, but I doubt this, for a parasitic *y* was treated as a consonant. Examples are *alias*, *genius*, *odium*, *junior*, *an[ae]mia*, and on the other hand *f[)i]lius*, *L[)y]dia*. Compound verbs with a short prefix were exceptions, as *[)o]beo*, *r[)e]creo*, whence our 'recreant'. A long prefix remained long as in *d[=e]sino*. The only other exception that I can remember was *Ph[)o]loe*.

In polysyllables the general rule was that all vowels and diphthongs before the penultima other than *u*, when it bore a primary or secondary stress, and *au* and *eu* were pronounced short except where the 'alias' rule or the 'larva' rule applied. Thus we said *h[)e]r[)e]ditaritis*, *[)[ae]]qu[)a]bilitas*, *imb[)e]cillus*, *susp[)i]cionem*, but *fid[=u]ciarius*, *m[=e]diocritas*, *p[=a]rticipare*. I do not know why the popular voice now gives *[)A]riadne*, for our forefathers said *[=A]riadne* as they said *[=a]rea*.

In very long words the alternation of stress and no-stress was insisted on. I remember a schoolmaster who took his degree at Oxford in the year 1827 reproving a boy for saying *['A]lphesib['oe]us* instead of *Alphesib['oe]us*, and I suspect that Wordsworth meant no inverted stress in

Page 10

La[’o]dam[’i]a, that at Jove’s command—

nor Landor in

Art[’e]mid[’o]ra, gods invisible—

though I hope that they did.

* * * * *

It is not to be thought that these rules were in any way arbitrary. So little was this so that, I believe, they were never even formulated. If examples with the quantities marked were ever given, they must have been for the use of foreigners settling in England. English boys did not want rules, and their teachers could not really have given them. The teachers did not understand that each vowel represented not two sounds only, a long and a short, but many more. This fact was no more understood by John Walker, the actor and lexicographer, who in 1798 published a Key to the Classical Pronunciation of Greek and Latin proper names. His general rule was wrong as a general rule, and so far as it agreed with facts it was useless. He says that when a vowel ends a syllable it is long, and when it does not it is short. Apart from the confusion of cause and effect there is the error of identifying for instance the *e* in *beatus* and the *e* in *habebat*. Moreover, Walker confounds the *u* in ‘curfew’, really long, with the short and otherwise different *u* in ‘but’. The rule was useless as a guide, for it did not say whether *moneo* for instance was to be read as *ino-neo* or as *mon-eo*, and therefore whether the *o* was to be long or short. Even Walker’s list is no exact guide. He gives for instance *M[=o]-na*, which is right, and *M[=o]-n[ae]ses*, which is not. Now without going into the difference between long vowels and ordinary vowels, of which latter some are long in scansion and some short, it is clear that there is no identity. In fact *Mona*, has the long *o* of ‘moan’ and *Mon[ae]ses* the ordinary *o* of ‘monaster’. A boy at school was not troubled by these matters. He had only two things to learn, first the quantity of the penultimate unit, second the fact that a final vowel was pronounced. When he knew these two things he gave the Latin word the sounds which it would have if it were an English word imported from the Latin. Thus he finds the word *civilitate*. I am not sure that he could find it, but that does not matter. He would know ‘civility’, and he learns that the penultima of the Latin word is long. Therefore he says *c[)i]v[)i]l[)i]t[=a]t[)e]*. Again he knows ‘[)i]nf[)i]n[)i]t’ (I must be allowed to spell the word as it is pronounced except in corrupt quires). He finds that the penultima of *infinitivus* is long, and he therefore says *[)i]nf[)i]n[)i]t[=i]v[)u]s*. Again he knows ‘irradiate’, and finding that the penultima of *irradiabitur* is short he says *[)i]rr[=a]d[)i][)a]b[)i]t[)u]r*. It is true that some of these verb forms under the influence of their congeners came to have an exceptional

Page 11

pronunciation. Thus *irradi[=a]bit* led at last to *irradi[=a]bitur*, but I doubt whether this occurred before the nineteenth century. The word *dabitur*, almost naturalized by Luther's adage of *date et dabitur*, kept its short *a* down to the time when it regained it, in a slightly different form, by its Roman right; and *am[)a]mini* and *mon[)e]mini* were unwavering in their use. Old people said *v[=a]ri[)a]bilis* long after the true quantities had asserted themselves, and the word as the specific name of a plant may be heard even now. Its first syllable of course follows what I shall call the 'alias' rule. We may still see this rule in other instances. All men say 'hippop['o]t[)a]mus', and even those who know that this *a* is short in Greek can say nothing but 'Mesopot[=a]mia', unless indeed the word lose its blessed and comforting powers in a disyllabic abbreviation. When a country was named after Cecil Rhodes, where the *e* in the surname is mute, we all called it 'Rhod[=e]sia'. Had it been named after a Newman, where the *a* is short or rather obscure, we should all have called it 'Newm[=a]nia ', while, named after a Davis, it would certainly have been 'Dav[)i]sia'. The process of thought would in each case have been unconscious. A new example is 'aviation', whose first vowel has been instinctively lengthened.

Again, when the word 'telegram' was coined, some scholars objected to its formation and insisted upon 'telegrapheme', but the most obdurate Grecian did not propose to keep the long Greek vowel in the first syllable. When only the other day 'cinematograph' made its not wholly desirable appearance, it made no claim to a long vowel in either of its two first syllables. Not till it was reasonably shortened into 'c[)i]n[)e]ma' did a Judge from the Bench make a lawless decree for a long second vowel, and even he left the *i* short though it is long in Greek.

Of course with the manner of speech the quantities had to be learnt separately. The task was not as difficult as some may think. To boys with a taste for making verses the thumbing of a Gradus (I hope that no one calls it a Gr[)a]dus) was always a delightful occupation, and a quantity once learnt was seldom forgotten. It must be admitted that, as boys were forced to do verses, whether they could or not, there were always some who could read and yet forget.

Although these usages did not precede but followed the pronunciation of words already borrowed from Latin, we may use them to classify the changes of quantity. We shall see that although there are some exceptions for which it is difficult to give a reason, yet most of the exceptions fall under two classes. When words came to us through French, the pronunciation was often affected by the French form of the word. Thus the adjective 'present' would, if it had come direct from Latin, have had a long vowel in the first syllable. To an English ear 'pr[)e]sent'

Page 12

seemed nearer than ‘pr[=e]sent’ to the French ‘pr[’e]sent’. The *N.E.D.* says that ‘gladiator’ comes straight from the Latin ‘gladiatorem’. Surely in that case it would have had its first vowel long, as in ‘radiator’ and ‘mediator’. In any case its pronunciation must have been affected by ‘gladiateur’. The other class of exceptions consists of words deliberately introduced by writers at a late period. Thus ‘adorable’ began as a penman’s word. Following ‘in[’e]xorable’ and the like it should have been ‘[’a]dorable’. Actually it was formed by adding _-able_ to ‘ad[’o]re’, like ‘laughable’. It is now too stiff in the joints to think of a change, and must continue to figure with the other sins of the Restoration.

Before dealing with the words as classified by their formation, we may make short lists of typical words to show that for the pronunciation of English derivatives it is idle to refer to the classical quantities.

From *[=[ae]]*: []e]difice, []e]mulate, c[]e]rulean, qu[]e]stion.

From *[=oe]*: []e]conomy, []e]cumenical, conf[]e]derate.

From *[=a]*,: don[]a]tive, n[]a]tural, cl[]a]mour, []a]verse.

From *[]a]*: [=a]lien, st[=a]tion, st[=a]ble, [=a]miable.

From *[=e]*: []e]vident, Quadrag[]e]sima, pl[]e]nitude, s[]e]gregate.

From *[]e]*: s[=e]ries, s[=e]nile, g[=e]nus, g[=e]nius.

From *[=i]*: lasc[]i]vious, erad[]i]cate, d[]i]vidend, f[]i]lial, susp[]i]cion.

From *[]i]*: l[=i]bel, m[=i]tre, s[=i]lex.

From *[=o]*: []o]rator, pr[]o]minent, pr[]o]montory, s[]o]litude.

From *[]o]*: b[=o]vine, l[=o]cal, f[=o]rum, coll[=o]quial.

From *[=u]*: fig[]u]rative, script[]u]ral, sol[]u]ble.

From *[]u]*: n[=u]merous, C[=u]pid, all[=u]vial, cer[=u]lean.

The *N.E.D.* prefers the spelling ‘[oe]cumenical’; but Newman wrote naturally ‘ecumenical’, and so does Dr. J.B. Bury. Dublin scholarship has in this matter been markedly correct.

CLASSIFICATION OF WORDS ACCORDING TO THEIR LATIN STEMS.

In classification it seems simplest to take the words according to their Latin stems. We must, however, first deal with a class of adjectives borrowed bodily from the Latin nominative masculine with the insertion of a meaningless *o* before the final _-us_.[1] These of course follow the rules given above. In words of more than two syllables the antepenultimate and stressed vowel is shortened, as ‘[)e]mulous’ from *[ae]mulus* and in ‘fr[)i]volous’ from *fr[=i]volus*, except where by the ‘alias’ rule it is long, as in ‘egr[=e]gious’ from *egr[)e]gius*. Words coined on this analogy also follow the rules. Thus ‘glabrous’ and ‘fibrous’ have the vowels long, as in the traditional pronunciation of *glabrum* and *fibrum*, where the vowels in classical Latin were short. The stressed *u* being always long we have ‘lug[=u]brious’ and ‘sal[=u]brious’, the length being independent of the ‘alias’ rule. Some words ending in _-ous_ are not of this class. Thus ‘odorous’ and ‘clamorous’ appear in Italian as *odoroso* and *clamoroso*. Milton has

Page 13

Son[’o]rous mettal blowing Martial sounds.

The Italian is *sonoro*, and our word was simply the Latin *sonorus* borrowed bodily at a somewhat late period. Hence the stress remains on the penultima. Skeat thought that the word would at last become ‘s[’o]norous’. It maybe hoped that Milton’s line will save it from the effect of a false analogy.

[Footnote 1: I regard this statement as inaccurate. The _-ous_ in these words does not come from the nominative ending _-us_, but is the ordinary _-ous_ from L. _-osus_ (through Fr.). It was added to many Latin adjective stems, because the need of a distinctly adjectival ending was felt. Similarly in early French _-eux_ was appended to adjectives when they were felt to require a termination, as in *pieux* from *pi-us*. Compare the English *capacious*, *veracious*, *hilarious*, where _-ous_ is added to other stems than those in *o*. Other suffixes of Latin origin are used in the same way: *e.g*. _-al_ in *aerial*, *ethereal*.—H.B.]

In classifying by stems it will be well to add, where possible, words of Greek origin. Except in some late introductions Greek words, except when introduced bodily, have been treated as if they came through Latin, and some of the bodily introductions are in the same case. Thus ‘an[ae]sthetic’ is spelt with the Latin diphthong and the Latin *c*. Even ‘skeleton’ had a *c* to start with, while the modern and wholly abominable ‘kaleidoscope’ is unprincipled on the face of it.

STEMS ENDING IN -ANT AND -ENT. These are participles or words formed as such. Our words have shed a syllable, thus *regentem* has become ‘regent’. Disyllables follow the ‘apex’ rule and lengthen the first vowel, as ‘agent’, ‘decent’, ‘potent’. Exceptions are ‘clement’ and ‘present’, perhaps under French influence. Words of more than two syllables with a single consonant before the termination throw the stress back and shorten a long penultima, as ‘ignorant’, ‘president’, ‘confident’, ‘adjutant’. Where there are two heavy consonants, the stress remains on the penultima, as ‘consultant’, ‘triumphant’, even when one of the consonants is not pronounced, as ‘reminiscent’. In some cases the Latinists seem to have deliberately altered the natural pronunciation. Thus Gower has ‘[’a]ppara[’u]nt’, but the word became ‘app[’a]rent’ before Shakespeare’s time, and later introductions such as ‘adherent’ followed it. What right ‘adjacent’ has to its long vowel and penultimate stress I do not know, but it cannot be altered now.

STEMS ENDING IN -ATO AND -UTO. These are mostly past participles, but many of them are used in English as verbs. It must be admitted that the disyllabic words are not wholly constant to a principle. Those verbs that come from _-latum_ consistently stress the last vowel, as ‘dilate’, ‘relate’, ‘collate’. So does ‘create’, because of one vowel following another. Of the rest all the words of any rank have the stress on the penultima, as ‘vibrate’, ‘frustrate’, ‘m[’i]grate’, ‘c[’a]strate’, ‘p[’u]lsate’, ‘v[’a]cate’. Thus Pope has

Page 14

The whisper, that to greatness still too near,
Perhaps, yet vibrates on his Sov'reign's ear,

and Shelley

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory.

There are, however, verbs of no literary account which in usage either vary in the stress or take it on the latter syllable. Such are 'locate', 'orate', 'negate', 'placate', and perhaps 'rotate'. With most of these we could well dispense. 'Equate' is mainly a technical word. Dictionaries seem to prefer the stress on the ultima, but some at least of the early Victorian mathematicians said '['e]quate', and the pronunciation is to be supported. Trisyllabic verbs throw the stress back and shorten the penultima, as 'd['e]s[)o]late', 's['u]ff[)o]cate', 'sc['i]nt[)i]llate'. Even words with heavy double consonants have adopted this habit. Thus where Browning has (like Milton and Cowper)

I the Trinity ill['u]strate
Drinking water'd orange pulp,
In three sips the Arian frustrate.
While he drains his at one gulp,

it is now usual to say '['i]llustrate'.

Adjectives of this class take as early a stress as they can, as '['o]rnate', 'p['i]nnate', 'd['e]licate', 'f['o]rtunate'. Nouns from all these words throw the accent back and shorten or obscure all but the penultimate vowel, as 'ignorance', 'evaporation'.

STEMS IN -IA. Here even disyllables shorten the penultima, as 'copy', 'province', while longer words throw the stress back as well as shorten the penultima, as 'injury', 'colony', while 'ignominy' almost lost its penultimate vowel, and therefore threw back the stress to the first syllable. Shakespeare frankly writes the word as a trisyllable,

Thy ignomy sleep with thee in the grave.

Milton restored the lost syllable, often eliding the final vowel, as in

Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain.

Even with heavy consonants we have the early stress, as in 'industry'. Greek words follow the same rules, as 'agony', 'melody'. Some words of this class have under French influence been further abbreviated, as 'concord'.

Corresponding STEMS IN -IO keep the same rules. Perhaps the only disyllable is 'study'; the shortening of a stressed *u* shows its immediate derivation from the old

French *estudie*. Trisyllabic examples are ‘colloquy’, ‘ministry’, ‘perjury’. Many words of this class have been further abbreviated in their passage through French. Such are ‘benefice’, ‘divorce’, ‘office’, ‘presage’, ‘suffrage’, ‘vestige’, ‘adverb’, ‘homicide’, ‘proverb’. The stress in ‘div[’o]rce’ is due to the long vowel and the two consonants. A few of these words have been borrowed bodily from Latin, as ‘odium’, ‘tedium’, ‘opprobrium’.

Page 15

STEMS IN -DO AND -TO (-SO). These words lose the final Latin syllable and keep the stress on the vowel which bore it in Latin. The stressed vowel, except in *au*, *eu*, is short, even when, as in 'vivid', 'florid', it was long in classical Latin. This, of course, is in accord with the English pronunciation of Latin. Examples are 'acid', 'tepid', 'rigid', 'horrid', 'humid', 'lurid ', 'absurd', 'tacit', 'digit', 'deposit', 'compact', 'complex', 'revise', 'response', 'acute'. Those which have the suffix _-es_ prefixed throw the stress back, as 'honest', 'modest'. Those which have the suffix _-men_ prefixed also throw the stress back, as 'moment', 'pigment', 'torment', and to the antepenultima, if there be one, as 'argument', 'armament', 'emolument', the penultimate vowel becoming short or obscure. In 'temperament' the tendency of the second syllable to disappear has carried the stress still further back. We may compare 'S['e]ptuagint', where *u* becomes consonantal. An exception for which I cannot account is 'cem['e]nt', but Shakespeare has 'c['e]ment'.

STEMS IN -T[=A]T. These are nouns and have the stress on the antepenultima, which in Latin bore the secondary stress. They of course show the usual shortening of the vowels with the usual exceptions. Examples are 'charity', 'equity', 'liberty', 'ferocity', 'authority', and with long antepenultima 'immunity', 'security', 'university'. With no vowel before the penultima the long quality is, as usual, preserved, as in 'satiety'.

STEMS IN -OSO. These are adjectives and throw the stress back to the antepenultima, if there be one. In disyllables the penultimate vowel is long, as in 'famous', 'vinous'; in longer words the antepenultimate vowel is short, as 'criminous', 'generous'. Many, however, fall under the 'alias' rule, as 'ingenious', 'odious', while those which have *i* in the penultimate run the two last syllables into one, as 'pernicious', 'religious', 'vicious'. A few late introductions, coming straight from the Latin, retained the Latin stress, as 'morose', 'verbose'.

STEMS IN -T[=O]RIO AND -S[=O]RIO. In these words the stress goes back to the fourth syllable from the end, this in Latin having the secondary stress, or, as in 'circulatory', 'ambulatory', even further. In fact the *o*, which of course is shortened, tends to disappear. Examples are 'declamatory', 'desultory', 'oratory', 'predatory', 'territory'. Three consonants running, as in 'perfunctory', keep the stress where it has to be in a trisyllable, such as 'victory'. So does a long vowel before *r* and another consonant, as in 'precursory'. Otherwise two consonants have not this effect, as in 'pr['o]montory', 'c['o]nsistory'. In spite of Milton's

> A gloomy Consistory, and them amidst
> With looks agast and sad he thus bespake,

the word is sometimes mispronounced.

Page 16

STEMS IN -[=A]RIO. These follow the same rules, except that, as in ‘[’a]dversary’, combinations like *ers* are shortened and the stress goes back; and that words ending in _-entary_, such as ‘elementary’ and ‘testamentary’, stress the antepenultima. Examples are ‘antiquary’, ‘honorary’, ‘voluntary’, ‘emissary’. It is difficult to see a reason for an irregular quantity in the antepenultima of some trisyllables. The general rule makes it short, as in ‘granary’, ‘salary’, but in ‘library’ and ‘notary’ it has been lengthened. The *N.E.D.* gives ‘pl[=e]nary’, but our grandfathers said ‘pl[)e]nary’. Of course ‘diary’ gives a long quality to the *i*.

STEMS IN -[)I]LI. These seem originally to have retained the short *i*. Thus Milton’s spelling is ‘facil’ and ‘fertil’ while other seventeenth-century writers give ‘steril’. This pronunciation still obtains in America, but in England the words seem to have been usually assimilated to ‘fragile’, as Milton spells it, which perhaps always lengthened the vowel. The penultimate vowel is short.

STEMS IN -[=I]LI. Here the long *i* is retained, and in disyllables the penultima is lengthened, as in ‘anile’, ‘senile’, ‘virile’. There is no excuse for following the classical quantity in the former syllables of any of these words. As an English word ‘sedilia’ shortens the antepenultimate, like ‘tibia’ and the rest, the ‘alias’ rule not applying when the vowel is *i*.

STEMS IN -B[)I]LI. These mostly come through French and change the suffix into _-ble_. Disyllables lengthen the penultima, as ‘able’, ‘stable’, ‘noble’, while ‘mobile’, as in French, lengthens its latter vowel. Trisyllables shorten and stress the antepenultima, as ‘placable’, ‘equable’, but of course *u* remains long, as in ‘mutable’. Longer words throw the stress further back, except mere negatives, like ‘impl[’a]cable’, and words with heavy consonants such as ‘delectable’. Examples are ‘miserable’, ‘admirable’, ‘intolerable’, ‘despicable’. The Poet Laureate holds that in these words Milton kept the long Italian *a* of the penultimate or secondary stress.

Fall’n Cherube, to be weak is miserable.

In English we have naturalized _-able_ as a suffix and added it to almost any verb, as ‘laughable’, ‘indescribable’, ‘desirable’. The last word may have been taken from French. The form ‘des[)i]derable’ occurs from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. Originally ‘acceptable’ threw the stress back, as in Milton’s

So fit, so acceptable, so Divine,

but the double mute has brought it into line with ‘delectable’. Nowadays one sometimes hears ‘disp[’u]table’, ‘desp[’i]cable’, but these are intolerable vulgarisms.

SUFFIXES IN T[)I]LI AND S[)I]LI. These words mostly lengthen the *i* and make the usual shortenings, as ‘missile’, ‘sessile’, ‘textile’, ‘volatile’, but of course ‘futile’. Exceptions which I cannot explain are ‘foss[)i]l’ and ‘fus[)i]le’.

Page 17

SUFFIX IN [=A]LI. These adjectives shorten the _-a_ and, with the usual exceptions, the preceding vowels, as ‘d[’o]ctrinal’, ‘f[’i]lial’, ‘l[’i]beral’, ‘m[’a]rital’, ‘med[’i]cinal’, but of course by the ‘alias’ rule ‘arb[=o]real’ (not a classical word in Latin) and ‘g[=e]nial’. Words like ‘national’ and ‘rational’ were treated like trisyllables, which they now are. The stress is on the antepenultima except when heavy consonants bring it on to the penultima, as in ‘sepulcral’, ‘parental’, ‘triumphal’.

Those who say ‘doctr[’i]nal’ on the ground that the second vowel is long in Latin commit themselves to ‘medic[’i]nal’, ‘nat[’u]ral’, ‘nutr[’i]ment’, ‘instr[’u]ment’, and, if their own principle be applied, they make false quantities by the dozen every day of their lives.

Three words mostly mispronounced are, from their rarity, perhaps not past rescue. They are ‘d[’e]canal’, ‘rurid[’e]canal’, and ‘pr[’e]bendal’. There is no more reason for saying ‘dec[’a]nal’ than for saying ‘matr[’o]nal’ or for saying ‘preb[’e]ndal’ than for saying ‘cal[’e]ndar’. Of course words like ‘tremendous’, being imported whole, keep the original stress. In our case the Latin words came into existence as *d[’e]can[’a]lis*, *pr[’e]bend[’a]lis*, parallel with *n[’a]tur[’a]lis*, which gives us ‘n[’a]tural’. That mostly wrong-headed man, Burgon of Chichester, was correct in speaking of his rights or at any rate his claims as ‘d[’e]canal’.

STEMS IN -LO. Of these ‘stimulus’ and ‘villa’ have been borrowed whole, while *umbella* is corrupted into ‘umbrella’. Disyllables lengthen the penultima, as ‘stable’, ‘title’, ‘pupil’. Under French influence ‘disciple’ follows their example. In longer words the usual shortenings are made, as in ‘frivolous’, ‘ridiculous’. The older words in _-ulo_ change the suffix into _-le_, as ‘uncle’, ‘maniple’, ‘tabernacle’, ‘conventicle’, ‘receptacle’, ‘panicle’. Later words retain the *u*, as ‘vestibule’, ‘reticule’, ‘molecule’.

STEMS IN -NO. The many words of this class are a grief to the classifier, who seeks in vain for reasons. Thus ‘german’ and ‘germane’ have the same source and travelled, it seems, by the same road through France. The Latin *hyacinth[)i]nus* and *adamant[)i]nus* are parallel words, yet Milton has ‘hyacinthin’ for the one and ‘adamantine’ for the other. One classification goes a little way. Thus ‘human’ and ‘urban’ must have come through French, ‘humane’ and ‘urbane’ direct from Latin. On the other hand while ‘meridian’ and ‘quartan’ are French, ‘publican’, ‘veteran’, and ‘oppidan’ are Latin. Words with a long *i*, if they came early through France, shorten the vowel, as ‘doctrine’, ‘discipline’, ‘medicine’, and ‘masculine’, while ‘genuine’, though a later word, followed them, but ‘anserine’ and ‘leonine’ did not. Disyllables seem to prefer the stress on the ultima, as ‘divine’, ‘supine’, but even these are not consistent. Some critics would scan Cassio’s words

Page 18

The d[’i]vine Desdemona,

though Shakespeare nowhere else has this stress, while Shelley has. Shelley, too, has

She cannot know how well the s[’u]pine slaves
Of blind authority read the truth of things.

The grammatical term, too, is ‘s[’u]pine’. Later introductions also have this stress, as ‘b[’o]vine’, ‘c[’a]nine’, ‘[’e]quine’. The last word is not always understood. At any rate Halliwell-Phillips, referring to a well-known story of Shakespeare’s youth, says that the poet probably attended the theatre ‘in some equine capacity’. As it is agreed that ‘bovine’ and ‘equine’ lengthen the former vowel, we ought by analogy to say ‘c[=a]nine’, as probably most people do. Words of more than two syllables have the stress on the antepenultima and the vowel is short, as in ‘libertine’, ‘adulterine’, but of course ‘[=u]terine’. When heavy consonants bring the stress on to the penultima, the *i* is shortened, as in ‘clandest[)i]n(e)’, ‘intest[)i]n(e)’, and so in like disyllables, as ‘doctr[)i]n(e)’. The modern words ‘morphin(e)’ and ‘strychnin(e)’, coined, the one from Morpheus and the other from the Greek name of the plant known to botanists as *Withania somnifera*, correctly follow ‘doctrine’ in shortening the *i*, though another pronunciation is sometimes heard.

STEMS IN -TUDIN. These shorten the antepenultima, as ‘plenitude’, ‘solitude’, with the usual exceptions, such as ‘fortitude’.

STEMS IN -TION. These words retain the suffix, which in early days was disyllabic, as it sometimes is in Shakespeare, for instance in Portia’s

Before a friend of this descripti[’o]n
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio’s fault.

Thus they came under the ‘alias’ rule, and what is now the penultimate vowel is long unless it be *i*. Examples are ‘nation’, ‘accretion’, ‘emotion’, ‘solution’, while *i* is shortened in ‘petition’, ‘munition’, and the like, and left short in ‘admonition’ and others. In military use an exception is made by ‘ration’, but the pronunciation is confined to one sense of the word, and is new at that. I remember old soldiers of George III who spoke of ‘r[=a]tions’. Perhaps the ugly change is due to French influence.

Originally the adjectives from these words must have lengthened the fourth vowel from the end long, as n[=a]t[)i][)o]nal, but when *ti* became *sh* they came to follow the rule of Latin trisyllables in our pronunciation.

STEMS IN -IC. Of these words we have a good many, both Latin and Greek. Those that came direct keep the stress on the vowel which was antepenultimate and is in English penultimate, and this vowel is short whatever its original quantity. Examples are

‘aquatic’, ‘italic’, ‘Germanic’. Words that came through French threw the stress back, as ‘l[’u]natic’. Skeat says that ‘fanatic’ came through French, but he can hardly be right, for the pronunciation ‘f[’a]natic’ is barely three score years old. There is no inverted stress in Milton’s

Page 19

Fan[’a]tic Egypt and her priests.

As for ‘unique’ it is a modern borrowing from French, and of late ‘[’a]ntique’ or ‘[’a]ntic’, as Shakespeare has it, has followed in one of its senses the French use. It is a pity in face of Milton’s

With mask and [’a]ntique Pageantry,

and it obscures the etymological identity of ‘antique’ and ‘antic’, but the old pronunciation is irredeemable. At least the new avoids the homophonic inconvenience.

Greek words of this class used as adjectives mostly follow the same rule, as ‘sporadic’, ‘dynamic’, ‘pneumatic’, ‘esoteric’, ‘philanthropic’, ‘emetic’, ‘panegyric’. As nouns the earlier introductions threw the stress back, as ‘heretic’, ‘arithmetic’, but later words follow the adjectives, as ‘emetic’, ‘enclitic’, ‘panegyric’. As for ‘politic’, which is stressed as we stress both by Shakespeare and by Milton, it must be under French influence, though Skeat seems to think that it came straight from Latin.

STEMS IN -OS. These words agree in being disyllabic, but otherwise they are a tiresome and quarrelsome people. For their diversity in spelling some can make a defence, since ‘horror’, ‘pallor’, ‘stupor’ came straight from Latin, but ‘tenor’, coming through French, should have joined hands with ‘colour’, ‘honour’, ‘odour’. The short vowel is inevitable in ‘horror’ and ‘pallor’, the long in ‘ardour’, ‘stupor’, ‘tumour’. The rest are at war, ‘clamour’, ‘colour’, ‘honour’, ‘dolour’, ‘rigour’, ‘squalor’, ‘tenor’, ‘vigour’ in the short legion, ‘favour’, ‘labour’, ‘odour’, ‘vapour’ in the long. Their camp-followers ending in -ous are under their discipline, so that, while ‘cl[)a]morous’, ‘r[)i]gorous’, ‘v[)i]gorous’ agree with the general rule, ‘[=o]dorous’ makes an exception to it. All the derivatives of *favor* are exceptions to the general rule, for ‘favourite’ and ‘favorable’ keep its long *a*. Of course ‘l[)a]b[=o]rious’ is quite in order, and so is ‘v[)a]pid’.

STEMS IN -TOR AND -SOR. These words, when they came through French, threw the stress back and shortened the penultimate, *[=o]r[=a]torem* becoming *orateur*, and then ‘[)o]r[)a]tor’, with the stress on the antepenultimate. Others of the same type are ‘auditor’, ‘competitor’, ‘senator’, and Shelley has

The sister-pest, congr[’e]gator of slaves,

while ‘amateur’ is borrowed whole from French and stresses its ultima. Trisyllables of course shorten the first vowel, as ‘cr[)e]ditor’, ‘j[)a]nitor’. Polysyllables follow the stress of the verbs; thus ‘[’a]gitate’ gives ‘[’a]gitator’ and ‘comp[’o]se’ gives ‘comp[’o]sitor’. To the first class belongs ‘circulator’, ‘educator’, ‘imitator’, ‘moderator’, ‘negotiator’, ‘prevaricator’, with which ‘gladiator’ associates itself; to the second belongs ‘competitor’. Words which came straight from Latin keep the stress of the Latin

nominative, as ‘creator’, ‘spectator’, ‘testator’, ‘coadjutor’, ‘assessor’, to which in Walton’s

Page 20

honour must be added ‘Piscator’ and ‘Venator’. On ‘curator’ he who decides does so at his peril. On one occasion Eldon from the Bench corrected Erskine for saying ‘c[’u]r[)a]tor’. ‘Cur[=a]tor, Mr. Erskine, cur[=a]tor.’ ‘I am glad’, was the reply, ’to be set right by so eminent a sen[=a]tor and so eloquent an or[=a]tor as your Lordship.’ Neither eminent lawyer knew much about it, but each was so far right that he stuck to the custom of his country. On other grounds Erskine might be thought to have committed himself to ‘t[’e]st[)a]tor’, if not quite to the ’testy tricks’ of Sally in Mrs. Gaskell’s ‘Ruth’.

STEMS IN -ERO AND -URO. Adjectives of this type keep the Latin stress, which thus falls on the ultima, and shorten or obscure the penultimate vowel, as ‘mature’, ‘obscure’, ‘severe’, ‘sincere’, but of course ‘[=a]ustere’. Of like form though of other origin is ‘secure’. Nouns take an early stress, as ‘[’a]perture’, ‘s[’e]pulture’, ‘l[’i]terature’, ‘t[’e]mperature’, unless two mutes obstruct, as in ‘conj[’e]cture’. Of the disyllables ‘nature’ keeps a long penultima, while ‘figure’ has it short, not because of the Latin quantity, but because of the French.

The lonely word ‘mediocre’ lengthens its first vowel by the ‘alias’ rule and also stresses it. Whether the penultima has more than a secondary stress is a matter of dispute.

STEMS IN -ARI. These words have the stress on the antepenultima, which they shorten, as in ‘secular’ or keep short as in ‘jocular’, ‘familiar’, but of course ‘pec[=u]liar’.

ON CERTAIN GREEK WORDS.

It will have been seen that Greek words are usually treated as Latin. Thus ‘crisis’ lengthens the penultima under the ‘apex’ rule, while ‘critical’ has it short under the general rule of polysyllables. Other examples of lengthening are ‘bathos’, ‘pathos’, while the long quantity is of course kept in ‘colon’ and ‘crasis’. For the ‘alias’ rule we may quote ‘[=a]theist’, ‘cryptog[=a]mia’, ‘h[=o]meopathy’, ‘heterog[=e]neous’, ‘pandem[=o]nium’, while the normal shortenings are found in ‘an[)o]nymous’, ‘eph[)e]meral’, ‘pand[)e]monium’, ‘[)e]r[)e]mite’. Ignorance of English usage has made some editors flounder on a line of Pope’s:

Yes, or we must renounce the Stagirite.

The birthplace of Aristotle was of course Stag[=i]ra or, as it is now fashionable to transcribe it, Stageira, as Pope doubtless knew, but the editors who accuse him of a false quantity in Greek are on the contrary themselves guilty of one in English. The penultima in English is short whether it was long or, as in ‘dynamite’ and ‘malachite’, short in Greek.

There is, however, one distinct class of Greek words in which the Latin rule is not followed. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there were scholars who rightly or wrongly treated the Greek accent as a mark of stress. It is clear that this habit led to an inability to maintain a long quantity in an unstressed syllable. Shakespeare must have learnt his little Greek from a scholar who had this habit, for he writes ‘Andr[’o]n[)i]cus’ and also

Page 21

I am mis[’a]nthr[)o]pos and hate mankind.

Of course all scholars shortened the first vowel of the word, and doubtless Shakespeare shortened also the third. Busby also thus spoke Greek with the result that Dryden in later life sometimes wrote epsilon instead of eta and also spoke of ‘Cleom[’e]nes’ and ‘Iphig[=e]n[)i]a’. As a boy at Westminster he wrote

Learn’d, Vertuous, Pious, Great, and have by this
An universal Metempsuchosis.

Macaulay with an ignorance very unusual in him rebuked his nephew for saying ‘metam[’o]rph[)o]sis’, and Dr. Johnson, had he been living, would have rebuked Macaulay. For the sake of our poets we ought to save ‘apoth[’e][)o]sis’, which is in some danger. Garth may perhaps be forgotten,

Allots the prince of his celestial line
An Apotheosis and rights divine,

but ‘Rejected Addresses’ should still carry weight. In the burlesque couplet, ascribed in the first edition to the younger Colman and afterwards transferred to Theodore Hook, we have

That John and Mrs. Bull from ale and tea-houses
May shout huzza for Punch’s apotheosis.

It need hardly be said that ‘tea-houses’ like ‘grandfathers’ has the stress on the antepenultimate.

There are other words of Greek origin which now break the rules, though I believe the infringement to be quite modern. First we have the class beginning with *proto*. It can hardly be doubted that our ancestors followed rule and said ‘pr[)o]tocol’, and ‘pr[)o]totype’, and I suspect also ‘pr[)o]tomartyr’. There seems, however, to be a general agreement nowadays to keep the Greek omega. As for ‘protagonist’ the word is so technical and is often so ludicrously misunderstood that writers on the Greek drama would do well to retain the Greek termination and say ‘protagonistes’; for ‘protagonist’ is very commonly mistaken and used for the opposite of ‘antagonist’.

Next come words beginning with *hypo* or *hyph*. In a disyllable the vowel is long by the ‘apex’ rule, as in ‘hyphen’. In longer words it should be short. So once it was, and we still say ‘hypocaust’, ‘hypocrit’, ‘hypochondria’ (whence ’hypped’), ‘hypothesis’, and others, but a large group of technical and scientific words seems determined to have a long *y*. It looks as though there were a belief that *y* is naturally long, though the French influence which gives us ‘t[=y]rant’ does not extend to ‘tyranny’. I do not know what Mr. Hardy calls his poem, but I hope he follows the old use and calls it ’The D[)y]nasts’. It

might be thought that ‘d[)y]nasty’ was safe, but it is not. Some modern words like ‘dynamite’ have been misused from their birth.

Another class begins with *hydro-* from the Greek word for water. None of them seem to be very old, but probably ‘hydraulic’ began life with a short *y*. Surely Mrs. Malaprop, when she meant ‘hysterics’ and said ‘hydrostatics’, must have used the short *y*. Of course ‘hydra’ which comes from the same root follows the ‘apex’ rule.

Page 22

Words beginning with *hyper-* seem nowadays always to have a long *y* except that one sometimes hears ‘h[)y]perbole’ and ‘h[)y]perbolical’. Of course both in *hypo-* and in *hyper-* the vowel is short in Greek, so that here at least the strange lengthening cannot be ascribed to the Grecians. The false theory of a long *y* has not affected ‘cynic’ or ‘cynical’, while ‘Cyril’ has been saved by being a Christian name. We may yet hope to retain *y* short in ‘cylinder’, ‘cynosure’, ‘lycanthropy’, ‘mythology’, ‘pyramid’, ‘pyrotechnic’, ‘sycamore’, ‘synonym’, ‘typical’. As for ‘h[=y]brid’ it seems as much a caprice as ‘[=a]crid’, a pronunciation often heard. Though ‘acrid’ is a false formation it ought to follow ‘vivid’ and ‘florid’. The ‘alias’ rule enforces a long *y* in ‘hygiene’ and ‘hygienic’.

On the matter of Greek names the lettern and the pulpit are grievous offenders. Once it was not so. The clergymen of the old type and the scholars of the Oxford Retrogression said T[)i]m[=o]th[)e][)u]s, because they had a sense of English and followed, consciously or unconsciously, the ‘alias’ rule. If there was ever an error, it was on the lips of some illiterate literate who made three syllables of the word. Now it seems fashionable to say T[=i]m[)o]th[)e][)u]s. The literate was better than this, for he at least had no theory, and frank ignorance is to be forgiven. It is no shame to a man not to know that the second *i* in ‘Villiers’ is as mute as that in ‘Parliament’ or that Bolingbroke’s name began with Bull and ended with brook, but when ignorance constructs a theory it is quite another matter. The etymological theory of pronunciation is intolerable. Etymology was a charming nymph even when men had but a distant acquaintance with her, and a nearer view adds to her graces; but when she is dragged reluctant from her element she flops like a stranded mermaid. The curate says ‘Deuteron[’o]my’, and on his theory ought to say ‘econ[’o]my’ and ‘etymol[’o]gy’. When Robert Gomery—why not give the reverend poetaster his real if less elegant name—published his once popular work, every one called it ’The Omn[’i]presence of the De[:i]ty’, and Shelley had already written

> And, as I look’d, the bright omn[’i]presence
> Of morning through the orient cavern flowed.

It is true that Ken a century earlier had committed himself to

> Thou while below wert yet on high
> By Omnipr[’e]sent Deity,

and later Coleridge, perhaps characteristically, had sinned with

> There is one Mind, one omnipr[’e]sent Mind,

but neither the bishop nor the poet would have said ‘omnisc[’i]ence’, or ‘omnip[’o]tence’.

Another word to show signs of etymological corruption is ‘[)e]volution’. It seems to have been introduced as a technical term of the art of war, and of course, like ‘d[)e]volution’,

shortened the *e*. The biologists first borrowed it and later seem desirous of corrupting it. Perhaps they think of such words as '[=e]gress', but the long vowel is right in the stressed penultimate.

Page 23

One natural tendency in English runs strongly against etymology. This is the tendency to throw the stress back, which about a century ago turned ‘cont[’e]mplate’ into ‘c[’o]ntemplate’ and somewhat later ‘ill[’u]strate’ into ‘[’i]llustrate’. Shakespeare and Milton pronounced ‘instinct’ as we pronounce ‘distinct’ and ‘aspect’ as we pronounce ‘respect’. Thus Belarius is made to say

’Tis wonder
That an invisible inst[’i]nct should frame them
To royalty unlearn’d,

and Milton has

By this new felt attraction and instinct,

and also

In battailous asp[’e]ct and neerer view.

The retrogression of the stress is in these instances well established, and we cannot quarrel with it; but against some very recent instances a protest may be made. One seems to be a corruption of the War. In 1884 the *N.E.D.* recognized no pronunciation of it save ‘all[’y]’, as in Romeo’s

This gentleman, the prince’s neer Alie.

The late Mr. B.B. Rogers in his translations of Aristophanes has of course no other pronunciation. His verses are too good to be spoiled by what began as a vulgarism. Another equally recent vulgarism, not recognized by the *N.E.D.* and bad enough to make George Russell turn in his grave, is ‘m[’a]gazine’ for ‘magaz[’i]ne’. It is not yet common, but such vulgarisms are apt to climb.

In times not quite so recent the word ‘prophecy’ has changed, not indeed its stress, but the quantity of its final vowel. When Alford wrote ‘The Queen’s English’, every one lengthened the last vowel, as in the verb, nor do I remember any other pronunciation in my boyhood. Now the *N.E.D.* gives the short vowel only. Alford to his own satisfaction accounted for the long vowel by the diphthong *ei* of the Greek. It is to be feared that his explanation would involve ‘dynast[=y]’ and ‘polic[=y]’, even if it did not oblige us to turn ‘Pompey’ into ‘Pomp[=y]’. In this case it may be suspected that the noun was assimilated to the verb, which follows the analogy of ‘magnify’ and ‘multiply’. The voice of the people which now gives us ‘prophec[)y]’ seems here to have felt the power of analogy and assuredly will prevail.

ON PROPER NAMES.

It is to be hoped that except in reading Latin and Greek texts we shall keep to the traditional pronunciation of proper names as it is enshrined in our poetry and other literature. We must continue to lengthen the stressed penultimate vowel in Athos, Cato, Draco, Eros, Hebrus, Lichas, Nero, Otho, Plato, Pylos, Remus, Samos, Titus, Venus, and the many other disyllables wherein it was short in the ancient tongues. On the other hand we shall shorten the originally long stressed antepenultimate vowel in Brasidas, Euripides, Icarus, Lavinia, Lucilius, Lydia, Nicias, Onesimus, Pegasus, Pyramus, Regulus, Romulus, Scipio, Sisyphus, Socrates, Thucydides, and many more.

Page 24

Quin, and the actors of his day, used to give to the first vowel in ‘Cato’ the sound of the *a* in ‘father’. They probably thought that they were Italianizing such names. In fact their use was neither Latin nor English. They were like the men of to-day who speak of the town opposite Dover as ‘Cally’, a name neither French nor English. A town which once sent members to the English Parliament has a right to an English name. Prior rhymed it with ‘Alice’ and Browning has

> When Fortune’s malice
> Lost her Calais.

Shakespeare, of course, spelt it ‘Callis’, and this form, which was first evicted by Pope, whom other editors servilely followed, ought to be restored to Shakespeare’s text. In the pronunciation of Cato the stage regained the English diphthong in the mouth of Garrick, whose good sense was often in evidence. It is recorded that his example was not at once followed in Scotland or Ireland. If there was any Highlander on the stage it may be hoped that he gave to the vowel the true Latin sound as it appears in ‘Mactavish’.

A once well-known schoolmaster, a correspondent of Conington’s, had a daughter born to him whom in his unregenerate days he christened Rosa. At a later time he became a purist in quantities, and then he shortened the *o* and took the voice out of the *s* and spoke of her and to her as Rossa. The mother and the sisters refused to acknowledge what they regarded as a touch of shamrock and clung persistently to the English flower. The good gentleman did not call his son Sol[=o]mon,[2] though this is the form which ought to be used by those who turn the traditional English ‘Elk[)a]nah’ into ‘Elk[=a]nah’, ‘Ab[)a]na’ into ‘Ab[=a]na’, and ‘Zeb[)u]lun’ into ‘Zeb[=u]lun’. If they do not know

> Poor Elk[)a]nah, all other troubles past,
> For bread in Smithfield dragons hiss’d at last,

yet at least they ought to know

> Of Abb[)a]na and Pharphar, lucid streams.

The malison of Milton on their heads! If the translators of the Bible had foreseen ‘Zeb[=u]lun’, they would have chosen some other word than ‘princes’ to avoid the cacophony of ‘the princes of Zeb[=u]lun’.

[Footnote 2: But pedantry would not suggest this. The New Testament has [Greek: Solom[^o]n], and the Latin Christian poets have the *o* short. True, the Vatican Septuagint has [Greek: Sal[^o]m[^o]n], but there the vowel of the first syllable is *a*.—H.B.]

That these usages were familiar is evident from the pronunciation of proper, especially Biblical, names. Thus ‘B[=a]bel’ and ‘B[)a]bylon’, ‘N[=i]nus’ and ‘N[)i]neveh’, were spoken as unconsciously as M[=i]chael’ and ‘M[)i]chaelmas’. Nobody thought of asking the quantity of the Hebrew vowels before he spoke of ‘C[=a]leb’ and ‘B[=a]rak’, of ‘G[)i]deon’ and ‘G[)i]lead’, of ‘D[)e]borah’ and ‘Ab[)i]melech’, of ‘[=E]phraim’ and ‘B[=e]lial’. The seeming exceptions can be explained. Thus

Page 25

the priest said ‘H[)e]rod’ because in the Vulgate he read ‘H[)e]rodes’, but there was no Greek or Latin form to make him say anything else than ‘M[=e]roz’, ‘P[=e]rez’, ‘S[=e]rah’, ‘T[=e]resh’. He said ‘[)A]dam’ because, although the Septuagint and other books retained the bare form of the name, there were other writings in which the name was extended by a Latin termination. There was no like extension to tempt him to say anything but ‘C[=a]desh’, ‘[=E]dom’, ‘J[=a]don’, ‘N[=a]dab’. I must admit my inability to explain ‘Th[)o]mas’, but doubtless there is a reason. The abbreviated form was of course first ‘Th[)o]m’ and then ‘T[)o]m’. Possibly the pet name has claimed dominion over the classical form. As in the *herba impia* of the early botanists, these young shoots sometimes refuse to be ‘trash’d for overtopping’.

A story is told of an eccentric Essex rector. He was reading in church the fourth chapter of Judges, and after ’Now D[)e]borah, a prophetess’, suddenly stopped, not much to the astonishment of the rustics, for they knew his ways. Then he went on ’Deb[)o]rah? Deb[)o]rah? Deb[=o]rah! Now Deb[=o]rah, a prophetess’, and so on. Probably a freak of memory had reminded him that the letter was omega in the Septuagint. It will be remembered that Miss Jenkyns in *Cranford* liked her sister to call her Deb[=o]rah, ’her father having once said that the Hebrew name ought to be so pronounced’, and it will not be forgotten that the good rector was too sound a scholar to read ‘Deb[=o]rah’ at the lettern.

An anecdote of Burgon’s is to the point. He had preached in St. Mary’s what he regarded as an epoch-making sermon, and afterwards he walked home to Oriel with Hawkins, the famous Provost. He looked for comment and hoped for praise, but the Provost’s only remark was, ’Why do you say Emm[=a]us?’ ‘I don’t know; isn’t it Emm[=a]us?’ ’No, no; Emm[)a]us, Emm[)a]us.’ When Hawkins was young, in the days of George III, every one said Emmaus, and in such matters he would say, ’I will have no innovations in my time.’ On the King’s lips the phrase, as referring to politics, was foolish, but Hawkins used it with sense.

PS.—I had meant to cite an anecdote of Johnson. As he walked in the Strand, a man with a napkin in his hand and no hat stept out of a tavern and said, ’Pray, Sir, is it irr[’e]parable or irrep[’a]irable that one should say?’—’The last, I think, Sir, for the adjective ought to follow the verb; but you had better consult my dictionary than me, for that was the result of more thought than you will now give me time for.’ The dictionary rightly gives *irr[’e]parable*, and both the rule and example of the Doctor’s *obiter dicta* (literally *obiter*) are wrong.

J.S.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

* * * * *

ADDENDA TO HOMOPHONES IN TRACT II

Several correspondents complain of the incompleteness of the list of Homophones in Tract II. The object of that list was to convince readers of the magnitude of the mischief, and the consequent necessity for preserving niceties of pronunciation: evidence of its incompleteness must strengthen its plea. The following words may be added; they are set here in the order of the literary alphabet.

Page 26

Add to Table I (p. 7)

band, [^1] *a tie*, [^2] *a company*.

bend, [^1] *verb*, [^2] *heraldic sub.*

bay, [^1] *tree*, [^2] *arm of sea*, [^3] *window*,
[^4] *barking of dog*, and '*at bay*',
[^5] *a dam*, [^6] *of antler*, [^7] *a colour*.

blaze, [^1] *of flame*, [^2] *to sound forth*.

bluff, [^1] *adj. & sub. = broad = fronted*,
[^2] *blinker*, [^3] *sub. and v. confusing* [^1] *and* [^2].

boom, [^1] *to hum*, [^2] _= beam_.

cant, [^1] *whine*, [^2] *to tilt*.

chaff, [^1] *of wheat*, [^2] _= chafe (slang)_.

cove, [^1] *a recess*, [^2] _= chap (slang)_.

file, [^1] *string*, [^2] *rasp*, [^3] _= to defile_.

grave, [^1] *sub.*, [^2] *adj.*

hind, [^1] *fem. of stag*, [^2] *a peasant*, [^3] *adj. of behind*.

limb, [^1] *member*, [^2] *edge*, [^3] limn.

limber, [^1] *shaft of cart (verb in artillery)*,
[^2] *naut. subs.*, [^3] *adj. pliant*.

loom, [^1] *subs.*, [^2] *v.*

nice, gneiss.

ounce, [^1] *animal*, [^2] *a weight*.

plash, [^1] _= pleach_, [^2] *a puddle*.

port, [^1] *demeanour, & military v.*,
[^2] *haven*, [^3] *gate & naut.= port-hole*,
[^4] _= larboard_, [^5] *a wine*.

shingle, [^1] *a wooden tile*, [^2] *gravel*,
[^3] (*in pl.*) *a disease*.

shrub, [^1] *a bush*, [^2] *a drink*.

smack, [^1] *a sounding blow*, [^2] *a fishing boat*, [^3] *taste*.

throw, throe.

Also note that *so* should be added to *sew, sow*, and that the words *leech*, *leach*, are not sufficiently credited with etymological variety: [see below p. 33].

To Table II add

when, *wen*.

To Table VIII

The following words, the absence of which has been noted, are not true homophones: —

crack fool fume gentle interest palm stem trip

To Table IX add

must [^1] *obs? new wine*, [^2] *verb.*

To Shakespearean obsoletes p. 27 add

limn, *lost in* limb.

* * * * *

THE SKILFUL LEECH

Page 27

The Poet Laureate has pointed out that several useful words have been lost to the English language because their identity in sound with other words renders it impossible to use them without the risk either of being misunderstood or of calling up undesirable associations. It is owing to this cause that English—or, at least, the English of Great Britain—has no word that can correctly be used as a general designation for a member of the healing profession. In America, I believe, the word is ‘physician’; but in England that appellation belongs to one branch of the profession exclusively. The most usual term here is ‘doctor’; but the M.D. rightly objects to the application of this title to his professional brother who has no degree; and in a university town to say that John Smith is a doctor would be inconveniently ambiguous. ‘Medical man’ is cumbrous, and has the further disadvantage (in these days) of not being of common gender. Now the lack of any proper word for a meaning so constantly needing to be expressed is certainly a serious defect in modern (insular) English. The Americans have some right to crow over us here; but their ‘physician’ is a long word; and though it has been good English in the sense of *medicus* for six hundred years, it ought by etymology to mean what *physicien* does in French, and *physicist* in modern English. Our ancestors were better off in this respect than either we or the Americans. The only native word to denote a practiser of the healing art is *leech*, which is better than the foreign ‘physician’ because it is shorter. It was once a term of high dignity: Chaucer could apply it figuratively to God, as the healer of souls; and even in the sixteenth century a poet could address his lady as ’My sorowes leech’. Why can we not so use it now? Why do we not speak of ’The Royal College of Leeches’? Obviously, because a word of the same form happens to be the name of an ugly little animal of disgusting habits. If I were to introduce my medical attendant to a friend with the words ‘This is my leech’, the gentleman (or lady) so presented would think I was indulging in the same sort of pleasantry as is used when a coachman is called a ‘whip’; and he (or she) would probably not consider the joke to be in the best of taste. Of course all educated people know that it was once not unusual to speak of a man of medicine as a ‘leech’; but probably there are many who imagine that this designation was a disparaging allusion to the man’s tool of trade, and that it could be applied only to inferior members of the profession. The ancient appellation of the healer is so far obsolete that if I were to answer a question as to a man’s profession with the words ’Oh, he is a leech’, there would be some risk of being misunderstood to mean that he was a money-lender.

Page 28

Etymologists generally have regarded the name of the bloodsucking animal as the same word with *leech* a physician, the assumption being that the animal received its name from its use as a remedial agent. But the early forms, both in English and Low German, show that the words are originally unconnected. The English for *medicus* was in the tenth century *l[’[ae]]ce* or *l[’e]ce*, and in the thirteenth century *leche*; the word for *sanguisuga* was in the tenth century *lyce*, and in the thirteenth century *liche*. According to phonetic law the latter word should have become *litch* in modern English; but it very early underwent a punning alteration which made it homophonous with the ancient word for physician. The unfortunate consequence is that the English language has hopelessly lost a valuable word, for which it has never been able to find a satisfactory substitute.

H.B.

DIFFERENTIATION OF HOMOPHONES

On this very difficult question the attitude of a careful English speaker is shown in the following extract from a letter addressed to us:

METAL, METTLE: AND PRINCIPAL, PRINCIPLE

’I find that I do not *naturally* distinguish *metal* and *mettle* in pronunciation, tho’ when there is any danger of ambiguity I say *metal* for the former and *met’l* for the latter; and I should probably do so (without thinking about it) in a public speech. In my young days the people about me usually pronounced *met’l* for both. Theoretically I think the distinction is a desirable one to make; the fact that the words are etymologically identical seems to me irrelevant. The words are distinctly two in modern use: when we talk of *mettle* (meaning spiritedness) there is in our mind no thought whatever of the etymological sense of the word, and the recollection of it, if it occurred, would only be disturbing. So I intend in future to pronounce metal as *met[e]l* (when I don’t forget). And I am not sure that *met[e]l* is, strictly speaking, a “spelling-pronunciation”: It is possible that the difference in spelling originated in a difference of pronunciation, not the other way about. For *metal* in its literal sense was originally a scientific word, and in that sense may have been pronounced carefully by people who would pronounce it carelessly when they used it in a colloquial transferred sense approaching to slang.

’The question of *principal* and *principle* is different. When I was young, educated people in my circle always, I believe, distinguished them; so to this day when I hear principal pronounced as principle it gives me a squirm, tho’ I am afraid nearly everybody does it now. That the words are etymologically distinct does not greatly matter; it is of more importance that I have sometimes been puzzled to know which word a speaker meant; if I remember right, I once had to ask.

Page 29

'It would be worth while to distinguish *flower* and *flour* (which originally, like *metal* and *mettle*, were the same word); yet in practice it is not easy to make the difference audible. The homophony is sometimes inconvenient.'

CORRECTION TO TRACT II

On p. 37 of TRACT II the words 'the Anglo-prussian society which Mr. Jones represents' have given offence and appear to be inaccurate. The German title of the series in which Jones's Dictionary is one has the following arrangement of words facing the English title:

HERAUSGEGEBEN

UND

DER "ASSOCIATION PHON['E]TIQUE INTERNATIONALE" GEWIDMET

VON

H. MICHAELIS,

and this misled me. I am assured that, though the dictionary may be rightly described as Anglo-Prussian, the Phonetic Association is Gallo-Scandinavian. In behalf of the S.P.E. I apologize to the A. Ph. I. for my mistake which has led one of its eminent associates to accuse me of bearing illwill towards the Germans. The logic of that reproach baffles me utterly.

[R.B.]

* * * * *

SOME LEXICAL MATTERS

FAST = QUICK OR FIRM

'An Old Cricketer' writes:

'After reading your remarks on the ambiguity of the word *fast* (Tract III, p. 12) I read in the report of a Lancashire cricket match that *Makepeace was the only batsman who was fast-footed*. But for the context and my knowledge of the game I should have

concluded that Makepeace kept his feet immovably on the crease; but the very opposite was intended. At school we used to translate [Greek: podas [^o]kus Achilleus] “swift-footed Achilles”, and I took that to mean that Achilles was a sprinter. I suppose *quick-footed* would be the epithet for Makepeace.’

SPRINTER is a good word, though *Sprinting Achilles* could not be recommended.

BRATTLE

A correspondent from Newcastle writes advocating the recognition of the word *brattle* as descriptive of thunder. It is a good old echo-word used by Dunbar and Douglas and Burns and by modern English writers. It is familiar through the first stanza of Burns’s poem ’To a Mouse’.

Wee sleekit cow’rin tim’rous beastie,
O what a panic’s in thy breastie.
Thou need na start awa sae hasty
Wi’ bickering brattle....

which is not suggestive of thunder. The *N.E.D.* explains this as ’to run with brattling feet, to scamper’.

In Burns’s ‘A Winter Night’, it is the noisy confusion of *biting Boreas* in the bare trees and bushes:

I thought me on the ourie cattle
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
O’ winter war.

Page 30

It is possible that *brattle* has fallen into disuse through too indiscriminate application. After Burns's famous poem the word can establish itself only in the sense of a scurrying dry noise: it is too small for thunder.

We would call attention to the principle involved in this judgement, for it is one of the main objects of our society to assist and guide Englishmen in the use of their language by fully exposing the facts that should determine their practice. Every word has its history, and no word can prosper in the speech or writing of those who do not respect its inherited and unalterable associations; these cannot be got rid of by ignoring them. Littr['e] in the preface to his dictionary claims for it this pre-eminent quality of usefulness, that it will enable his countrymen to speak and write good French by acquainting them with historic tradition, and he says that it was enthusiasm for this one purpose that sustained him in his great work. Its object was to harmonize the present use of the language with the past usage, in order that the present usage may possess all the fullness, richness, and certitude which it can have, and which naturally belong to it. His words are: 'Avant tout, et pour ramener [`a] une id['e]e m[`e]re ce qui va [^e]tre expliqu['e] dans la *Pr['e]face*, je dirai, d['e]finissant ce dictionnaire, qu'il embrasse et combine l'usage pr['e]sent de la langue et son usage pass['e], afin de donner [`a] l'usage pr['e]sent toute la pl['e]nitude et la s[^u]ret['e] qu'il comporte.'

It is the intention of our society to offer only expert and well-considered opinion on these literary matters, which are often popularly handled in the newspapers and journals as fit subjects for private taste and uninformed prejudice: and since the Oxford Dictionary has done more fully for English what Littr['e] did for French, our task is comparatively easy. But experts cannot be expected, all of them, to have the self-denying zeal of ['E]mile Littr['e], and the worth of our tracts will probably improve with the increase of our subscribers.

BICKER

As Burns happens to use *bickering* as his epithet for the mouse's brattle, we may take this word as another illustration of Littr['e]'s principle. The *N.E.D.* gives the original meaning as *skirmish*, and quotes Shakespeare,

> If I longer stay
> We shall begin our ancient bickerings,

which a man transposing the third and fourth words might say to-day without rising above colloquial speech; but there is another allied signification which Milton has in

> Smoak and bickering flame;

and this is followed by many later writers. It would seem therefore, if the word is to have a special sense, that it must be focused in the idea of something that both wavers and skirmishes, and this suggests another word which caught our eye in the dictionary, that is

Page 31

BRANGLE

It is defined in the *N.E.D.* as ‘a brawl, wrangle, squabble’ and marked *obsolete*. It seems to differ from its numerous synonyms by the suggestion of what we call a muddle: that is an active wrangling which has become inextricably confused.

SURVIVALS IN LANCASHIRE SPEECH

Mr. Ernest Stenhouse sends us notes on Tract II, from which we extract the following:

’*Poll* (= to cut the hair) is still familiar in Lancashire. *Tickle* (unstable) is obsolescent but not yet obsolete. As a child I often heard *meterly* (= moderately): *e.g*. *meterly fausse* (? false) = moderately cunning. It may still be in use. *Bout* (= without = A.S. butan) is commonly heard.

’The words tabulated in Tract II, p. 34, and the following pairs are not homophones in Lancashire: stork, stalk; pattern, patten; because although the *r* in stork and pattern is not trilled as in Scotland, it is distinctly indicated by a modification of the preceding vowel, somewhat similar to that heard in the *[(or]e* words (p. 35).

’Homophony may arise from a failure to make distinctions that are recognized in P.S.P. Thus in Lancashire the diphthong sound in *flow*, *snow*, *bone*, *coal*, *those*, &c., is very often pronounced as a pure vowel (cf. French *eau*, *mot*): hence confusion arises between *flow* and *flaw*, *sow* and *saw*, *coal* and *call*: both these vowel sounds tending to become indistinguishable from the French *eau*.’

FEASIBLE

Feasible is a good example of a word which appears in danger of being lost through incorrect and ignorant use. It can very well happen that a word which is not quite comfortable may feel its way to a useful place in defiance of etymology; and in such cases it is pedantry to object to its instinctive vagaries. But *feasible* is a well-set comfortable word which is being ignorantly deprived of its useful definite signification. In the following note Mr. Fowler puts its case clearly, and his quotations, being typically illustrative of the manner in which this sort of mischief comes about, are worthy of attention.

’With those who feel that the use of an ordinary word for an ordinary notion does not do justice to their vocabulary or sufficiently exhibit their cultivation, who in fact prefer the stylish to the working word, *feasible* is now a prime favourite. Its proper sense is “capable of being done, accomplished, or carried out”. That is, it means the same as *possible* in one of the latter’s senses, and its true function is to be used instead of

possible where that might be ambiguous. *A thunderstorm is possible* (but not *feasible*). Irrigation is possible (or, indifferently, *feasible*). *A counter-revolution is possible*; *i.e*., (a) one may for all we know happen, or (b) we can if we choose bring one about; but, if *b* is the meaning, *feasible* is better than *possible* because it cannot properly bear sense *a*, and therefore obviates ambiguity.

Page 32

'The wrong use of *feasible* is that in which, by a slipshod extension, it is allowed to have also the other sense of *possible*, and that of *probable*. This is described by the highest authority as "hardly a justifiable sense etymologically, and ... recognized by no dictionary". It is however becoming very common; in all the following quotations, it will be seen that the natural word would be either *possible* or *probable*, one of which should have been chosen:—Continuing, Mr. Wood said: "I think it is very feasible that the strike may be brought to an end this week, and it is a significant coincidence that ...". / Witness said it was quite feasible that if he had had night binoculars he would have seen the iceberg earlier. / We ourselves believe that this is the most feasible explanation of the tradition. / This would appear to offer a feasible explanation of the scaffold puzzle.'

PROTAGONIST

Mr. Sargeaunt (on p. 26) suggests that we might do well to keep the full Greek form of this word, and speak and write *protagonistes*. Familiarity with *Agonistes* in the title of Milton's drama, where it is correctly used as equivalent to 'mighty champion', would be misleading, and the rejection of the English form 'protagonist' seems otherwise undesirable. The following remarks by Mr. Fowler show that popular diction is destroying the word; and if ignorance be allowed its way we shall have a good word destroyed.

'The word that has so suddenly become a prime favourite with journalists, who more often than not make it mean champion or advocate or defender, has no right whatever to any of those meanings, and almost certainly owes them to the mistaking of the first syllable (representing Greek [Greek: pr[^o]tos] "first") for [Greek: pro] "on behalf of"—a mistake made easy by the accidental resemblance to *antagonist*. "Accidental", since the Greek [Greek: ag[^o]nist[^e]s] has different meanings in the two words, in one "combatant", but in the other "play-actor". The Greek [Greek: pr[^o]tag[^o]nist[^e]s] means the actor who takes the chief part in a play—a sense readily admitting of figurative application to the most conspicuous personage in any affair. The deuteragonist and tritagonist take parts of second and third importance, and to talk of several protagonists, or of a chief protagonist or the like, is an absurdity. In the newspapers it is a rarity to meet *protagonist* in a legitimate sense; but two examples of it are put first in the following collection. All the others are outrages on this learned-sounding word, because some of them distinguish between chief protagonists and others who are not chief, some state or imply that there are more protagonists than one in an affair, and the rest use *protagonist* as a mere synonym for advocate.

'Legitimate uses: *The "cher Hal['e]vy" who is the protagonist of the amazing dialogue. / Marco Landi, the protagonist and narrator of a story which is skilfully contrived and excellently told, is a fairly familiar type of soldier of fortune.*

Page 33

’Absurd uses with *chief*, &c.: *The chief protagonist is a young Nonconformist minister. / Unlike a number of the leading protagonists in the Home Rule fight, Sir Edward Carson was not in Parliament when.... / It presents a spiritual conflict, centred about its two chief protagonists, but shared in by all its characters.*

’Absurd plural uses: *One of the protagonists of that glorious fight for Parliamentary Reform in 1866 is still actively among us. / One of these immense protagonists must fall, and, as we have already foreshadowed, it is the Duke. / By a tragic but rapid process of elimination most of the protagonists have now been removed. / As on a stage where all the protagonists of a drama assemble at the end of the last act. / That letter is essential to a true understanding of the relations of the three great protagonists at this period. / The protagonists in the drama, which has the motion and structure of a Greek tragedy* (Fy! fy!—a Greek tragedy and protagonists?).

’Confusions with *advocate*, &c.: *The new Warden is a strenuous protagonist of that party in Convocation. / Mr ——, an enthusiastic protagonist of militant Protestantism. / The chief protagonist on the company’s side in the latest railway strike, Mr ——. / It was a happy thought that placed in the hands of the son of one of the great protagonists of Evolution the materials for the biography of another. / But most of the protagonists of this demand have shifted their ground. / As for what the medium himself or his protagonists may think of them—for etymological purposes that is neither here nor there.*

’Perhaps we need not consider the Greek scholar’s feelings; he has many advantages over the rest of us, and cannot expect that in addition he shall be allowed to forbid us a word that we find useful. Is it useful? or is it merely a pretentious blundering substitute for words that are useful? *Pro-* in *protagonist* is not the opposite of *anti-*; _-agonist_ is not the same as in *antagonist*; *advocate* and *champion* and *defender* and *combatant* are better words for the wrong senses given to *protagonist*; and *protagonist* in its right sense of *the* (not *a*) chief actor in an affair has still work to do if it could only be allowed to mind its own business.’

* * * * *

AMERICAN APPRECIATION

We are glad to reprint the following short extracts from the *New York Times Book Review and Magazine*, September 26, 1920.

’THE CAMPAIGN FOR PURE ENGLISH

Page 34

’Among those who joined it (the S.P.E.) immediately were Arthur J. Balfour, A.C. Bradley, Austin Dobson, Thomas Hardy, J.W. Mackail, Gilbert Murray, Mrs. Humphry Ward, and Mrs. Wharton.... The rallying of these men and women of letters was not more significant than the prompt adhesion of the Professors of English in the various British Universities: W.M. Dixon, Oliver Elton, E.S. Gordon, C.H. Herford, W.P. Ker, G.C. Moore-Smith, F.W. Moorman, A. Quiller-Couch, George Saintsbury, and H.C.K. Wyld....’There is a peril to the proper development of the language in offensive affectations, in persistent pedantry, and in other results of that comprehensive ignorance of the history of English, which we find plentifully revealed in many of our grammars. It is high time that men who love the language, who can use it deftly and forcibly, and who are acquainted with the principles and the processes of its growth, should raise the standard of independence....’It is encouraging to realize that the atrophy of the word-making habit is less obvious in the United States than it is in Great Britain.... We cannot but regret that it is not now possible to credit to their several inventors American compounds of a delightful expressiveness—*windjammer, loan-shark, scare-head*, and that more delectable *pussy-footed*—all of them verbal creations with an imaginative quality almost Elizabethan in its felicity, and all of them examples of the purest English.... We Americans made the compound *farm-hand*, and employ it in preference to the British [English?] *agricultural labourer*.’*The attention of the officers of the society may be called to the late Professor Lounsbury’s lively and enlightening* History of the English Language, *and to Professor George Philip Krapp’s illuminating study of* Modern English.

BRANDER MATTHEWS.’

* * * * *

REPORT

Of the proceedings of the Society for the first year ending Xmas, 1920.

The Society still remains governed by the small committee of its original founders: the support of the public and the press has been altogether satisfactory: the suggestions and programme which the committee originally put forward have met with nothing but favourable criticism; no opposition has been aroused, and we are therefore encouraged to meet the numerous invitations that we have received from all parts of the English-speaking world to make our activities more widely known. The sale of the Tracts has been sufficient to pay their expenses; and we are in this respect very much indebted to the Oxford University Press for its generous co-operation; for it has enabled us to offer our subscribers good workmanship at a reasonable price. The publication of this Tract IV closes our first ‘year’: we regret that the prevalent national disturbances have extended it beyond the solar period, but the conditions render explanation and apology needless.

Page 35

Our list shows 188 members, and their names include many well-known men of letters, Professors of Literature, Editors, Journalists, and others interested in the history and present condition of the language. Nineteen members sent donations (above 10s. 6d.) which together amounted to about 40 pounds; and thirty-two sent subscriptions of ten shillings for the supply of one year's publications.

To these subscribers (whose names are printed in the list below) all the four Tracts for this year have been sent: and it will appear that since they might have bought the four Tracts for 7s. 6d., they have made a donation of 2s. 6d. apiece to the funds of the Society. This margin is very useful and we hope that they will renew their 10s. subscription in advance for the ensuing year. That will ensure their receiving the Society's papers as they are issued, and it will much assist the machinery of publication. Also Members who have not hitherto subscribed are now specially invited to do so. They can judge of the Society's work, and can best support it in this way. The publications of 1921 *will be sent as soon as issued to all such subscribers*.

Subscriptions may be sent to the Secretary, L. Pearsall Smith, 11 St. Leonard's Terrace, Chelsea, London, S.W., to whom all communications should be addressed, or they may be paid direct to 'Treasurer of S.P.E.', Barclay's Bank, High Street, Oxford.

* * * * *

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS

*+ Aikin, Dr. W.A., 66 Bedford Gardens.
* Bennett, Arnold, 80 Piccadilly.
Bottomley, Gordon, The Sheiling, Silverdale, Carnforth.
Brindley, H.H., 25 Madingly Road, Cambridge.
* Brown, Miss E.O., Bournstream, Wotton-under-Edge.
Carleton, Brig.-Gen. L.R., Holmdale, Grasmere.
* Case, Thomas, Corpus Christi College, Oxford.
Curtis, James, 179 Marylebone Road, N.W. 1.
Dixon, Prof. J. Main, Univ. S. California, Los Angeles.
Elliott, Rear-Adml. H.V., 13 South Road, Weston-super-Mare.
Fry, Miss Agnes, Failand House, nr. Bristol.
* Gainsford, W.D., Skendleby Hall, Spilsbury.
* Harman, Capt. H.A., D.S.O., King's College, Lagos, S. Nigeria.
Headlam, Rev. Stewart, Wavertree, St. Margaret-on-Thames.
* Henderson, T., Upumulo Napumulo, Natal.
Horniman, Miss A.E.F., 1h.* Montague Mansions, W. 1.
Hunt, Howard L., Univ. S. California, Los Angeles.
* Lacy, Miss H., Highbury Crescent, N. 5.
+ Lawrence, A., 13 Norfolk Crescent, W. 2.

Lindsay, Prof. W.M., 5 Howard Place, St. Andrews.
Melland, E. Alport, Bakewell.
Morton, G.H., 13 Kimberley Terrace, Tredegar.
* Muirhead, L., Haseley Court, Wallingford.
* Nickerson, Rev. D., Newton-on-Ouse, York.
* O’May, J., c/o Messrs. Barker & Co., Singapore.
Partington, S., Sunny

Page 36

Brow, Eden Mount, Grange on Sands, Lancs.
* Pickering-Jones, J., West Africa House, Water Street, Liverpool.
Portal, Miss E., 82 Carlisle Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.
* Pryor, Mrs., Lannock Manor, Stevenage, Herts.
Ramsden, William, Marshfield, Huddersfield.
Reade, H.V., 181 Queen's Gate, S.W.
Rieder, Madame A., Lyceum Club, 128 Piccadilly.
Robinson, Frances G., The Towers, Sneyd Park, nr. Bristol.
Samuel, Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert, 31 Porchester Terrace, Hyde Park.
Sampson, John, University Library, Liverpool.
Scrivener, Miss J., The Ladies' College, Cheltenham.
* Sheldon, E.W., 46 Park Avenue, New York.
Shepherd, Arthur, 46 Edwardes Square, W. 8.
* Strachey, Lady, 51 Gordon Square, W.C.
Teixeira de Mattos, A., 9 Cheltenham Terrace, S.W. 3.
Thompson, Rev. E.J., Wesleyan College, Bankura, Bengal.
* Tilley A., 2 Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge.
Warrington, T.C., High School, Leek, Staffs.
* Waterhouse, Mrs. T.C., Lomberdale Hall, Bakewell.
Wheeler, Horace L., Public Library, Back Bay, Boston, Mass.
Wigram, Col. Clive, 37 Chester Square, S.W. 1.
Wollaston, G.H., Flaxley Cottage, Flax Bourton.
++ The Ladies' College, Cheltenham. ++ Queen's University, Belfast. ++ Minnesota University. ++ Princeton University.

* Donors of above 10s. 6d.

+ Subscribers for 1921.

++ Universities, Colleges, or Libraries to which the issues of 1921 will be sent without prepayment.

The secretary should be informed of any error in the above addresses, and of any permanent change of address.

FINIS