Shakespearian Pronunciation. [April,

cial understanding, and to natural affection, will allow more to reason and imagination, and will more successfully reconcile nature and the supernatural, science and faith, philosophy and religion. His theology serves its end as a stepping-stone to something better, and will presently be left behind. But the man Theodore Parker, as a moral force, as a character, as a noble human soul, will live, as such always do, and will be immortal, as such always are. He will live in his friends as a part, and the better part, of their life. He will live in their children and their children's children as an inherent power of principle. He will live in the moral sentiments he stimulated, in the moral causes he aided. He will live in the wiser laws of the future time which he aimed at introducing, in the worthier customs which he did his best to implant, and in the nobler institutions at whose foundations he worked with such manly and self-sacrificing energy. He will not be celebrated among the great masters of philosophy, or among the great authors of religion. His life will be hid; but it will be hid in the deep heart of humanity.


It has come to pass that in our day we have two separate languages.—English spoken and English printed. The words of some of our authors were composed upon paper, when they are read aloud, they sound almost like translations; they may not lack rhythm and euphony, but it is a rhythm and a euphony that the eye can see. Another class, on the other hand, among whom Shakespeare is pre-eminent, can only be quite comprehended, appreciated, and accompanied in the spoken language; the print may give an indication of what that is, but it is only in that that the words breathe and are quick. It cannot, then, be useless to point out precisely how Shakespeare pronounced. It may be a small portion of the commentary upon his works, but no sincere disciple of his will despise labor bestowed even on this small object. And a knowledge of the old pronunciation is not merely a curious thing; it leads to other knowledge, highly important. It suggests many corrections of the text, and repels many previous emendations far less credible. By showing, in many places, puns hitherto unnoticed, it gives us an understanding of lines hitherto unintelligible. Besides this, it helps us in discovering the derivations of words; and finally, it renders clear and indisputable the fact that our forefathers possessed a more rational, though less constraining, system of orthography than our own.

Two methods of investigating this subject have been proposed. One is by means of rhymes, puns, misspellings, and other such indications. This is the process of Mr. White and Professor Craik. Its value is best estimated by applying it to the literature of our own day. Thus Thomas Hood is a peerless master of puns, yet, excluding those which present an identity in spelling, one out of three of his are imperfect in sound. So the "Voices of the Night," and "In Memoriam" will compare in point of polish with any poems of Shakespeare's day; yet in the former the proportion of imperfect rhymes is one in nine, and in the latter one in seven. We are aware that a notion is rife that such rhymes are not allowed in the Elizabethan era; but some extracts from Spencer, printed phonetically by the tutor of Milton, display fully the modern proportion of them; that is to say, the lines frequently do not rhyme to the eye, as they should do when so printed, and as they are sometimes forced to do by the editor's spelling one of the words differently from his usual way. As for bad spelling, it is usually utterly irrational, or, if it be phonetic, it is the phonetics of a man whose pronunciation and ear are as rude as his spelling. Doctor Johnson observes that every language has two pronunciations: one, which is regular and sedate, is its
true orthoepy; the other, existing in colloquial and vulgar use, is merely a corruption of the former. Now it is to this latter only that researches like Mr. White's can be directed, and it is an extremely interesting subject of antiquarian research; but it must be evident to every reader that the study of that which is irregular and various can only be successfully prosecuted when founded upon a thorough knowledge of that more stable thing about which it shifts and veers. Moreover, the conclusions to which this method has led have been very strange, and have been very frequently corrected or reversed by their authors.

The other method consists in collecting the positive statements of original orthoepical and phonetical writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is the process of Mr. Marsh, whose chapter on this subject is admirable both for the skillful conduct of the inquiry and for the undogmatical manner in which its conclusions are presented. Let it not be supposed that authorities are wanting for such an examination. No less than six phonographical systems of Shakespeare's day are preserved to us.* Here are their titles:


1590. John Hart. On Orthographie: containing the due order and reason how to write or paint thin gloze of manner's voice, most like to the life or nature. London. 8°.

1592. [William] Bullokar. A Booke at large, for the amendment of Orthographie, for English speech; wherein a most perfect spoyle is made for the wanes and double sound of Letters in the Olde Orthographie, with Examples for the same. With ease confidence and use of both Orthographies to save expense in Books for a time, until this amendment grow to a generall use, for the ease, spoyle, and perfect reading and writing of English, (the speech not changed, as some untruly and maliciously, or at least ignorantly blow abroad,) etc. London. 4°.

The last work we found in the library of Harvard College, which is very rich in school-books, new and old. The tract of Smith, and the Feminine Monarchy of Butler, were kindly lent to us by the trustees of the Boston Public Library. Malcaster's Electorarius, and Coke's English School-Master, were obtained from private libraries.

1590. Peter Bales. Writing Schoolemaster; containing three Books in one; the first, teaching Swift Writing; the second, True Writing; the third, Faire Writing. London. 4°.


The Feminine Monarchy, or the history of bees. Shewing their admirable Nature, and Properties; their Generation and Colonies; their Government, Loyalty, Art, Industrie; Enemies, VVars, Magnanimity, &c. together with the right ordering of them from tim to tim; and the sweet Profit arising therof. Written out of experience. Oxford. 1634. 4°

It is often said that from these works we can ascertain what words were pronounced alike, but not what sounds they had. The mode of removing this difficulty is as follows. We should first consider, in a general way, the amount of change that the language has undergone in two hundred and fifty years. This certainly is not very great. We find that almost all words which now have a peculiar pronunciation are peculiarly represented in these phonetic systems. Such, for instance, as lieutenant, Cateswold, iron, subtitle, of, borough, etc. Hence, no very great amount of change can be admitted. We must also consider what directions the language is changing, and how its present pronunciation differs from the Saxon. Then, with regard to each sound, we must consult the grammars from our own time, backward to the time of Shakespeare, noting what changes have occurred in their rules for the sounds of the letters, and in their statements of the equivalency of our sounds with those of other languages. This process can hardly ever deceive us. Let us exemplify this mode of procedure by an actual study of the sounds. We shall be able to refer to but three of the above-mentioned phonotypical authors,—Smith, Butler, and Gil; the last is, however, probably the best of them all.*

* A seventh, by one Wade, is referred to by an old writer as exhibiting a very vulgar pronunciation; writing, for instance, 'Lañon' or 'Laña' for 'London,' like the linkley, and burgeman.
In this article, words will be put under one head, which, with us, convey the same sound. The mode in which we shall indicate the vowel-sounds is that of Mr. Jennison, in his admirable introduction to Hillard’s Reader; it is best explained by an example: ‘plain’ means the vowel-sound in ‘plain.’ Let the reader understand, therefore, when a word is enclosed in single quotation-marks, with certain letters italicized, that which is denoted is simply the sound of the italicized letters.

Of the Consonantal Sounds.

J. The substitution of y for j in old authors has occasioned the assumption that j was pronounced by them, as in some parts of Europe now, with the force of y.\(^1\) Gil’s testimony is very exact. He says:—

\(^1\) “G before a, o, or u is pronounced with the pure and German sound, as it is before consonants, in gloria and gratia; before e or i, for the most part, as by the Italians in gentile and gierene; for even so we sound a giant, a gilet, ginger, gente, changed, and other words. Some nations may perhaps express this sound by eyy, we by simple g before e or i, but before a, o, and u always by j consonant; for in Jason, Goffrey, Ginger, Joseph, and a Judge, the g and j have the same pronunciation; the ey, even, following the u in the latter word, having the same sound as the j preceding it.”

Judah was pronounced ‘Yuda.’

Q. Mr. White has taken the ground that qu was pronounced “like simple k; and often represented by it in many words in which the full sound of the former combination is now heard.”\(^3\)

Sir Thomas Smith summarily ejects the letter from his alphabet, as beggarly, false, servile, infirm, and lame, having no power without its staff u, and with u no better than k.\(^4\) Barret in his “Alvearie,” or Bee-Hive, doubtless the most charming dictionary of our language, leaving the alphabet to be reformed “by better learned men,” contents himself with the following animadversion:

10th April, 1861.

“Q hath long been superfluous used in writing English words, whereas the Greeks never knew it, neither could the English Saxons ever abide the abuse thereof, but always used K when such occasion served. And security, I think, reason, and the better judgement of the case will teach a young beginner, that Quest, Quarell, etc. male be as well, and as easily spelled with K, as Ruest, Kumarre, etc., for it appeareth that Q is no single letter, but compounded of K and U, which soundeth Q.”\(^1\)

Ch. There is abundance of testimony that this digraph was pronounced precisely as at present. “It is the peculiarity of the English tongue,” says Gil, “to express by ch that sound that the Italians give to c in piacevole.”\(^2\) White thinks that in speech, beseech, &c., it had the k sound; but Mulcaster observes, “The strong ch is more foren, and therefore endeth no word with us, but is turned into k.”\(^3\) He also says, “For ch, where it is strong the number is not manie, and therefor it manie well abide the perpendicular accent over the coplement, as charact, ar’changell.”\(^4\) Now he does not use this accent over any ch not now pronounced k. Mr. White must have come upon a provincialism of “the Scotch and Transpantane English” noticed by Sir T. Smith.\(^5\)

Gil. The sound of this guttural must have been atomic and faint, for Barret, Smith, and Jonson make it equivalent to k.\(^7\) But Bulloker and Gil assign to it a separate character. Its sound must have been disappearing at Shakespeare’s time, for in 1628 it was a provincialism.\(^8\) Smith and Gil sound it in almost all words, but never in delight &c. not always in high.\(^9\) Coote, in his “English Schoole-Master,” 15th ed., 1624, one of the most valuable of our authorities, says:

“(Ch.) Coming together, except in Ghost, are of most men but little

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1 White’s Shakespeare, Vol. VII. p. 141.
2 Logonorum Angl., p. 2. See also B. Jonson (Gifford’s ed., 1816), IX. 252; and Wallis, p. 38.
3 White’s Shakespeare, II. 320 and XII. 450.
4 fol. 29.
5 Albemarle, 2d ed., 1580, sub tit. Q. See also Guanzerus de Diplomaticis [1646], ed. 1668, p. 20 E; Gil, p. 9; Wallis, Grammatica Linguae Anglicana, 1630, p. 49.
6 p. 137.
7 fol. 29.
8 fol. 29.
9 For delight, Gil, p. 27, 114, 141. For high, Gil, pp. 21, 34, 74, 98, and 24, 24, 83, 100.
sounded, as might, fight, pronounced as mie, fil: but in the end of a
word some countries sound them fully, others not at all: as some say,
plough, slough, bough: other, plane, slow, bow. Thereupon some write
barrow, some, barrow: but the truth is both to watch, and pronounce
them. 1

Gil mentions 'that the common pronunciation was in many
respects ambiguous; and instances enough and ever: 2 Smith
sometimes spells 'laugh' laf. It is probable that $f$ was fre-
quently substituted for $gh$.

St was equivalent to the French ch and German sh.

"I say," says Smith, "that its sound comes nearer to s and y than to
s and h; and that you may understand more clearly what I mean, first
sound our word for the informal regions. Quintus, Hid.: Smith.
Preserve that sound entire, and prefix an s. Quintus, Shel. 3 Smith.
You see that that does not make our word for coach. But now sound
g-y-t. Qv. Yd. Smith. And prefix an s, preserving the former sound
and making one syllable. Qv. Syd. Smith. I put it to you now,
Quintus, which of these sounds comes nearer to the word shell." 4

The pronunciation of tion, sion, tiel, c. is shrouded with
difficulty and doubt. They seem in many instances to be dis-
syllable in pronunciation; but Professor Craik inclines, with
some hesitation, to the belief that such lines as

"But for your private satisfaction"

are to be regarded as truncated lines; and has, on the whole,
no doubt that words ending in 'tion' and 'sion' had in the
age of Shakespeare already come to be sounded exactly as at
the present day. 5 The unabbreviated notation of these end-
ings in the phonetic system of Gil shows that he regarded them
as disyllable, and we are not therefore surprised at his state-
ment that words of these terminations are sometimes contracted
by synæresis. Sidney, in his "Defence of Poesie," also gives
'motion' and 'potion' as instances of English dactyls, and
Puttenham instructs us that 'remuneration' makes two good
dactyls. 6 Are we then to infer, with Mr. Marsh, that 'motion'
and 'potion' were pronounced 'no-shi-on' and 'po-shi-on'? To this Mulcaster would answer:—

4 fol. 40. 5 English of Shakespeare, p. 168. 6 Apud Marsh, p. 530.

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SHAKESPEARIAN PRONUNCIATION.

"The kepeth one force still saving where a vowel followeth after, l-
as in action, discretion, consumption, whereas, t, soundeth like the full s,
or strong [weak] $s$, so the words where it is so used, be altogether
strangers." 1

In fewer words, Wallis:—

"If before followed by another vowel is sounded, like the hissing
s, . . . . . but in question, mixture, and wherever else $t$ follows the letter
s or z, it retains its pure sound." 2

These authorities, with a number of others, seem to bear out
the view that $t$ was pronounced in these words as in modern
French. 3 It seems improbable that 'tion,' even in its con-
tracted form, was pronounced 'shun,' as the forms shun
and shun are never met with in the old books and manu-
scripts, although we continually meet with shun, syon, syon,
and son. Could the present aspirated pronunciation have ex-
isted in the popular speech, and have failed to manifest itself
in the infinitely varied cacography of the time,—especially when
it is considered that in 1675 the aspirated spelling of 'tion'
was the prevalent form in which the juvenile depravity mani-
fested itself? 4 We must, however, confess that the weight of
direct authority upon this point is weakened by the following
consideration. The whole vocal interval between sh and si is
filled up with innumerable possible sounds, which, both with
respect to their formation in the mouth and the sound itself in
the ear, differ not at all in kind, but only in degree, resulting
from the greater or less proximity of the tongue to the palate
and teeth. The sound of tion was once undoubtedly si-on, but
during the progress to shun it probably rested for generations
on some of these intermediate semi-vocals. Now, in all gram-
mars and dictionaries, down to the middle of the last century,
'tion' and 'sion' are still described as sounding shun or
syon, although, from a chance remark in De la Touche's L'Art
de bien Parler Français (Amsterdam, 1704), we discern that
ever since that was written, at the least, they have been pro-

1 Elem., p. 122. 2 p. 47.
3 Baré, Coote, Ben Jonson, Gataker, and Gil. See also Perdval's Spanish
Grammar, edited by the English Minshiu, and prefixed to his Spanish Dictionary.
London. 1623, p. 6. Also, Coegrave's French Dictionary, 1667.
4 Nie Strong, English Perfect School-Master, 10th ed. (enlarged), 1704. Li-
ceased, 1675.
SHAKESPEAREAN PRONUNCIATION.

...nounced exactly as they now are. Moreover, the orthoepists of those days used ordinarily to describe sh as equivalent to sy. How natural, then, for them to call what was really near shi, st. We therefore conclude,—1st, that -tion and -ion are dissyllabic, but could be contracted to one syllable; and, 2d, that they had nearly, if not quite, the modern French sound.

Th. The arguments used by a writer in the Atlantic Monthly, Vol. III. p. 241, seem to us to demonstrate that this “complement” had its two modern sounds: Wallis, whose descriptions of the sounds, renowned as they are, are even more accurate than has been imagined, says:—

*In pronouncing T; if the breath go forth more thickly, the Greek Theta is formed, the Hebrew Thau aspirated, and the Arabic Th; this is the English Th in the words high, thin, thought, through, etc. The Anglo-Saxons used to write it with a Spiua: ... In pronouncing the letter D; if the breath breaks forth more grossly, and as through a hole, the Arabic Dhal is formed, the aspirated Hebrew Daleth, and the Spanish d soft, as that letter is used in the middle and end of words, as Majestad, Trinidad, etc. The English represent this sound in the same way as the one mentioned above, namely by th, as in the words they, thin, this, though, etc.

Mr. White thinks the sound of the French t in nuetres, and the Irish th in further is the sound indicated. But it cannot be a French or Irish sound, for both those peoples are represented, both in the plays and grammars of the period, as unable to pronounce the th.

Th was probably vulgarly and provincially interchanged with t. At least the eocographie of the period seems to indicate this, and Gil says, “Certainly, where the dialect varies, I readily suffer the writing itself to be least consistent; as, further or farther; murder or murderer.” But this looseness must not be exaggerated. Of the hundred words given by Gil in which the th sound now occurs, only author, Arthur, and certain ordinal numerals have the t; while murder is the only word in which his th would now be d or t. Mulcaster’s general table contains one hundred and sixty-five words now sounded with th. Of

1 Wilkins’s Essay towards a Real Character, p. 372. 2 Wallis, pp. 38, 65.
3 See Davenant’s “Playhouse to Let,” and Jonson’s “Irish Mask”; also, Palsgrave, p. 19; and Smith, fol. 5, where, however, the phrase is ambiguous.
4 Gil, Preface.
5 Gil, Preface.
6 p. 137.
7 Ibid.
8 Smith and Gil,
short then; and to these we must add age\(^1\) (sometimes long), change\(^2\), ceder\(^3\), diamond\(^4\), divers\(^5\), fayer\(^6\), ever\(^7\), silent\(^8\). Saturn, however, been\(^9\), sometimes have, mischief, minate, sometimes pronounce final, ai in a final syllable, and a number of words in ea, had their vowels long. So, on the other hand, words now pronounced long, though spelt short, were then long; but to this we except angel\(^10\) and chamber\(^11\). Challenge was spelt with one l and had the a long.

**Short Vowels.** 1. 'Good.' All words spelt with oo had the long sound, and properly took the final e; except blood\(^12\), flood\(^13\), good\(^14\), hood\(^15\), wood\(^16\), and wood\(^17\). Woman\(^18\) and Worcester\(^19\) had the 'good' sound; but could, would, should, were long\(^20\).

2. 'Up.' There is ample evidence that, in the reign of Charles II., a had the same sound we now give it; and Mr. Marsh is of opinion that it was so pronounced in Shakespeare's day. This scholar, whose reasons are usually so direct and unerring, seems here to have made a curious mistake. He founds his conclusion solely upon the following words of Gil: "V, est tenus, aut crassa; tensis v, est in Verbo tu u: USE: crassa bravissi est u, ut in pronuncia us nos." He does not translate this, but he evidently understands it thus: "U is thin or thick; the thin u is in the verb 'to use,' the thick u is short, as in the pronoun us." But had he turned over the page, he would have found the sentence finished thus: "ant longa u: ut in verbo tu u: COOE scatario, aut sensim exeo more aqua ni expressa." Gil is in this chapter describing his own orthography. Now he has three characters for u; namely, v, which takes the place of our u long, u (short), which takes the place of oo long. He says, then, "U is thin or thick; the thin u occurs in 'use'; the thick, when short, is 'u' as in 'us,' when long, is 'u' as in 'ooze.'" He thus states directly that the u in 'us' is the short sound of the oo in 'ooze.'\(^1\) In another place he says: "So in Bucke and Booke; nor have these any other difference in sound but that which is perceived in quantity."\(^2\) The reader must remember that the oo in Book was long. In these statements Gil is fully supported by the other authorities.

**Ben Jonson.** "In the short time more flat and akin to u; as cozen, dozen, mother, brother, love, prove.

**Note.** U:oo, vel 0 Gallicum." (IX. pp. 206, 207.)

**Coote.** "You shall find some words written with c and o single, when they should be written with the digriages oo, as, co, as he, be, she, me, do, mother; for bee, bee, me, do, oo, &c." (p. 22)

**Butler.** "For as i short hath the sound of ee short, so hath u short of oo short." "U short into oo short (which sound is all one)." (pp. 8, 9. *Apostle White's Shakespeare, Vol. IV.* p. 101.)

This sound of oo short extended to all the words which we now pronounce with 'wp,' whether spelt with w, o, or ou.

The only exceptions that we have met with are among, nothing, with the sound of o short, and none and one with the sound of o long. It is noticeable that this class of words includes nearly all those which end with om and on. The French o nasal was anciently pronounced 'oom.' It is by means of this tendency to pronounce om 'oom,' that the pons between Rome and room are to be explained. At any rate, it is certain that, when Pope wrote these lines,—

> "From the same foes, at last, both felt their doom,
And the same age saw learning fall, and Rome,—"

he meant both words to be pronounced 'ooze,' for Granville Sharp's "Short Treatise," an excellent work on English orthography, (London, 1767,) says, "in lose, move, prove, and Rome,\(^3\)"

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2 "Sie in Bokie hic dama, etc. Bookey Elber: neque in his ulta soni differentia est, praeter illam quae in quantitatem recipitur." *Log Angle,* p. 3.
3 Gil, pp. 52, 58, 59, &c.

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o is commonly pronounced like oo." The word one was commonly pronounced as spelt; down into the middle of the last century. Nevertheless, the pronunciation of the w is very ancient.

In 1650, u short had acquired its present sound, and even those words spelt with a oo, mentioned under the last heading, changed into: gud, hud, sut, blud, flud; but good, hood, loot, (wood, foot, and wood) afterward recovered their regular pronunciation, to correspond with the many words in oo long, which, in consequence of the omission of the final e, were becoming short.

3. 'on.' A Yankee pronunciation of 'whole' and 'coast' bears the same relation to their true sounds that 'ball' does to ' rule,' and the question arises whether o short, as well as u short, has undergone a change in sound. One thing is very clear, that, in the middle of the seventeenth century, 'on' had the same pronunciation as now, for Wallis and Wilkins describe it without ambiguity as the short sound of a in 'fall' and 'ball.' The latter author also states that no short sound corresponding to o retumb existed in the language. Previous to the Rebellion, Gil is our sole authority. He makes no distinction in his phonotype between the o in ' hop' and ' hope,' except by the long mark, but still he fails to tell us expressly that they are the same in sound, although he does say so of e short and e long, of i short and double e, u short and double o. He remarks, in general, that, "although in a long or short syllable the time in pronunciation is different, the vicinity of the sound is not; still the same vowel sometimes sounds broader, sometimes sharper, as in hall, hale, and Hat." Perhaps by vicinity of sound he did not mean identity. This matter must, therefore, remain in doubt.

Words in which a now has the sound of o short, as was, 'what,' and 'quality,' were formerly pronounced regularly. Numerous words, as 'hot,' 'poth,' 'cloth,' which are found in books of about the date 1600 spelt ' hote,' ' mossie,' and ' clothe,' were nevertheless, in the year 1621, as we learn from Gil, pronounced as at present. Mr. White would place more reliance on the spelling, as an indication of the sound,

"A carrion crow sat on a tree." "To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels.""1

"In the last syllables," says Ben Jonson, "before n and w, o frequently loseth its sound; as in person, action, wildone, bilowe." These last words remind one of Chaucer's herbera, and the Yankee pronunciation ' willer.'

4. 'can.' Ben Jonson, following Mulecaster, whom indeed he ever closely copies, distinguishes a short from a long by calling the former flat and the latter sharp.2 Wallis describes the present sound in an unmistakable manner.3 It may be safe to assume that the sound has not changed for three hundred years. In this case, it is a defect in Gil's system, that it does not distinguish between the a in ' cat' and that in 'cart.' This error is an easy one, for Webster's Unabridged Dictionary gives to 'grass,' 'dance,' etc. the sound of 'cart,' while his smaller Dictionaries assign to the same words the sound of ' cat.' Have was sounded either long or short. Shall was sounded generally as at present, but sometimes with the au sound. Than was spelt and pronounced with an e.

5. ' End.' This sound has undergone no perceptible change. Any and many had the sound of a short. Friend had the sound of i short, and so generally had yet, yes, and yesterday. These are now all Hiberniisms.

6. 'In.' Words to which we now give this sound had in general the same pronunciation in Shakespeare's day. Women, busy, and breeches were sounded as at present. Build was pronounced either byuddle, 'bild,' 'beold,' ' bield,' or 'beedle,' according to Gil. Y or ie at the end of a word had indifferently its present sound, or that of the long diphthongal i.

LONG VOWELS. 1. 'oone.' This sound we derive from the Saxons, and it has been in the language ever since. Wallis describes it accurately, and Baret remarks:

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1 Gil.
2 Ib. p. 47, 5.
3 Gil., p. 93.
4 B. Jonson, IX. 261; Mulecaster, Elem., p. 110.
5 Ib., pp. 34, 39, 75, 87, 91, etc.
6 Ib., p. 17; Smith, fol. 18.
7 Gil., p. 77; Smith, fol. 17.
8 Gil., p. 41.
9 Ib., p. 17.
10 Ib., pp. 4, 19, 105, 111.
11 Ib., p. 91.
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-sounded like ‘dance’ had indifferently the a of ‘fat’ and ‘fall’.

What, then, was the sound of au which belonged to all these words? The grammars will tell us that it was that of the French and German a. Here follow a few citations, with dates and authors prefixed.

1833. Ben Jonson. “When [au] comes before a in the end of a syllable, it obtained the full French sound, and is uttered with the mouth and throat wide opened and the tongue bent back from the teeth.”

1653. Walls. “Neither do the Germans alone, but the French and some other nations most commonly pronounce their a with the same sound.”

1673. Restor says that the French pronounce their a like the English ow. (p. 7)

1698. Serault. “A se prononce encore comme en Francois quand il est ferme par une ou deux consonnes.” Example: Pal, gras; mad, enrage; all, tout; call, apple.”—p. 214.

It is established, then, that our au and the French a were nearly enough alike to be described as equivalent. The next step is to obtain some further information respecting the French a, and here we shall find that though the resemblance to the English au is still perceived, yet, that, aside from that statement, the grammarians, after the year 1700, tell a very different story from those previous to that date. Thus:

1710. “Les Anglois donnent quelquefois a ou le son de au comme tells.” De la Touche, l’Art de bien Parler Français, (Amsterdam, 9th ed.), Vol. I. p. 44. Here French a is made equivalent to our e short.

1745. “A is pronounced as in English in these words, War, that, tall; as academic, Academly; abatrate, to full down, &c. they must always be pronounced full and plain, as awe.”—Taudon, French Grammar, 4th ed. p. 1.

1767. “a in Water is commonly pronounced like the French a, or English owe in Father, and the last syllable of Pope, Mama, it has a medium sound between owe and the English a.”—Sharp on the English Pronunciation, p. 5.

1784. “It is the legitimate sound of the long a in the French language; but I do not know that it is to be met with at all in the Italian.”—Nares on Orthoepy, p. 7.

1 Mulcaster, pp. 128, 129, 137; Gil, Preface. The following is from Coote:—

"Robert. What spelloth b, r, a, o, e, h? John. Branch, Robert. Nay, but you should put in (u). John. That skilleth not, for both ways be usual."
We thus see that, after 1700, the French a was not the Italian a, but was the o in 'toil,' or fully and plainly aw. Now let us consult a few of the older grammarians.

1530. "The sounding of a which is most generally used through out the flemische tongue, is ... lyke as the Italians sound a, or they with us that pronounce the latine tongue arright.

"If m or n folowe next after a in a fenche worde, all in one syllable, than a shall be sounded lyke this diphthong an, and something in the noose, as these wordes ámbre, ámbre, mander, ámbint, tant, parlónt, regardónt, shall in redyng and speckyng be sounding ámbre, ámbre, mander, ámbint, &c."—Palsgrave, p. 2.

And on the next page he lets us know what this Italian a is:

"If m or n folowe next after e all in one syllable, than e shall be sounded lyke an Italian a and some thynge in the noose."—p. 3.

1523. "A is sounded plainly with opening the mouth, as in Latin, French, and Italian, as in English man, can, so in Spanish muchado, etc.”—Rich. Pçonval, Spanish Grammar affixed to the Dictionary, edited by Minshew.

1550. "A in the English Tongue, and in no other, hath two differing sounds, the one open and clear, as Balián, the other pressing and as it were, high-mouth'd and mincingly, as Stale Ale. In French t is always pronounced as in the first, clear and ouvert."—Congrave's Dictionary, by Howell.

It is true that Strong (1698), E. Coles (1701), and Bailey (2d ed. 1738) say that Baal and Bawel are pronounced alike, but this proves but little with regard to Balasim; and it is probable that, with Bawel, &c. directly in his path, Congrave would have sought out an uncommon proper noun to illustrate the French sound, unless he had perceived that it answered his purpose better?

1660. "Of the Pronunciation of the Netherdutch Letters. a is pronounced more fully and broader than ours, as the French a with an open mouth, or as ah in English."—Hexham's Dictionary.

There are three reasons for thinking that Hexham here meant to give the French a nearly its present sound. The first is, that he refers to the French a with an open mouth as though he wished to distinguish it from some other sound of a in French. This can only mean the nasal sound (which is even now pronounced aw, though some of the modern grammars do not say so). But this would not differ from the ordinary a if

the latter was aw; therefore the orthoepy must have been like that of Palsgrave's time. The second reason is, that this French a is made equivalent to our interjection Ah! Is it credible that this was ever aw? Thirdly, it is said to equal the Dutch a. For the sound of that see Sewel's Wegwyzer, 1705: "In some words, however, a in English is pronounced nearly as in Dutch; as, Man, animal, bastard, singular, particular, mutual, . . . apply, arrest, assist, &c." (p. 8)

1690. "A is the most open of the letters, as well as the simplest and the easiest to pronounce; whence it comes that it is with this that children begin to form sounds."—Pompey's Royal French Dictionary.

We have now collected authorities of every generation, from 1600 to 1800, and from them we conclude:—1. That in the time of Henry VIII the French a was pronounced as it is now. 2. That as we advance into the seventeenth century, the statement that it is pronounced 'daunt' is less and less distinctly enunciated, and its equivalency to the English aw is more frequently noticed. 3. That from 1700 until after the Revolution, it was pronounced 'dawn.' But what conclusion shall we draw respecting the English aw, which the grammarians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries alike concur in representing to be the same as the French a? The inference that it also changed, and that at the same time as the French a, would be preposterously improbable. For inferring a change at any other time sufficient reason is wanting. We must, therefore, endeavor to explain our facts on the presumption that its sound underwent no change. Now this can only be done by supposing that the French a, from 1620 to 1690, represented such a sound as might at once be described as 'daunt' and be made equivalent to 'dawn.' Such a sound is, perhaps, given to 'batm' in Georgia and Alabama. Soon after 1690 it took another step in the same direction as that which was taken after the wars of the Huguenots, perhaps, and now bore no resemblance to the a in father. It appears, however, that this change had not struck completely into the provinces, for, as the Revolution gradually passed off, this orthoepy also died out, and left the pronunciation as it was during the reign of Francis I. If we accept this theory, our conclusion respecting
the English are will be that it was always pronounced as at present.

The 'daint' sound we have always had in English in a few such words as 'car' and 'star'; probably also in one mode of pronouncing dance, France, &c.; but its present use in daint, aunt, father, and others arose between 1669 and 1737, when Saxon first states that the u in aunt is silent. The remarkable absence of original grammars during the fourscore years before the last date renders it difficult to assign any particular period to this change, but it is natural to think that it took place after the Revolution, when many new customs arose, and when other vowels altered their sound. Still later, and in fact very recently, the sound we give to words like dance is branched off from that of 'daunt,' and now the prevalent vulgarism is to call dance like 'damsel'; in all which stages one tendency of growth is manifest. — 1. 'dawn,' 2. 'daunt,' 3. 'dance,' 4. 'damsel.'

4. 'Ale,' 'air.' A long had a sound nearly like 'ale.' A single extract will suffice to show this. It is from "An Introduction for to lerne to rede, to pronounce, and to speke the French trewly," 1532, by Giles Da Gues, the tutor of Queen Mary Tudor.

Ye shall pronounce your a, as wyde open mouthe as ye can; your a, as ye do in Latyn, almost as brede as ye pronounce your a in englyshe.

A in 'Ale,' as now sounded, ends with a very short i sound, as o in 'old' does with a oo sound; and it is an important but difficult question to determine whether this vanish existed or was invariably used in Shakespeare's day. 6 It uses three characters in places where we sound 'ale;' they are, a, ai, ai. The two latter, which are used indifferently where the a is followed by an i or y in common spelling, he regards as diph-

2. Jewell (Rerto Weyguez, p. 8) gives the sound of particular to water, war, and old, and the sound of 'dawn' to aunt, daint, August. Strong (Perf School Master, 1698) gives the 'dawn' sound to Drought, Haunt, Laugh, Taunt, Vaux (p. 33). In his table of words of like sound he has "Walter came by Walter" (p. 86). But he makes aunt different from aunt. These authorities are not sufficient to fix the date.
3. Same vol. as Palegrave.

1864.]

SHAKESPEARIAN PRONUNCIATION.

thongs. And in speaking of the peculiarities of the Lincolnshire speech he says, "In ai, abjiciant i, ut pro pai volo, pâ; pro sai dico, sâ." This shows that he really distinguished the sound of jade and pain, pain, and pane, gait and gate. Sir Thomas Smith's remarks are even more explicit; thus: —

"The consideration of the diphthongs follows the vowels. Now a diphthong is any sound compounded of two vowels: as AI, pai, dai, wai, lâi, say, sai, tai, fail, pain, disdain, claim, pla, arâ. In these letters are short among more cultivated speakers. The country-folk produce a dense, obscure, and too greedy sound, by sounding both vowels, or at least the latter one, long: Pai, dai, wai, mai, loi. So those who pronounce these words very delicately, young ladies especially, exhibit plainly the Roman diphthong æ. As Latin diphthong. Pa, dai, wai, mai, loi. Somer and some Transytrent English pronounce these words with the improper Greek diphthong α. Pâ, dâi, wâi, mâi, lâi."

There was then a decided difference between ai and a. Had, then, the latter a diphthongal termination as now? Sir Thomas Smith, speaking of the relation of mad and lad: to made and lade, says: —

"It is certain that there is no difference between these words except in the length and shortness of the vowel, as any one who is willing to listen and consult hisears, unless his are more unsure than those of an ass, can readily understand."

And Wallis, whose knowledge of phonetics is not to be questioned, says: —

"With the larger opening is formed the of the English, that is, a thin, such as is heard in the words, bat, bate, pat, pair, Sam, same, lamb, lane, ban, bone, etc. This sound differs from the German å thick or open; in that the English raise the middle of the tongue, and thereby compress the air in the palate; while the Germans depress the middle of the tongue, and thereby compress the air in the throat. The French almost give that sound where e precedes the letter n in the same syllable, as entendement, &c. The Welsh are accustomed to pronounce their â with this sound."

Now the Welsh a is 'cat' when short, and when long the

1. p. 17. 2. fol. 14, c. secq. 3. fol. 10. 4. p. 8.
same elongated without a vanish, or nearly 'care, There was then no vanish to the long a, and ai was a true diphthong, more resembling our a long than our I long. Ei had a peculiar pronunciation, which we shall presently consider.

3. 'old, 'ore.' Having seen that a wanted the vanish, we are ready to believe that the same was the case with a, since we find the old phonotypists indicating it. There was, besides, the diphthong ou, formed of the long o and a, which was heard in all those words in which ou and ow are now sounded 'old,' and also wherever o long was followed by i; this sound must have been in the same way with which the Irish now pronounce the word 'bold.' Court was pronounced coort, Door, quoth, shoe, pour, were sounded exactly as spelt, the last word differing only from 'power' in spelling.

6. 'Eve,' 'deer.' There can be no doubt that this sound was heard in almost all the words where it now occurs, including 'people' and 'shore,' in combination, for Gil gives to all these words the long sound of the short i. The principal exceptions were words in ea, several in ei, Caesar, cedar, equal, fierce, Grecian, interfere, these, etc., which had the peculiarity sound of ea.

The sound of ea. It was a great puzzle to Mr. White, when considering rhymes and puns, to decide whether ea was sounded like long or double e. Mr. Marsh, looking at the grammars,

at once discovered that it was neither one nor the other, but an intermediate sound, like the e in met, prolonged. This view is sustained by the following extract from Wallis:

"In the same place, also, but with a middling opening of the mouth, is formed the e masculine of the French: which sound the English, Italians, Spanish, give to this letter; a vivid and sharp sound. It is a sound intermediate between the preceding vowel and that which is to follow [a in pane with a greater opening, and e with a less opening of the mouth]. This sound the English express by e, and when long not infrequently by ea, and sometimes ei. As the, there, these, sell, seat, tell, tend, tent, set, sent, best, red, read [lego], receive, receive, &c."

Many words in ea, which now receive the short sound, in Shakespeare's day were long. Of these we have noted the following: bread, deadly, death, deaf, dread, heavy, head (the metal), mean, pleasant, pleasure, spread (present tense), sweet (present tense), threat, weapon. The following were pronounced both ways: dead, health, heaven, ready, sweet (noun), thread, tread, treasure. The following were, as now, short: bread, breast, breath, cleanly, endeavor, feather, head, leads (noun, etc.)

1. Gil, p. 22. See courtesies, p. 67, courtesy, p. 82. With reference to the distinction between a and in Mr. White quotes Shakespeare's "Not on thy soles: but on thy soul, harsh Hew," and argues from this that the two sounds were pronounced alike. What does the reader say to this inference? Will some future antiquarian apply the same reasoning to Hook's lines on the learned pig?

"Of what avail that I could spell
And read just like my betters,
If I must come to this at last,
To listen, not to listen!"

2. Gil, p. 95; Smith, fol. 24. But the present pronunciation also existed. Gil, pp. 118, 122.

3. Or 'loch.' Gil, p. 64.

4. Also like 'poor.' Gil, p. 21; Smith, fol. 43.

5. Gil, pp. 21, 22, 41, 78.


7. Ib, 70, 81, etc.

8. Ib, 155.

9. Ib, 84.

10. Ib, 73, 74.

11. Ib, 15, 14, 45, and Wallis quoted below.
nearly ah, up, err, end, in, eve. But it is not to be supposed that any abrupt change was made from the Saxon i long to this very complex combination. It is more rational to suppose that the sound grew up by insensible gradations somewhat in this way:

1. eve;
2. in-eve;
3. end-in-eve;
4. err-end-in-eve;
5. up-err-end-in-eve;

The grammars do not afford us that full and exact information which we should desire upon so interesting a subject; but it would seem that in the time of Palegrave the change from eve to ice was but half completed.

"I, in the frenche tong," says this author, "bath II diverse maners of soundynges": (1) "Like as the Italians sound i, which is almost as we sound e in thes wordes: a bee, a fie; a beere, for a deede corps; a peere, a felowe; a fee, a rewarde; a hell more soundynges towards i, as we sounde i with us." (2) "If i be the first letter in a frenche worde, or the laste, he shall, in these two places, be sounde lyke as we do this letter y in these wordes with us, ‘by and by, a spie, a flye, away,’ and suche other, as in gynage, covert, ydole, estordy, in which the y hath suche sounde as we wolde gyve hyrn in our tonge.

"I reken a[i] also among the diphonges in the frenche tong, which, when they came to gether, shal have suche a sounde in frenche worde as we gyve hyrn in these wordes in our tonge: a swyne, a dwyne, I twyne; so that these worde, agyea, aygylon, condtayre, dedaye, anjourdayn, meshay, and al suche lyke shall unde they r and i shortly together, as we do in our tong in the worde I have gyven example of, and nat eache of them distinctly by hymselfe."

The unmistakable drift of these citations is to the effect that 'ice' was pronounced like i in 'wind,' or perhaps 'end-in-eve.' During the next half-century the pronunciation underwent a further change, as is evident from Mulecaster's remarks upon 'wind' and 'kind' quoted below.

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1 Butler, p. 23.
2 Smith, fol. 11; Gil, pp. 48, 52, 117; Butler, pp. 16, 127.
3 Butler, p. 35.
4 Gil, p. 106; Butler, pp. 95, 97, 105, 148.
5 Smith, fol. 11; Gil, p. 48.
7 Butler, pp. 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 15, 16, etc.
8 Butler, pp. 42, 94; Butler, pp. 13, 15, 16, 18, 24, 51, etc.
10 Butler, pp. 29, 32, 30, 31, 32, etc.
11 Butler, pp. 14, 18, 26, 30, 34, etc.
12 Butler, pp. 29, 42, 47, 86, 97. Ee sound, Butler, p. 87.
13 Butler, pp. 50; Butler, pp. 34, 139.
14 Butler, pp. 22, 26, 99, 109, etc.; Butler, pp. 15, 29, 48, 55, 64, etc.
15 Butler, pp. 27; Butler, pp. 14, 15, 114.
16 Smith, fol. 30; Gil, p. 107; Butler, p. 119.
17 Butler, pp. 5, 8, 18, 144. Gil, however, gives it the long sound of e, p. 103.
18 Gil, pp. 21, 25, 80; Butler, p. 150; White's Shakespeare, XII, 427.
19 Butler, pp. 21, 25, 24, 19, 99, 119; Butler, pp. 15, 25, 33, 150.
20 p. 115.
Some phonotypists in the time of Barett thought that *ei* should take the place of long *i*; but Gil says that *i* long differed slightly from *ei* (that is, probably, *er-i*); and because *i* long had a sharper sound than this combination, he adopted into his system the character *j* as its representative. Wallis regards *iæ* as compounded of French *e* feminine, that is, *e* in *stranger,* and *i* short, pronounced like the Greek *ei,* and almost like *ai* in the French words *main* and *pain.* This description may not appear strange when the process by which *point,* came to be pronounced *pint,* is explained. The analysis of *iæ* by Wallis may be thought to be that of numbers four or five in our table, but it is not to be asserted that this is or is not the case. It may be doubted whether Shakespeare pronounced this sound like ourselves; but, until stronger evidence is produced than that of Gil and Wallis, we should hardly be justified in believing that its pronunciation has become essentially changed since 1600. Even at this day so excellent an orthoepist as Smart is confident that *er-i* is the true analysis of *i* long. This resolution differs but little from that of Wallis.

"Mice," *lie,* and "kine:* were pronounced as now; but Jonson informs us that the old sounds "miceo," &c., were also allowable. The Palsgraveian pronunciation of *iæ,* in words where the *i* is now sounded long, appears to have been confined, with Mulcaster, to a few words ending in *nd.* "Wind," *fried," *bird," he laconically remarks, "and with the qualifying *e*, *kiade,* *frade,* &c." So Cooke, who, however, like Gil, preferred the longer pronunciation in all words of this class, not excepting "wind." And some pronounce these words, *blad,* *friad,* *behaid,* short: others *blade,* *fride,* *behade,* with *e,* long.

"Height" and "slight" were pronounced *hat* and *sleat* by Mulcaster, but by Gil as they are now. "Eye" was also sounded like *i* by Gil, who, however, refers to Mulcaster's pronunciation, which was nearly that of *a* long.

2. "oil." There were two different sounds of this diphthong

in Shakespeare's day; the present sound and that of *oii.* This duplicity of sound is thus referred to by Mulcaster:

"Thirdly, *oi,* the diphthong sounding upon the *o,* for difference sake, from the other, which soundeth upon the *u,* shall be written with a *y,* as *joy,* *away,* *toy,* *boy,* whereas *ainot,* *appoint,* *foil,* and such some to have an *u.* And yet when, *i* goeth before the diphthong, the *i* sound upon the *u,* it were better *ay,* then *oi,* as *joyn,* *joye,* which these shall upon perceive, when these make the speele of their pen: likewise if *oi* with *i,* sound upon the *o,* it may be noted for difference from the other sound, with the straight accent."1

Mulcaster, therefore, in the system of orthography in which his work is written, the most marked characteristic of which is the employment of *e* in place of *ee,* places a straight or acute accent upon *oi,* or rather *ay,* sounded upon the *o* in this position. While treating of the proper diphthongs, Gil, in confirmation of Mulcaster, remarks: "Sometimes we indifferently foist *a* in the place of *o* before *i.* For we say toil or taul, broil or brüil, soil or sull."2

During the thirty-four years which intervened between the publication of Gil's and Wallis's Grammars, the *oii* sound in *oil* shortened into *up*; and we are instructed by the latter author, that in *oi,* sometimes *o* short, as in *boy,* and sometimes *o* or *u* obscure, as in *oil* or *tayl,* *toil* or *tayl,* is the first part of the combination. This pronunciation soon degenerated into that of *i* long, the almost universal orthoepie for nearly a century. Even as late as 1754 Nares says: "The form'd diphthong seems at length to be upon its return; for there are many who are now hardy enough to pronounce *boil* exactly as they do *toil,* a *i* join like *coine.*"

3. "out." The combination *ou* is said by the old grammars to have had two sounds. One might, perhaps, be so lazy as to make the same remark now, though in fact it has seven, "touch," "trough," "ought," "group," "should," "mould," and "thou." The sounds it most frequently had are spoken of in the following quotations from Palsgrave and Mulcaster:

"On in the Frenche tong shall be sounded lyke as the Italians sounds this voweel *u,* or they with us that sounde the latine tong aight, that is

1 Logonomia, pp. 7 and 16
2 Wallis, pp. 38 and 60.
4 Elementarie, p. 133.
6 Coote, p. 19.
8 B. Jonson, p. 201.
9 Logonomia; p. 15.
11 Elements of Orthoepie/p. 74.
to say, almost as we sound hym in these words, "a cove, a move, a
cowe," as oun de, soundage, oudbier: and so of suche other."

"O is a letter of as great uncertainie in our tongue, as a, is of
direction both alone in seavoll, and combined in diphthong. The cause is,
for that in seavoll it soundeth as much upon the o, which is his eson,
as upon the o, which is his naturalite, as in ezen, ounen, mother, where o,
is still naturalite short, and, ounen, ounren, wtheren, which o, is naturalite
long. In the diphthong it soundeth more upon the, a, then upon the, o,
as in sound, wound, cow, son, bow, now, and bow, sow, ouned, ouught,
oight, moie, triouge." 2

An acute accent placed upon the last six words indicates
that they were sounded on the o. Sounding upon the u in all
cases in Mulecaster means sounding ou, whether long or short.
In another passage he says, "Hoop, coop. If custom had not
won this, why not ou? ... Houe, cool, scowl. Why not as
well with oo?" 3 It would appear from these quotations, that
in 1582 ou was pronounced like oo. There are several puns
in Shakespeare, as that of "fowl" and "fool," which depend
upon this identity in sound.

Jonson copies Mulecaster; Gil says:

"We place before the vowels either o short as in bound, sound, or:
or 6 long, as in blum, throum. So a box bough differs from a box bone.
and a bow from a boul bowle."

That this language can only be construed as teaching a
pronunciation different from that of Mulecaster is made still more
evident by Gil's mode of spelling certain words regarded by
Wallis as exceptions to the general sound of ou, as yu for
you, yar for your, wind for wound, curt for court, cild for
could, &c.

Wallis seems to contradict both Mulecaster and Gil; he says:

"Ou and owe are pronounced with an obscure sound; to wit, a sound
composed of o or u obscure and w. As house, mouse."

This is not an accurate description of the present sound, but
what is intended must be left to others to determine.

4. "use, ure. The pronunciation of "use" is described with
some unanimity, as that of the French y, as indeed it may well

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1 Wallis, p. 63.
2 Elementary, p. 115.
3 Thel., p. 136.