A PRIMER OF FRENCH PRONUNCIATION
First Published in 1920
“And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly
After the scole of Stratford-attê-Bowe,
For Frenssh of Parys was to hire unknowe.”

CHAUCER, Prologue, ll. 124-126.

“Wherefore . . . the best ought to be learned at once and also from the best masters. For what is more foolish than with great pains to learn something which afterward you will be compelled with greater pains to unlearn? Nothing, moreover, is more easily learned than that which is right and true. But bad things, if once they stick in the mind, it is wonderful to tell how hardly they can be torn out.”

ERASMUS.
THE following chapters are an attempt at a logical treatment of French Pronunciation. They constitute what we may call Practical Phonetics, and their purport is to show the necessity of a more systematic study and a more careful treatment of the sounds of French than at present obtains in many schools.

They are humbly offered, primarily as a guide to English teachers of French, and hence the form in which they are cast is pedagogic; but the writer hopes that they may also be of direct interest to the student of the language who is studying French for its own sake.

I should like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr A. Watson Bain (Messrs Methuen's Educational Editor) for the care with which he has read the MS. and for the valuable hints and suggestions he has been good enough to give me.

S. W. G.
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A PRIMER OF FRENCH PRONUNCIATION

CHAPTER I

SOUND: PHONETICS

§ 1. The acquirement of a sense of Sound is a conscious process.

Let us, by way of introduction, consider the term Sound from a linguistic rather than from a dictionary or a scientific point of view. Sound is a question both of mouth and ear. In dealing with the sounds of a foreign language both these organs require special training. The ear, which is accustomed to hear only the sounds of one's native language, needs a certain amount of practice before it can diagnose, or differentiate between, sounds of another language. In the same way the mouth, accustomed through long familiarity to certain definite muscular reactions which are all-sufficient for the needs of one's own language, requires a certain amount of conscious adaptation while learning the sounds of another.

Before we can relegate to the subconscious pro-
cesses which entail a reaction of any part of the muscular system, practice is necessary, and the practice forms a habit. The mouth is no exception, and before it can, with ease and spontaneity, perform sounds to which it is unaccustomed, exercise and conscious effort are essential.

We, as a nation, are apt not to make this conscious effort and to be content with a vicious anglicizing of French sounds—turning their vowels into diphthongs—ignoring the peculiar quality of their nasal vowel sounds—pretending we are sounding consonants when we are not—in short, using all the phonic matériel of one language while speaking another.

But with practice, anyone (physical disabilities being absent) can acquire an ear with which he can discriminate between sounds that without practice he would have considered identical, and also a mouth with which he can make them.

It is rare, I think, to find an Englishman speaking French (unless he has had long residence abroad) which sounds anything like an educated Frenchman's French. Even those who have lived for a considerable time in France sometimes fail to give the language the real sound. The reason is not far to seek—it is because they have not subjected their ear to hear or their mouth to perform.

Let us, for a moment, take an example from the Frenchman. We have, all of us, in England, heard
him speaking perfectly fluent and grammatical English. But does it sound like English? Should we take him for an Englishman? He is fluent, he uses the right word, often the most exact word; his sentences may be a model of construction, and yet with all this he is not speaking English as the Englishman speaks it, simply because he has not got the sounds right. I can think of several instances of Frenchmen who have lived in England for over twenty years, whose vocabulary is excellent and who speak as fluently as we could wish, but whose very first words denounce them. "Good Afternoon" is quite sufficient for them. With all their years of residence they have not made the aural appreciation of the fact that the syllable 'ter' in 'afternoon' is not pronounced like their word 'terre'; their ear has never reacted consciously to the many hundred opportunities they have had of listening to this very greeting, and so they make, and continue to make, a mistake of sound which they might easily never have made at all, or which they might have realized and corrected in their first week.

Similarly 'je suis' is enough for most Englishmen. Few survive it in proportion to the numbers that use it. Is it ever anything but 'je sou-is' as the majority pronounce it? This word 'suis' will betray ninety-nine per cent. of Englishmen who speak French to their own satisfaction. Why
should it? We can, in all probability, say 'su,' the past participle of 'savoir,' quite as well as a Frenchman can; hence we can say 'su-is,' and then, by closing the lips a little more, arrive at 'suis,' and not 'sou-is,' if we take the trouble.

Instances could be multiplied at will, but it is a topic that will be found to receive due attention in the chapters that follow; my only point at present is to show that a sense of sound in a language is by no means an implicit process but a conscious, although not necessarily a difficult, one.

§ 2. It must also be a consistent process.

Not only must the acquirement of a sense of Sound be a conscious process, it must also be a consistent one. Whatever be our method of teaching French—and it is outside the scope of our subject to discuss its methodology—we may assume that at some period or other some form of grammar is learnt. It is in the recital of such grammar, when our attention is taken up with testing the verbal accuracy of our pupils, that we are apt to let pronunciation slide. We are apt, on these occasions, to waive accurate and distinct pronunciation under the impression that we save time thereby, and that our only object when doing grammar is to see whether a boy knows it well enough to write it out. This is a pity, for we do not save time in the end. All this careless pronunciation with the bad
habits which follow has to be corrected in another lesson.

Learning a tense and saying it off by heart is a process to which there can hardly be any serious objection if it is pronounced as well and articulated as clearly as possible. It is the rapid and slovenly gabble of a tense that is so harmful. We cannot have one code of pronunciation for grammar, another for reading, and perhaps another for conversation. The same care is required over le, la, un, une, or tu, whatever the ostensible object of the lesson.

Is it an over-statement to say that the majority of schoolboys will, when saying a tense of a verb, pronounce tu as they would pronounce tout? Would it be another over-statement to accuse the majority of us of not stopping to correct it?

Suppose we ask an average boy to say the Present tense of venir; he may be able to write it down, but he may quite probably not pronounce a single person correctly. The mistake already alluded to in respect of ‘je suis’ is another example. As to the Future tense of être, I think I may lay it to our charge that a very large proportion of us are content to accept je sérrai, etc., with a strong tonic accent on ser. And yet the correct way, which we may represent by jes-ráï, is not so very much more difficult. This is no quibbling or hair-splitting distinction. Pronounce je serai as usually
pronounced in English schools, and it means nothing more or less than 'I clasped,' as in 'je vous serrai la main.'

The foregoing examples are perhaps sufficient to show the necessity of consistent pronunciation. It may be slow work at first, but a slow beginning is preferable to subsequent delays; indeed, the beginning should be slow and the repetition frequent in order that the foundation of true progress may be laid.

§ 3. Phonetics.

By Phonetics we mean the scientific analysis of the sounds of a language. We study a language phonetically when we analyse its sounds, comparing them with identical or similar sounds in other languages, especially our own. As will be seen, the accurate sounding of, and discrimination between, the French vowel sounds, their relation to the English diphthongs, the peculiar quality of the nasal vowel sounds, the treatment of the consonants, should all be taught at the very beginning. The greater the pains taken at the outset to drill ear and mouth into recognition and performance, the quicker the progress afterwards.

The "Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister to Inquire into the Position of Modern Languages in the Educational System of
Great Britain"¹ gives due weight to the value and importance of Phonetics in Modern Language teaching. "Teachers of Modern Languages should have a thorough training in Phonetics."² It is surely incontestable that a teacher, even though he himself has learned to speak accurately abroad, must, in order to save time, be able to classify and distinguish sounds and to drill systematically the ear and mouth of those who are learning in this country. It does not follow, because he has acquired a good accent himself under such conditions as may have dispensed him from finding Phonetics essential, that he should dispense with it in teaching others who have less time, less aptitude perhaps, and who work under different conditions.

This being taken for granted, we come now to the question of a phonetic script, which is what some people mean, and nothing more, when they use the term Phonetics. But to confuse Phonetics with 'phonetic script is to confuse sounds with letters, music with musical notation, or a speech with the reporter's shorthand version of it.

Phonetics has to do with sound and the human voice, but the written sign that we choose in order to call up from paper the impression of the sound is merely a matter of convention. It by no means

¹ Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1918. Price 9d. net.
² § 203 op. cit.
follows, because we can denote the sound on paper, that we can pronounce it. Any Frenchman can make the figure 3, but he needs considerable practice before he can say ‘three’; any Englishman can make an 8, but he finds saying huit rather difficult.

However, it is convenient for instructional purposes that one sound should have one, and only one, sign to represent it graphically; and that, whatever the language, one sign should represent one, and only one, sound; and also that when there is no sound at all there should be no superfluous letter putting in an appearance.

Such conditions not being found in any language, an artificial code is necessary, and the one most generally used is that of the "Association phonétique internationale."

I have not thought fit to use that code in giving the imitated pronunciation of words, as I am not convinced that all those whom it is my desire to help know it. Hence, in consideration of such, I have adopted a phonetic script (imperfect perhaps, yet conveying to all, I think, the impression of the sound I intend to convey), based on a knowledge that I may safely assume; especially as the vowels and nasal vowel sounds are treated and explained before using them to indicate pronunciation.

As to whether we should use the code of the "Association phonétique" in schools, I will quote
again from the "Report" mentioned above: "The use of phonetic script by the pupils may be regarded as optional; but it is of great utility as a convenient means of readily reviving earlier studies, provided that in that earlier instruction the meaning of the symbols was sufficiently grasped and comprehended." ¹

But as things are at present, it is usually impracticable, after a boy has been learning French for three or four years without any phonetic script, to thrust it on him so late; so that in Public and Secondary schools we have to consider whether he began with the script or not. My experience (based on statistical records) is that about one boy out of twenty-five has learned something of a phonetic script at his Preparatory school; which means that not more than four per cent. have learnt anything about Phonetics, for I usually find that the two go together, so much so, indeed, that a boy who has learned more or less intelligently to use phonetic symbols is apt to consider that the whole science of Phonetics begins and ends in writing the script.

Practical Phonetics is only a means to an end, and once the end is achieved the means may be dispensed with. But the script is not even the means whereby we try and train ourselves to pronounce correctly, it is only a graphical representation of the means, and, since Phonetics

¹ § 204 op. cit.
deals with sounds, is not indispensable even to the means.

If the lowest classes in a Public or Secondary school consisted of boys who were coming for their very first lessons and who knew absolutely nothing of the language, I do not see that we could do better than attempt a logical, uniform, graphical representation of the sounds we are teaching; and such a representation the code of the "Association phonétique internationale" certainly offers.

In such a case, I imagine it would only lead to confusion and take all the good away if we were to teach the ordinary spelling for the first two terms at least.

Or if, again, the lowest classes had begun (when and where they did begin) with a phonetic script, I can see the good of continuing to use it.

But the difficulty we have to contend with at present is of the following type. A boy, ignorant of Phonetics, reads or says 'il est,' pronouncing it 'il ay' (as in English 'pay'); is it any use to show him $e$ and say that that represents the sound? He must, of course, be shown where he is wrong, and must be put right and practised in the sound usually represented in phonetic script by $e$; but do we do any good, in such a case and at such a stage, by offering him a whole set of new symbols?

It is possible to reform pronunciation, even at a comparatively advanced stage, by practical
Phonetics; but I do not believe we can work miracles with boys who know some French, but who pronounce it badly, by writing on the board Greek letters, or letters upside down, and getting the boys to copy them.

Surely it is more helpful in such cases to let them hear and imitate (under phonetic direction) the correct sound of **vu** (which they have seen written often enough as **vu**) than to cause confusion by writing it **vy**.

In the same way, when the nasal vowel sounds are being tackled, they can be written in, **an** (or **en**), **on**, **un**, spellings which will mean much more to the pupils, at their stage, than **ë**, **ã**, **ø** or **œ**.

However, I do not in the least wish to disparage the use of a universal script, provided it is used intelligently from the very beginning. It has undoubted advantages, especially for comparing different languages and different dialects; while for self-tuition, and in the hands of intelligent older students learning a new language, it is invaluable.
CHAPTER II

THE VOWEL SOUNDS

We have now to consider the subject of French pronunciation in detail. We shall see, in the course of the chapters which follow, that much false pronunciation is just as difficult as the correct. We shall also see how easy it is in many cases to be correct, and what a difference it will make.

It is, of course, beyond the scope of this book to give a complete account of French pronunciation; indeed, it is not even necessary. I propose rather to point out the more common pitfalls which the average student of French may be glad to know how to avoid.

1. We will begin with the vowel sounds. When we say we have five vowels in the English language, a, e, i, o, u, we use the word vowel in a loose, indefinite sense. I intend to use it in the sense of 'a simple vocal sound,' which is indeed the first definition of a vowel that I find in an ordinary English dictionary. A simple vocal sound, that is a single vocal sound, not a double one, or even the slurring of two vocal sounds together so as to form a diphthong. Now, among the so-called
vowels as we say them in our English alphabet, let us consider how many are really vowels in the restricted yet correct sense of the word. We shall find that only one out of these five is a vowel—the second one, e—and this only if pronounced in a certain way without the sound of yer \(^1\) at the end. The sound e as we pronounce it in English is only one sound; the other so-called vowels, a, i, o, u, are two sounds, as will be seen in a moment.

2. Now let us consider the French vowels, á (‘close’—so-called), e, é, i, ó (‘close’), u. I have left out à (‘open’—so-called) for the moment, my point at present being to compare French vowels with English diphthongs.

Take the first one, á, which is pronounced not quite as in English ah, half, pa, but very nearly. Shorten these sounds of ah, half, pa, and you will have fairly accurately the French ‘forward’ vowel á.

When you have said the sound allow the mouth to remain open and still, and not to move as when we say pa with a slight er \(^1\) at the end. This sound a, as the French pronounce it, is a true vowel. The vowel e (often called e mute), as in French le, me, se, is again a true vowel and only one sound; so is é.

Now let these two facts be considered carefully: é in French is a true vowel, while a (ay-ee) in English is not—it is a diphthong. How many ordinary

\(^1\) \textit{i.e.} the sound in lawyer, maker.
teachers of French realize this and show their pupils the difference? The majority are, I know, quite content to hear é pronounced as a (ay-ee) in English, and seldom to correct it, e.g. porter, fermé, donnerai, donnai—all with a final syllable like ay-ee in English. They perhaps do not realize that a (ay-ee) in English is a diphthong, i.e. that there are two sounds ay and ee glided together and that in é in French there is only one.

With regard to French i, as in lit, rit, nid, it is also a vowel, just as e in English may be if sounded without a final yer,¹ and indeed they are practically identical. French ó is a vowel (sot, rôti), English o (oh-oo), as in go, so, is not—at any rate not as Southerners pronounce it.² French u is also a vowel, as in su, du, vu, but English u (ee-oo) is not. So then out of the English a, e, i, o, u, pronounced as usually pronounced, only one is a vowel (e),³ and of the French a, e, é, i, o, u, all are vowels. Hence we see that the English language runs very largely on diphthongs and the French on vowels. Moreover, as these diphthongs are often represented by one-letter characters, e.g. a, i, o, u, we are very apt to fall into the snare of thinking we are sounding vowels, when we are really sounding diphthongs; e.g.:

¹ I.e. the sound in lawyer.
² The 'broad' o of Lancashire and Wales is practically a vowel.
³ The fact that a, i, o, u may be vowels does not invalidate the argument.
a=ay-ee as in place=play-ees; makes=may-eeks.
i=ah-ee ,, kite=kah-eet; bright=brah-eet.
o=oh-oo ,, cold=koh-oold; hope=hoh-oop.
u=ee-oo ,, tulip=tee-oold; excuse=ex-kee-oos.

3. In conjunction with these we may consider the sound ow, ou, as in how, sound. It is usual to count this sound as a diphthong, and so it is, but no more so than o, for ou in the word sound =ah-oo, which is similar to any of the above. In the same way it will be seen that au as in caught or laugh, oo as in cool, and ee as in keep, are not diphthongs but vowels.

It is most important for us to realize these facts if we want to pronounce our French vowels correctly. The Englishman, then, has to cultivate vowels when speaking French and to avoid diphthongs, just as the Frenchman has to cultivate diphthongs if he wants to speak English.

4. Now as to how to cultivate vowels. A vowel is one simple sound. To produce it, open the mouth and make a sound, and before you move mouth, lips or anything concerned with its production, stop making the sound. Make a sound and stop; then relax the mouth muscles and you will have sounded a vowel. Relax before you finish the sound and you will have made a diphthong. That is the whole secret, you can test it for yourself. The English language is full of movement (slight as it may
appear to be in the average indistinct diction) during the actual sounding of its individual syllables, hence a vowel never has a chance; it is started with one position of the lips and finished with another—result, a diphthong. *One sound, one position; two sounds, two positions;* a diphthong, which is two rapid or slurred sounds, has two positions, the second one following the first one so smoothly and quietly as to be at first sight imperceptible. A mirror will convince you of it. Looking into one, say the first letter of the English alphabet. You begin with the sound of *ay*, but you do not keep it up; it gradually changes and gives way to *ee*. You can follow the movement if you articulate slowly; and then after this *ay-ee*, before you have quite let the sound go, you will probably see the lower part of the mouth drop as you say a faint *yer*¹ at the end of it.

Now let the tip of the tongue curl naturally against the lower teeth and try the French *é*. If you say it correctly without shifting to *ee*, at the end of it there will be no mouth movement whatever.² It is just this movement which spoils the sound of *é* in French. Try it on the word *aimer*. There is no movement until you have finished with *ai* (*é*), then the lips close and snap open for *mer* (*mé*), exactly the same vowel sound. The lips must be

¹ Cf. pp. 13 and 14, and footnote i.
² Cf. p. 24, § 8. There is no confliction between the two passages.
held tightly in position and not allowed to move or drop, for if they do, an ee will inevitably follow and the English diphthong a is at once produced. Here it might be mentioned how much firmer the lips must be in the French vowels than in the English diphthongs; to encourage this firmness they must be held with the fingers if necessary.

So much for English diphthong a and French vowel é. English e and French i are, as already stated, practically identical, though there is just a trace of yer at the end of the English e. Say "Come to tea"—look in the mirror and see the movement as you finish the word 'tea' with yer. Now say it without that final slackening of the lips, and you have the French vowel i as in lit, admire, ile.

Now for English i as in aisle, isle, bright, kite, etc.; look in the mirror and see how distinct the movement is and listen for the separate components ah and ee, with perhaps a slight yer at the end. In the word aisle the sound happens to be represented by two letters, but in the majority of cases there is only the one sign i to denote this diphthong. The French have a similar sound, in which the ah part of it predominates and the ee follows, instead of the two being fused into one; that is to say, the French sound does not quite become a diphthong as in the corresponding English sound. This sound the French write ai, e.g. ail, rail, railler, travail, etc.,
although *ai* does not usually represent this diphthong; *cf. aigle, ainé, aimer*, etc.

Now try English *o*. Note again the movement due to the initial *oh* shifting to *oo*, with a probable *er* at the end as the bottom lip drops slightly. Try it with *Oh no*; articulate slowly so as to hear it resolved into *Oh-oo-noh-oo (er)*. Then try the French close vowel *o* (*ô*). First push your lips out (which is not an easy thing for an Englishman to do), get them round, show no teeth and make a very small mouth aperture: now say an *o* and make no movement. The result should be an *o fermé* (*ô*). Do not allow the sound to shift to *oo* as in English, but keep to the first part *oh*. This is only possible if you check any attempt at movement while the sound is in progress. If there is no movement the sound may be prolonged indefinitely and it will still be homogeneous. Be careful, too, not to let the sound tail off into *er* (thus giving *oh-er*) by letting the lower part of the mouth drop. With attention to what has been said and careful practice success is sure, and indeed it is worth it, for it will make a world of difference to one's reading and speaking French if the French vowel *o* is sounded instead of the English diphthong.

Now try with English *u* (*ee-oo*) as in the word *you*, and watch the amount of movement that is going on. When you began the sound with *ee* you were showing quite a lot of teeth, then the
teeth were covered up by the lips as you said oo, and finally they were partially exposed again if you finished the sound with er. I think there should be no doubt about the diphthongal nature of English u.

As to the French u, you may or may not have acquired it—in any case it is easily learned—and when you can sound it you will see that there is no movement of the mouth the whole time the sound is in progress, and you can prolong it as long as your breath lasts. Push out the lips as in French ô, holding them with the fingers if necessary, reduce the aperture to a minimum (about the size of a very small pea), and with the lips in this position try and say ee. You will not succeed in this, as it is impossible, but the result will be that you have sounded a French u, because ee with flat, stretched lips changes to French u if the lips are pushed out and rounded. Indeed, it is a good exercise for making one's lips supple to change from ee (stretched lips) to u (round lips) and back again many times. You have only to try and emit the same sound (ee) and move the lips backwards and forwards, the mere movement will effect the change of sound. Very little practice gives Englishmen this sound almost perfectly. It is another most important vowel and one that is badly travestied as a rule, solely (as I have found by experience) for want of knowing what to do and how to do it. A common
error in the making of it is to prefix a y, i.e. to say yune for une, and it is very hard to keep it pure in such words as suis, huit, puis, which are very apt to become diverted into soo-ee, oo-eet', poo-ee,—a bad mistake (see page 108, 'persuader'). To avoid this, say su-ee as a dissyllable, keeping the ee separated from the su. When it can be said correctly as a dissyllable, try closing the lips a little more and making the sound thinner. So also for huit and puis. We have heard the people of Devon say the word 'you.' It is the French u almost exactly, but of course with a y in front; the y which must be avoided in saying the simple vowel sound. It may here be mentioned that other Romance tongues (Spanish, Italian) do not have this sound. It is found in German as ü, e.g. müde, Bücher, etc. In France it is probably of Celtic origin, which explains its survival in Devon.

5. If the foregoing examples are understood, the following points will now be clear:

(1) The so-called English vowels are not vowels at all, although they may be represented by a single letter.
(2) They are really diphthongs, because there is a mouth-movement during their sounding.
(3) The French vowels are vowels, and there is no movement.
(4) An Englishman has to restrain lip and mouth-
movement during the actual sounding of a French vowel.

(5) A Frenchman has to encourage this movement in order to say the English diphthongs.

It is easier to learn to restrain a natural movement of lip and mouth than it is to loosen a natural firmness of them. This gradual movement while the sound is in progress—so natural to us—is very difficult to the Frenchman; that is to say, difficult to do gradually so as to produce the peculiar gliding sound an English diphthong has. Some Frenchmen have lived in England all their lives and have never realized this movement, so that they pronounce say, pay, day like sé, pé, dé, i.e. not as diphthongs but as vowels. They treat Oh no in the same way, which strikes us at once. Others make the movement, but not gradually enough, and this also makes a peculiar sound to our ears, due to their sounding two isolated vowels rather than a diphthong, a peculiarity which has already been pointed out (p. 17).

This should not be considered a digression; we can learn much from studying the difficulties a Frenchman encounters when battling with our own troublesome tongue. From actual experience I have found that quite young boys are interested in this exposition of vowel and diphthong and can readily understand it. It is a good plan to let them
pronounce such phrases as to-day, I say, Oh no, etc., using the French vowels é and ô instead of the English diphthongs, and then to say aimer, agréer, fermer, l'eau est chaude, trying to restrain lip-movement during each sound.

6. Before turning to nasal vowel sounds, which I propose to treat next, we have to consider briefly the difference between close and open vowels, i.e. between é and è, eu and eù, a and à, ô and ô, which was deferred (p. 13, § 2) while the difference between vowels and diphthongs was under discussion. We have also to consider the various spellings of é and è. Let us take the last point straight away.

é (called é fermé) may also be written thus:

-ai, as in gai, geai, j'ai, lait, and 1st pers. past def. of 1st conjugation verbs and all futures (cf. -ai, p. 23).

-ê, ,, bêtise, guêpier. N.B.—ê is much oftener pronounced è (cf. -è, p. 23).

-ed, ,, pied, s'assied.

-er, -uer, ,, the infinitive of 1st conjugation verbs, e.g. aller, fier, distinguer.

-er, -ier, ,, suffixes (Lat. -arius), e.g. boucher, boulanger, altier, dernier, portier, premier, etc. (cf. -er, p. 23).

-ez, ,, assez, chez, nez, etc., and the 2nd pers. plural of verbs. N.B.—also in et (and).
è (called è ouvert) is also spelt:

-ai, as in plaine, quai, vrai, etc. (cf. -ai, p. 22).
-aie, que j’aie, paie, raie, etc.
-aient, qu’ils aient and all imperfects and conditionals.
-ai[r], air, impair, pair (both words), etc.
-ais, français, jamais, laisser, etc., and all imperfects and conditionals.
-ait, laitage, laitue, etc., and all imperfects and conditionals.
-aix, faix, paix, etc.
-ay, balayer, rayon, etc.
-è, arrêter, bête, blême, extrême, forêt, guêpe, tête, etc. (cf. -è, p. 22).
-e[c], avec, bec, échecs (or as éché, cs silent), sec, etc.
-ei, peine, peigne, reine, seize, treize, etc.
-e[l], ciel, elle, mortel, etc.
-e[r], amer, aster, cancer, carter, cher, chercher, concert, cuiller, désert, dessert, enfer, éther, exercer, fer, ferme, hiver, mer, pater, permission, à travers, univers, ver, vers, etc., in all of which the r is sounded (cf. -er, p. 22).
-e[rre], parterre, serre, terre, tonnerre, verre, etc.
-ès, abcès, accès, agrès, congrès, excès, grès, londrès (see p. 86), palmarès
(see p. 86), procès, progrès, succès, etc.

-est, as in est, 'is' (è) and 'east' (èst), lest, etc.

-et, , complet, discret, forêt, objet, regret, secret, etc., (?) (except et ('and'), cf. p. 22).

-ie[r], ,, fier (adj. 'proud'), hier (see p. 83).

Note.—(1) With regard to je fais, fait, mai, mais, je sais, sait, etc., they may be pronounced é or è. North France affects é and the South è (broadly speaking); maison is generally mé- all over France, though Larousse, also Hatzfeld, Darmesteter and Thomas give mè-. Similarly for ces, des, les, mes, ses, tes, which are generally è.

(2) When je fais, je sais become interrogative, the sound, owing to the influence of the following e mute, is always that of è, i.e. fèj, sèj.

7. Close and Open Vowels.

The difference between these is that open vowels are uttered with a wider opening of the oral cavity than those called close.

8. To pronounce é (é fermé).

Keep the lips very firm and tightly pressed round the teeth, the mouth nearly closed, the tip of the tongue curling naturally and downwards against the lower teeth. Be most careful that there is no movement until the sound is finished. Cultivate a short sharp sound, almost that of a short ee or y in English, as in coffee, beauty. Thus the final syllables of coffee, café, beauty, beauté, city, cité are somewhat alike.
9. To pronounce è (è ouvert).

As the name of the sound implies, there is much more mouth-aperture in this than in é fermé. Again, the tip of the tongue is curled naturally against the lower teeth, but both lips are much looser and the muscles generally of the mouth are more relaxed; but still again there must be no movement. Practice with these instructions and a mirror (the latter will reveal the amount of aperture, tightness of lips and movement) will enable one to make these sounds correctly.

Before leaving them I may add that, properly pronounced, there is a good deal of difference between them, and that neither is like the English a as in pay. From the foregoing it will have been seen that there is a difference in sound between je donnai and je donnais, between je donnerai and je donnerais, i.e. between all futures and conditionals; that the sound -ai cannot rime with -ais, because é cannot rime with è; also that there is a difference between et and est. Whatever happens, both é and è must be kept as vowels, for nothing sounds worse in French, except perhaps bad nasal vowel sounds, than the careless perversion of é or è into the English diphthong a (ay-ee).

10. To pronounce.eu (eu fermé).

We have seen (p. 19) that English ee (French i) with flat, stretched lips changed to u if the lips were pushed out and rounded. In the same
way é becomes eu if the same lip-change is made. Thus both é and eu are close (fermé), the difference between them being in the position of the lips.

Eu is pronounced eu (fermé):

1. when final; e.g. adieu, aveu, bœufs, œufs (fs mute, hence final; cf. bœuf, œuf, p. 28, also p. 81), bleu, cheveu, Dieu, feu (both ‘fire’ and ‘late’), jeu, lieu, milieu, neveu, peu, voeu, etc.

2. before a, e; e.g. bleuâtre, banlieue, bleue, bleuet, lieue, queue, etc.

3. before d; e.g. jeudi, noeud.

4. before s; e.g. creuse, danseuse, heureuse (2nd syllable only), joyeuse, jeûner (cf. déjeuner, p. 28), pêcheuse, vendangeuse, etc.

5. before t (generally); e.g. feutre, lieutenant, meute, neutre, peut, peut-être, pleut, etc.

6. before x; e.g. boiseux, ceux, cieux, creux, délicieux, deux, dieux, eux, gueux (cf. p. 94), heureux (2nd syllable only), mieux, nombreux, paresseux, peureux (see heureux), peux, veux, yeux.

It will be evident that the more important cases of eu being pronounced eu are (1) when final, (2) before se, (3) before x.

ii. It will be well to point out here that eu, eue, eus, eues (past participles of avoir), also j’eus, que
j’eusse (throughout each tense) have the sound neither of eu nor of eu (see below), but simply that of the French vowel u; in other words the e is ignored in pronouncing these parts of avoir.

12. To pronounce eu (eu ouvert).

Again, just as é becomes eu when the lips are rounded and pushed out, so è becomes eu under similar circumstances. The latter are both open vowels, and, as in the case of u and eu, the different position of the lips gives the change of sound.

In dealing with eu and eu the directions for change given on page 19 should be followed and suppleness of lips encouraged by the backward and forward movement, é—eu—é, etc., è—eu—è, etc.

It will be noted that neither eu nor eu occurs in English, for they are both made with round protruding lips. The vowel sound of English girt, hurt, pert, which is practically that of French e mute (a less contradictory term is e sourd), as in le, me, etc., lies between them however, though it is nearer to eu than it is to eu. Thus eu is a trifle more open than e, while eu is more closed than e.

Eu is pronounced eu (ouvert):

(1) before b, p, v (usually); e.g. garde-meuble, immeuble, meuble, meubler; dépeupler, euphonie, Euphrate, peuple, peuplier;
breuvage, épreuve, fleuve, neuve, neuvième, œuvre, peuvent, preuve, veuve;
but as eu in abreuver, ameublement.

(2) before c, f, g; e.g. eucalyptus, eucharistie, Euclide; bœuf, œuf (cf. bœufs, p. 26 and see p. 81), neuf (both words), veuf; aveugle, aveuglement, aveuglément, aveugler, Eugène, Eugénie; but as eu in beuglement, beugler, meuglement, meugler.

(3) before il or ill mouillé; e.g. bouvreuil, deuil, écureuil, fauteuil, feuille, feuilleter, œil, œillet, seuil, treuil (cf. p. 77), etc.

(4) before l, r; e.g. eulogie, filleule, gueule (cf. p. 94), seul, tilleul, veulent, etc. (but as eu in meule and derivatives);
acteur, ardeur, beurre, chaleur, chœur, cœur, couleur, danseur, Europe, fleur, heure, heureux (1st syllable only, cf. p. 26), honneur, largeur, leur, leurre, longueur, meilleur, meurs, mœurs (cf. p. 86), peur, peureux (see heureux above), professeur, seigneur, sieur, sœur, spectateur, vainqueur, etc.

Note.—Except in monsieur, messieurs, in which the sound is that of eü (cf. pp. 83, 107).

Note also—meunier (eü); déjeuner, jeune (eù); (cf. jeûner, p. 26). accueil, cueillir (and derivatives) (eù); (cf. pp. 76, 104); orgueil, orgueilleux (gheù) (cf. p. 77).

Thus the most important cases are those in which eu precedes il or ill mouillé, or r.
13. With regard to the so-called close and open a, i.e. á and à, the terms close and open are merely comparative, for neither sound is really close, though á is a little less open than à. They might more suitably be called 'forward a,' or 'hard-palate a' (á), and 'backward,' or 'guttural,' or 'soft-palate a' (à).

The tongue, which is more or less flat for both, is more advanced for á, and is drawn back for à. The lips for á are in their normal position, for à they are rounder and are slightly pushed out.

It would be a work of supererogation to attempt lists of words representing these sounds. Moreover, it is largely a question of locality. Roughly speaking, Northern France favours á, the forward variety, and Southern France à, the backward one.¹ We do not mind particularly whether an Englishman pronounces castle, chance, demand with a Northern or a Southern pronunciation, and we should certainly accept either from a foreigner.

In any case the following words, which exemplify the forward a for Northern France, would all, without exception, be pronounced à by the Southerner: e.g. a, à, appeler, arbre, battre, fatigué, jamais, la, ma, par, part, partout, ta, etc. There are, especially

¹ On the stage the backward a (à) tends to supplant á, especially in the termination -ation, e.g. création, natation, nation, situation, etc. In French Canada there is a tendency to push it further back still to a sound intermediate between à and ô; e.g. pas almost like English 'paw' (cf. § 14) and garçon (gawrson).
at present, more important matters in the ordinary class-room than the differentiation of forward and backward a—especially as Frenchmen themselves vary in certain words; however, the following may be noted:

The backward a (â) is found universally in the following cases:

(1) In â; e.g. âge, âme, âpre, débâcle, parlât, pâte, pâté, etc.

(2) Before gn mouillé, il or ill mouillé; e.g. campagne, gagner, montagne; rail, travail; que j’aille, canaille, paille.

14. With regard to close o (ó) and open o (ô) we may note that ó is practically the North of England o (cf. p. 14), as in no, go, hope, i.e. a vowel, not a diphthong; and that ô is practically our vowel in paw, all, caught, care being taken, however, both to round the lips and to see that they are vowels whether open or close.

It may also be pointed out that the open o of Northern France becomes more closed in the South, e.g. comme, force, fort. However, o before r we may always consider as open, while in such spellings as ô (bientôt), au, eau (saut, beaux, peau), the sound is close universally.

15. With regard to the vowel ou, most of us can say oo, and so there is little difficulty here if the
lips are pushed well out and rounded, with the back of the tongue high up against the soft palate.

The reader may here claim that, although he sees the truth, wisdom and expediency of the foregoing, yet he does not see that I have justified my claim that the right is often as easy as the wrong. I do not pretend to have made good that point yet. The correct vowel sounds as given are not, and cannot be, as easy to the Englishman as the incorrect diphthongs, neither are the nasal vowel sounds which follow. I have begun with the difficulties; the other point will be made good in due time and place.
CHAPTER III

THE NASAL VOWEL SOUNDS

1. It is most important to learn these from the outset. Nothing spoils spoken French so much as the inability to produce them. They are not easy for an Englishman, but their difficulty is nothing like as great as is commonly imagined.

Practice should enable nearly everybody to say them, at all events slowly. I have found that inability to say them is the result, not of failure after a conscientious endeavour to tackle them, but simply of not having appreciated what a nasal vowel is, how many there are, their difference, and the manner of producing each. It is rare to find a boy at school pronouncing nasal vowel sounds as such, and it is rarer still to find them all exactly right. If the following table be taught and practised carefully and frequently, and each fault checked at once by every French master in every school—and really this should not be impossible—then a kind of tradition of nasal sound will be set up, just as there is a tradition all the other way at present. It is little use for one or two only in every school
to worry about them: all of us who profess French must consider an accurate exposition and consistent performance of nasal vowel sounds as part of our teaching equipment.

It will be difficult at first—there is so much to correct—but, if all teachers will help, a few years will put this and a great many other matters right.

2. The French language nasalizes four open oral vowels, è, à, ô, eù; at least this is the usual statement. In practice, however, it is not quite the truth, for although è and eù are open—indeed, they become even more opened in the process of nasalization—yet the fact remains that à and ô tend to close under the process, or rather, in the case of à it is better, as already explained (p. 29), to consider it as becoming more ‘forward’ when nasalized, with the tongue (cf. p. 29) not drawn back. Hence it is of small significance whether we derive an from à or à, and on from ô or ô, a fact that we will utilize by considering the oral vowels which give rise to these two nasal sounds simply as a and o, without attempting to mark their aperture (cf. p. 39). We may note once more that French Southerners, just as they substitute oral ô for oral ô, so they also substitute a close nasal on for a half-closed, or nearly-closed, nasal on.

Thus we get:
I. (έ nasalized)

-im as in impossible, simple.
-ain " pain, saint.
-aim " daim, faim.
-ein " hein, plein.

as in fin,

pin, sphinx,

vin.

-yn " larynx, lynx, syndicat, syntaxe.

-ym " nymphe, Olympic, symbole, sympathie, symptôme (cf. p. 85, note).

2. (a nasalized)

-an as in plan, franc.

-as in ample, camp, lampe.

-em " exempt (pt mute), membre, temps.

-as in enfant

(enfant)

(except in 3rd pl. of verbs).

-ean " Jean, mangeant, vengeance.

-aon " Laon, paon.

-aen " Caen, Saint-Saëns (sanss).

3. (ο nasalized)

-as in conte, non.

-on

-om as in compte, comte, nom.

4. (eū nasalized)

-as in brun, commun.

-un

-um as in parfum, humble.

-eun " à jeun, Meung.
There are four. They are all different. The above order will be found convenient; they are in order of pitch and loudness. The first is highest and loudest, the last is lowest and softest. As you say in, an, on, un, the voice seems to drop down the scale to an accompanying diminuendo.

3. For convenience I have separated the commonest or simplest spelling from the less common; but it is to be understood that all the spellings of No. 1 give one and the same sound; that is to say, not approximately, but exactly the same sound. Similarly for No. 2 and the others. There are but four sounds, however many the spellings.¹

The opened sound of è nasalized becomes No. 1, which may be spelt in any of the eight ways there given. Half-open a nasalized becomes No. 2, with seven different spellings. Half-open o gives No. 3, which may be spelt in two ways; and eu, a little more open still, gives No. 4, with three spellings. The various spellings as given under each number have to be learned so that in reading they may be recognized.

4. Here it would be well to point out that an m in a nasal vowel sound is to all intents and purposes

¹ It is more convenient not to count -oin (pronounced ou-in) as a separate nasal vowel sound. As the imitated pronunciation shows, the combination -oin represents two sounds, which, although becoming fused, finish, so far as the nasal element is concerned, with -in (No. 1). Such words are coin, foin, loin, moins, soin, etc.
an n. There must be no closing of the lips and opening again, as in English ham.

Nom might as well be written non; or lampe, lanpe; or temps, tan, as the p and s are mute. This has to be clearly understood, as the peculiar intonation of a nasal vowel sound cannot be effected if there is any movement in the middle or end of it. Insist upon conte, comte, compte all being sounded exactly alike, similarly with non and nom. Comptant sounds exactly as content (adj.), but not as comptons or contons, whose final syllables are on (No. 3). It will now be obvious that a difference must be made between the final syllables of 1st pers. plurals and present participles, the usual fault here being to make them both alike and pronounce No. 3 as No. 2, i.e. parlons as parlant, or perhaps to produce a sound intermediate between on and an, which is made to do duty for either. Points of this kind require a great deal of emphasis. In such words as dompter, prompt, one is bound to hear from time to time an m and a p sounded, a mistake that must be checked at once.

5. When a nasal vowel sound is produced, what happens is this: by lowering the soft palate, the breath which usually comes out of the mouth is partially diverted through the nostrils, so that some comes out of the mouth and some out of the nostrils, hence the name Nasal Vowel sound. These sounds are produced with the tongue and mouth in the
same position as for their oral equivalents (but see p. 33), *i.e.* in has the same position as è; an as a; on as o; and un as eu; the only difference being this partial diversion of breath through the nostrils, thus setting up nasal resonance as well as oral, and so modifying the timbre of the sound.¹

6. Now for a more exact account as to how these nasal vowel sounds are to be produced. It is difficult to achieve them without hearing them, but something may be done by careful description and diagrams.

The first sound -in is the highest and loudest. If we say the English word 'sang' without touching the g and only half pronouncing the n—that is to say, if we stop before finishing the word—the

1 When humming a nasal consonant, *e.g.* m or n in English or French, *all* the breath goes through the nose (we can close the mouth and try), and so if we have a cold we cannot say a nasal consonant, because the passage through the nose is choked up, with the result that the corresponding explosives are formed—the nasal labial m giving the explosive labial b, and the nasal dental n giving the explosive dental d. In the same way a nasal vowel sound would, under the influence of a cold, produce the corresponding oral vowel, *i.e.* the sound would become denasalized:

*E.g.* Comment becomes cobbent.
Je ne connais pas becomes Je de coddais pas.
Mon ami becomes bodabi.

(Mon is not a nasal vowel sound here. See p. 43, 3.)

Nous sommes enrhumés becomes douso sobbes arhubé.

Hence the popular remark that a person had a cold and was talking through his nose is just what he could not do. A cold prevents him speaking through his nose, and so the corresponding explosives or the corresponding oral vowels are formed, as the case may be.
result will be not unlike No. 1. The mouth should be as follows:

Oral è                Nasal in

Then practice changing from oral è to nasal in, keeping the mouth in the same position.
Repeat the same sound for pin, pain, impossible, fam, fin, plein, sympathie, syntaxe, etc.

No. 2. This is a nasalized half-open a, so that when you say pla you are nearly saying the French plan, and, as already explained, with a bad cold you could not get nearer to plan than pla. Let some of the breath out through the nostrils by lowering the soft palate, but be careful not to get the sound too low—which will not happen if you watch the diagram and keep the mouth open—or too high, which would produce in.
Practise changing oral to nasal: pla—plan; pas—pan; ta—tan; la—lampe; etc.

No. 3. Note the position of the lips and the small aperture here. If you can say the French vowel o as already described (page 18), with pushed-out lips, and can divert some breath to the nostrils, you will get French on or om. Now try all three, in, an, on, and hear the pitch fall and the volume of sound as well.

Practise again the change oral to nasal o—on; l’eau—l’on, l’ombre; seau—sont; etc., keeping the same position of mouth and lips. Here it may be as well to point out again the difference between sans, son (sont); portant, portons; vendant, vendons, etc. If you cannot hear the difference of sound, begin with the oral vowels and change, sa—sans; seau—son; ta—tant; tôt—tons; etc., when the difference will be heard, and then, while the sound is still in your ear, say portant, portons. It will be evident that in vendant, both syllables are of the same pitch and sound, they are on the same level so to speak, they rime; but in vendons,
the pitch falls from ven to dons, and the two syllables do not rime.

No. 4. A difficult sound, but so important, for it is the French word for a or an, and very badly pronounced it is as a rule—varying in English mouths from oon (as in 'coon,' 'soon') to ung (as in 'hung,' 'sung'). The best way to arrive at it is through the oral eu (cf. p. 27); we have

![Diagram of mouth positions for Oral eu and Nasal un]

only to nasalize eu to get un absolutely right. If we can say jeu we ought to be able to say jeun. Similarly with keu—qu'un; parfeu—parfum. It is a regular grunt, the sound one sometimes makes when in pain or after a sudden exertion. With the best will in the world we shall not get much volume of sound with it; and if we find that we can say it strongly, we are probably saying No. 1 and not No. 4 at all. Keep it soft, only touch the n, and of course there is no g at the end. The mouth aperture is less than in No. 2 and the lips are not so stretched as in No. 1. A mirror for all these sounds is indispensable. Try and get the position of the mouth exactly as shown. It is to be understood that these are the normal positions
for the nasal vowel sounds pronounced carefully. They will no doubt vary slightly, but not much, in continuous speech and with different speakers. Now try saying un bon vin blanc and watch each position of the mouth come as already given.

Be careful to try and keep each sound homogeneous, with no movement during its production.

7. It now remains to point out what exceptions there are to these spellings, as given on p. 34.

**Exception 1.**—En (No. 2) after i, y, or é is pronounced as -in (No. 1);

*e.g.* Amiens (mi-in), bien, historien, Indien, mien, païen, parisien, prussien, rien, sien, tiens, tient, tiendrai, viendrais, etc.;

citoyen, concitoyen, doyen, moyen, payen (older spelling of païen), Wesleyen, etc.;

chaldéen (kal), cyclopéen, élysée, européen, fuséen, galliléen, herculéen, lycéen, méditerranéen, pyrénéen, etc.

8. Also in the following, although no i, y, or é precedes:

Abencérages (bin), agenda (jin), alpenstock (pin), appendice, appendicite, Bengale, Benjamin (bin),
centumvirat (see p. 45), compendium (see p. 45), consensus (kon-sin-suss), crescendo (shin), delirium-tremens (see p. 45), examen, gens (jinss, Roman family), impedimenta, Marengo, mémento, menthol, mentor, pensum (pin-somm), Rubens (ru-binss), all words from Greek πέντε, e.g. pentagone, pentateuque, except pentecôte, which is No. 2.

To which may be added sempiternel (sin).

9. N.B.—In the following words, however, the No. 2 sound of en is retained in spite of i preceding: orient (and its various derivatives, orienter, etc.), patient (and its derivatives, impatience, etc.), quotient (ko-si-an), science (conscience, escient, scientifique, etc.).

10. Exception 2.—Any nasal vowel sound is destroyed if the m or n is doubled (except in the case of initial emm- or remm-, which remain nasal) or if a vowel or silent h follows the m or n.

E.g. Doubled Consonant. Before a vowel or h mute.

1. (in) innocence. inutile, inhabitation, vinaigre.
   (im) immobile. imitation.
   (ain) haine, plaine, saine

1 E.g. emmagasiner, emmaigrir, emmailloter, emmancher, emmèler, emménager, emmener, emmitoufler, emmuseler, remmancher, remmener.

But in Emmanuel, Emmaüs the sound is not nasal but that of èmm.
THE NASAL VOWEL SOUNDS

Doubled Consonant. Before a vowel or h mute.

(aim) aimable.
(ein) pleine, Seine.
(yn) synonyme.
(ym) symétrie, symétrique.

Note.—Immangeable and immanquable may be either nasal or not; i.e. either in-man-ja-ble or imm-man-ja-ble.

2. (an) panne, année. manuscrit, panier.
   (en) ennemi, moyen- menu, saugrenu, *il y en a, nant.
   *en un.
   * These, owing to liaison, tend to return to oral vowel a.

   (am) flamme (fla-me). ami.
   (em) dilemma, gemme (here -emm is not initial).
   (ean) Jeanne.
   (aon) Laonnois, paonne.

Except: ennoblir, ennui, ennuyant, ennuyer, ennuyeux, and enamourer, enivrer (and derivatives), enorgueillir (cf. p. 76), in which the -en is nasal.

Doubled Consonant. Before a vowel or h mute.

3. (on) bonne, honneur. trône, on en a*, mon ami*, mon homme*.

   (om) homme. omelette, Rome.
   * These, owing to liaison, tend to return to oral vowel o.

4. (un) tunnel. une, un homme*, un œuf*.
   * These, owing to liaison, tend to return to oral vowel eu.

   (um) gummifère humilier.
   (gomm-).

   (eun) jeune.

Note.—Initial amn- and omn- are not nasal, e.g. amnistie (amm-nis-tie), omnibus, omnipotent.
ANOMALIES

II. (i) The following in -am pronounce this syllable -amm: Abraham, Amsterdam (‘amm’ in both syllables), Islam, Macadam, rams (ramms), tam-tam, while in Adam the sound is nasal -an (No. 2). Cf. Adam et Eve (a-dan-é-èv).

(2) In damner and condamner the m becomes mute (con-da-né), i.e. riming with chi-ca-ner. Note also: somnambule (somm-nan-bu-le), exemption (èg-zanp-si-on), péremptoire (pé-ranp-toi-re), ré-déemption (ré-danp-si-on), automne (ô-tonne), insomnie (in-somm-nie), somnoler (somm-no-lé).

(3) (a) The following with -em have this syllable sounded -emm, e.g. harem (ha-rèmm); so also décemvirat, idem, indemniser, indemnité, item, Jérusalem, requiem (rè-kui-èmm), septemvirat, tandem, tempo.

(b) With regard to femme, prudemment, fréquemment, évidemment, and all adverbs in -emment, the sound is not like èmm in gemme or dilemme, but is practically the oral a, i.e. femme (fa-me) riming with ‘âme,’ prudemment (pru-da-man), évidemment (é-vi-da-man), etc.

Similarly for one or two words with -en, e.g. hennir (ha-nir), hennissement (though these may be more ‘correctly’ pronounced hè-nir, hè-nisse-
ment); also nenni (na-ni), Rouennais (rou-a-nè), solennel (so-la-nel).

(c) In the following -en has the sound of -ènn: abdomen, amen, dolmen, Éden, hymen, lichen (li-kènn), pollen, spécimen.

(4) In the following words the -im or -ym is not nasal: interim (rimm), gymnase, gymnastique (jeem), hymne (eem-ne).

(5) Many words in -um, due to Mod. Fr. pronunciation of Latin, are peculiar. They are generally mispronounced in England; care must be taken to pronounce the -um as -omm; album (al-bomm); so also aquarium (a-kou-a-ri-omm), atrium, calcium, carborundum (-ron-domm), centumvirat (sin-tomm), compendium (kon-pin-di-omm), critérium, delirium-tremens (dé-li-ri-omm-tré-minss), dum-dum (doum-doum), électrum, erratum, factotum, forum, géranium, gummifère, harmonium, hélim, laudanum, linoléum, maximum, médium, mémorandum, minimum, muséum, opium, opossum, palladium, pensum (pin-somm), pilum, post-scriptum, potassium, quantum (kou-an-tomm), quorum (ko-romm), radium, rhum (romm), rumsteck, sacrarium, sanatorium, sérum, sodium, strontium (stron-si-omm), summum (somm-momm), Te-Deum (té-dé-omm), triumvirat, ultimatum, uranium, vacuum, vade-mecum, variorum.
(6) Some words with -un pronounce this syllable -on, e.g. carborundum (as given above), conjungo (-jon-gho), jungle (jon-gle), punch (ponsh); the last may also be sounded punch as in English, secundo (sé-kon-do).

12. Below are appended useful words for practice in nasal vowel sounds. They all either follow the rules as given or are provided for in Exceptions 1 and 2. It is a good plan to give them out orally and have the class write them down, putting the number of the nasal sounds over each. As a mnemonic to remember the numbers, the following plan is useful. Everyone can remember the so-called vowels in order, a, e, i, o, u. In four spaces fill up the second with a and e, the remaining three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>i^n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>a_m^n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>o^n_m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>u^n_m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in order, one vowel for each, add an n or m, and the result is the commonest spellings of the nasal vowel sounds in order.

**Practice Words for Nasal Vowel Sounds**

ample, au fond, bonbon, bouquin, Caïn (ka-in), camp, chien, chirurgien, chrétien, chrétienté, cinq
THE NASAL VOWEL SOUNDS

It is hoped that the above selection of words used a few at a time will provide a kind of drill. Frequent repetition of them is necessary, and of course some may be omitted and others substituted at discretion. It is useful, too, if one wants to improve the dictation of a class, to give out such a sound as kan, and then show that it may be written camp, quand, quant, qu’en, or Caen, and also the difference, both of mouth-position and sound, between this sound and the sound of qu’on.

To select a few examples from the list, the num-
bering would be: Saint, chien, un fonds, commençant, commençons, Laon, Londres, quantité, etc.

13. Note.—Since gu = gh and qu = k, gu- or qu- rarely form a dissyllable with a following nasal vowel sound:

*E.g.* guindé, guimbarde, where the sound is ghin, onguent (gan, *not* gu-an). In Quimper, quincaillier, quinquet, quint, quinzaine, quinze, the sound is kin; in quand, quant, qu’en it is that of kan; in qu’on that of kon, while qu’un = kun.

However, quinquennal = ku-in-ku-enn-nal,

quinquagésime = ku-in-kou-a-gé-zi-me,

and quintette = ku-in-tet-te.

14. To conclude the subject of nasal vowel sounds, perhaps it may be urged once more that they are largely a matter of careful practice, especially when a quick change from one to another in successive syllables is required:

*E.g.* en conséquence,

en comptant,

un bon vin blanc,

en un rien de temps
HAVING now treated sufficiently fully the French vowels and the nasal vowel sounds, I propose to show how a word is divided into its component syllables—a most important matter. The one guiding principle is that, where a consonant separates two vowels, the consonant must be taken with the second vowel and not with the first: e.g. a/ni/mal, di/a/mant, se/rai, fe/rai, de/man/der, re/com/men/cer, re/par/tir.

When two consonants occur together they are usually separated, except in the case of bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, ch, th, gn, or two consonants the second of which is r, e.g. in/vo/lon/tai/re, ras/sem/blé, ai/ma/ble, mus/cle, gi/ro/flée, a/veu/gle, tem/ple, chu/cho/ter (shu-sho), mon/ta/gne, ma/thé/ma/ti/ques, la/dre, vi/nai/gre, in/trus, ou/vra/ge.

2. It will now be clear why a vowel following a nasal vowel sound destroys it (cf. p. 42, Exception 2), for the m or n must, by the rule given above, be taken with the following vowel, hence the nasal vowel sound is cut in two: e.g. i/nu/ti/le, u/ne, me/nu, hu/mi/lie.

1 But the group rr is separated, e.g. ver/rai, ser/rons.
It is in such words as se/rai, fe/rai, je/tai, me/nai that the correct division into syllables is so essential, for an incorrect division entails a very bad pronunciation. The false pronunciation of se/rai (so often heard in England as sèr/ai) is due to the r being taken with the first instead of the second syllable, and so making sèr rime with cher or fer; hence je serai would sound as je sèrrai, which means 'I clasped,' not 'I shall be,' a fact that has already been pointed out.

The future tense of être needs careful pronunciation for beginners. It should be said as follows:

jeuss/rai, tuss/ras, ilss/rā,
nouss/rōns, vouss/roz, ilss/rōnt,

the e hardly being heard. In poetry sometimes serai is pronounced seu/rai, but the r must be kept away from the first syllable. Similarly with ferai, jetai, menai in all persons.

I have now come to a case in point where the correct pronunciation is as easy as the incorrect. It is as easy to learn jeuss/rai, etc., as je/sèr/ai, and a great deal more profitable, as it leaves nothing to be corrected afterwards. In such a word, too, as de/man/der, the m must be kept away from the de just as the c must be kept off the re in re/com/men/ber (reu-komm-), and no sound of rek must be heard.

3. With regard to the pronunciation of e mute
(so-called), it may be said that in Northern France (Paris included) e mute is much more mute than in the South, where it is heard as a distinct syllable, as it always is in singing and often in poetry (unless elided). But even though e mute is practically so in N. France, it never becomes as mute as when an Englishman forgets it is there at all. Je porte does not end in a t, but in te, which, said slowly, is like the pronoun te, so je/por/te, nous/vin/mes, the verb of which sounds exactly like vin me in ce vin me plait. Now when an Englishman makes an e mute he usually makes it absolutely mute, so that the preceding consonant has no sound of e following it. This sounds very bad, and so in English schools it is far better to get a full e sound—even if sometimes it is exaggerated into eû. In the sentence je vous demande, there is as much sound of de at the end of the word as at the beginning of it. The singular and 3rd pers. plural pres. ind. of this verb is a good practice tense for the sound of e.

je/de/man/de.  
tu/de/man/des.  
il/de/man/de.  
ils/de/man/dent.  

1 As already suggested (p. 27), the term is unsatisfactory and misleading. 'E sourd' is better, and I think 'e assourdi' ('muffled') would be better still. For Englishmen, at all events, we want to avoid any suggestion of absence of sound.
2 Cf. Eng. bite and biter; the second syllable of biter is almost exactly that of te in French.
3 One often hears the careless assertion that -ent is not sounded in verbs. This is misleading. It is only the -nt which is not sounded.
The pronunciation of this e mute adds a great deal to one's reading, and is just as easy to do as not to do if insisted on from the outset. Experience will afterwards determine whether an e mute should be left out, or kept in, or opened still further to eu; but for beginners I certainly advise that they should give it a full eu pronunciation at the end of words, for I find great difficulty in getting this sound recognized after three or four years have been devoted to ignoring it.

Consider the following:

je / re/com/men/ce / ce / dis/cours./
por/te/-t-il/ ?

In these the similarity of sound requires ce to be ceu and te, teu.

4. It may not be out of place here to point out that as you pronounce ce, le, me, so you must pronounce words with ble, cle, fle, gle, ple in them.

horrible           is hor/ri/bleu         not hor/ri/boul.
table               ,, ta/bleu           ,, ta/boul.
muscle              ,, mus/kleu          ,, mus/soul.
obstacle           ,, ob/sta/kleu        ,, ob/sta/koul.
tréfle             ,, trè/fleu          ,, trè/foul.
Angleterre          ,, an/gleu/tèr       ,, an/goul/tèr.
aveušle             ,, a/veu/gleu        ,, a/veu/goul.
temple              ,, tem/pleu           ,, tem/poul.
a point worth bringing out, as everyone, who knows what force of habit is, will admit. This assimilation of familiar-looking groups of letters to English sounds reminds me that, when dealing with nasal vowel sounds and in reading, you will always be correcting words like—

pantalon, distinguer, ample, Normandie,

because the English equivalents are bound to come into the beginner’s mind, thus evoking their English pronunciation—a very natural mistake (see Chapter X.).

5. A further point with regard to division into syllables, not of isolated, but of connected, words, is that the stop or pause is often not at the end of the word at all, but in the middle of it.

A word although a logical entity is not necessarily a phonetic one. In les hommes, for example, the liaison between the two words precludes any pause between them; there is a slight dwelling on homm-, however, and the syllable -mes follows afterwards, i.e. the sound one hears is lézomm—me.

La pincette sounds exactly like Lapin VII.; l’appendice (see p. 41) like Lapin X.; tout le monde is pronounced toul-mon-de, and tout ce qui is pronounced touss-qui. This kind of thing obtains, of course, in every language: an orange, unless sounded punctiliously, might well (perhaps better) be written a norange. Such unavoidable liaisons
produce curious-anomalies in a language, e.g. an apron, where the n has become severed from napron (cf. Scotch napery and Fr. nappe); in the same way an adder is from a nadder. The reverse has happened in the case of a newt, which, by a prosthetic n, comes from an ewt. In future years it may well happen that an edge will become a nedge, etc. In French, too, the aphaeresis of the a from aboutique has resulted in la boutique. In the same way m'amie (an older form of mon amie) has given us ma mie. In the English phrase not at all we never (in England) pronounce the words with their logical division; what we really say is not a tall, just as we say not a tall man. Americans, however, make a difference between these two and pronounce the former not-at'-all.

This phonetic, rather than logical, division causes great difficulty to the foreigner when he hears the language spoken, because he tries to visualize the words, and cannot do so because of this confliction between sound groups and words. Particularly is this the case for an Englishman hearing French—a language peculiarly given to liaison, with the result that it is par excellence the language of puns. Hence the many riddles and quibbles depending upon the same sound being capable of two or more written variations. "Mettez-vous une h (hache) à Hercule?" is a dilemma with which you may catch the average Frenchman. Thinking only of the letter
'h' he will probably answer "Oui," to which the retort is, "Mais non, c'était une massue!" Should he be thinking of 'hache' and so reply 'non,' the retort is obvious. Imagine an atheist and an abbot quarrelling on a bridge over a muddy stream, with the result that they both fall into it. What two Greek provinces do you mention when they have fallen in? Answer: La Thessalie et la Béotie (L'athée sali et l'abbé aussi). These two phrases are sounded exactly alike, in spite of the different word-divisions. Similarly Charles attend may be sounded charlatans. Another riddle may be of interest: Pourquoi Gounod et Verdi se sont-ils disputés? — Parceque lorsque Gounod faisait l'Ave Maria, Verdi faisait Otello. Perhaps I may leave the other reading, with the excellent pun that it perpetrates, to the reader's ear. Instances could be multiplied, but the point to be realized is that the end of a word is not necessarily the place where the pause comes, and a pupil's ear can be tuned gradually to recognize this and thus improve his reading, for it will help to eliminate that strong tonic accent which, although there are exceptions, has really no place in French pronunciation, and which—or rather the want of which—causes a Frenchman (as a rule) to read or talk English so badly.1

1 A fluent Frenchman of my acquaintance would often say: "Do not men shun it?" What he meant to say was, "Don't mention it."
Ask a class what lal son or dél son mean: ask for them to be written and you will see how few will succeed. Yet these sounds are the accepted and correct pronunciation of la leçon and des leçons.

6. This brings me to the following rule. When the first syllable of a word consists of e mute, e.g. venons, venez, leçon, mesure, tenailles, it is usual for a preceding strong syllable to couple this weak e mute with it and incorporate it with itself, and for the pause to be made after this fusion of sounds.

For example, in nous venons, vous venez, la leçon, à mesure, des tenailles, vous pouvez la jeter, tout ce qui, the preceding strong syllables nous, vous, la, etc., take the following weak syllables with them, and so we get nouv’ nons, vouv’ nez, lal son, ame zur, dél nailles, vous pouvez laj’té, touss qui,¹ as the correct pronunciation. Similarly with such words as ennemi (enn’mi), appeler (ap’lé), acheter (ash’té). One generally has to go to France to discover things of this kind, and, when there, one hears such a phrase as seul-vé or leuss-gon and cannot place it. After seeing them written (se lever, le second), one sees with some annoyance that the words are perfectly familiar and that it would have

¹ This reminds me of the number of times I have to correct this in Dictation. Touss qui is what is heard, and they write down tous qui—an impossible construction even though the verb be made plural. ‘All who’ has to be rendered tous ceux qui or toutes celles qui, and the sound touss qui can be written only thus—tout ce qui.
been an easy matter to have learned their right pronunciation when they were first met.

7. And now for a point which is much too often lost sight of in teaching and in speaking French. Englishmen do not realize sufficiently that while in English the definite article 'the' is unstressed (we pronounce it theu except before a vowel), yet the French equivalents le, la are stressed, i.e. the French article has an equal chance with the noun and is not subordinate to it. Consider the words 'the lesson' in English: 'the' and 'son' are both very much subordinate from the point of view of stress to 'less,' which receives a strong tonic accent. But in French la is strong and le of leçon is weak, and the French accentuation lal son is just the opposite of ours.

In early lessons, therefore, do not allow the article to be treated as in English. It must be shown much more courtesy and must very often receive a slight stress; it should not be forgotten, either, that this emphasis of the article is very helpful for remembering genders.

The same applies, though perhaps in a lesser degree, to the indefinite article.¹

8. Another frequently heard mistake is that of perverting e into é, e.g. to call repos, répos; revenir,

¹ It may be of interest to note that in music the definite article in French may be sung to the first beat of the bar—thus showing the stress it is capable of taking—a position it could never have in an English song.
révenir, or la leçon, la léçon (or more usually still, lah laysong)—in the last instance the natural result of not taking le with la is to call le, lé. This correct pronunciation of e as eu and not confusing it with é when unaccented is another of the many matters that have to be insisted upon from the outset. It helps one to know by the sound, right from the beginning, whether an e has an acute accent or not. Frequent practice with words containing such syllables as re, ré, me, mé, de, dé, etc., will establish the difference: e.g. repos, revenir, retourner have a very different initial syllable from répondre or réunion. Similarly with melon and mémoire, degré and dégoûtant. It is often very wearisome to correct such mistakes in reading, but it has to be done.
CHAPTER V
LIAISON

1. The proper linking of a final consonant to a following word beginning with a vowel or a mute appears to cause considerable difficulty to the Englishman. Of course it is by no means easy always to tell when or not a liaison should be made; but in the majority of cases there is little difficulty if (I must apologize for saying it again) attention is paid to it at the beginning. Liaison is not a matter that may be deferred for a year or even for a term, neither is it good to omit it in the grammar lesson and insist on it in the reading or dictation lesson. It has already been said that it will not do to have one pronunciation for reciting the tense of a verb and another for reading, and this applies particularly to liaison.

2. I do not propose to discuss the more obvious cases or to treat the question exhaustively, but to point out common errors in pronunciation—errors of omission as well as commission—that I have frequently noticed. I will assume that such cases as nous avons (nou-za-von), ils ont (il-zon), ils sont (il-sson), seront-ils? (se-ron-til), de nombreux argu-
ments (de nom-breú-zar-gu-men) are known, and that an s in liaison becomes z, and will only urge once again that they should always be insisted on; for liaison is almost entirely a question of ear, and it is not for a foreigner to lay such a burden upon it as to allow the same grouping of words to admit of two or more sets of sounds.

3. How is a teacher to make his pupil see a liaison in print before he says it? We all know the difficulty and we all know how often we have to stop a pupil reading simply over this matter; indeed, he will stop himself sometimes and read a phrase over again and pick up a liaison, after he has heard the effect without it. This takes time, and we are not learning French all day. Is there any way, then, by which one may see a liaison coming and so anticipate it? I think there is. I have already spoken of how a word is to be divided into its component syllables, viz., that a consonant separating two vowels must go with the second. Extend this rule so that the second vowel is in a separate word and then one may see a liaison. In mon ami the n of mon separates two vowels and so must go with the second vowel a, i.e. mo-na-mi is the proper division. To separate these two words and make mon a purely nasal vowel sound (No. 3) unlinked to ami would not sound right—an unpleasant hiatus would be heard. (Cf. p. 43, 3.)
Similarly: se mirent à = se-mir'-ta,
et sans attendre = é-san-za-ten-dre,
leur ami = leu-ra-mi,
comment il = comm-men-ti'I,
avec un = a-ve-kun,
il fit afficher = il-fi-taf-fi-ché,
menus objets = me-nu-zob-jè,
il allait entrer = i-lal-lai-ten-tré,
quel homme = què-lom-me,
rien à désirer = ria-na-dé-zi-ré,
bien heureux = bia-neù-reù,
premier enfant = pre-mièr-ren-fan,

and so on.

4. I am perfectly aware that this process may cause many liaisons to be made which are better not made or even must not be made; but I am suggesting a remedy for things as they now exist, and I do not think one teacher in a hundred has to spend much time in depreciating false liaisons except in two cases—the liaison of et to a following vowel, and of a word like les to an h aspirate. Except for these cases we have to encourage them, and with that end in view I have suggested the foregoing plan. We have to try and teach a boy to read in groups of sounds beginning with a consonant and ending with a vowel, i.e. to read sounds, not words. Personally I have found that this plan—although it may drag in a few impossible liaisons from time to time—makes the reading more syllabic
and less verbal, which is just what we want in reading French. It tends, at the same time, to eliminate another mistake—that tonic accent (ce vieil accent tonique des familles!) which, in spite of all that has been or may be written about it, must, so far as we English are concerned, be given very short shrift because of the very natural tendency to put it on first syllables of words. Syllabic reading will help to get rid of it and to obtain a juster balance between syllable and syllable, which, although more monotonous to our ear, is more like French.

5. It may now be of use to tabulate certain liaisons which are often forgotten but which ought to be made.

For convenience the sign _ indicates liaison, and * no liaison.

Il n'y en a pas. No hiatus must occur here between en and a, i.e. na must be heard. Similarly, Lorsqu'ils en ont besoin (cf. p. 43). Un élève, bien élevé, trop aimable, trois hommes, quatre enfants, cinq ans, vingt et un (but quatre-vingt-un), prompt à (pron-ta), prompts à (pron-za), au moment où, un mois après, or un mois après, peu de temps après avoir, plus étrange, mais encore, mais oui (mais oui is familiar), puis il, puis elle, je puis aller, je peux aller (x = z), quatre heures et demie, quelques instants auparavant, tu diras à ton père, tu sembles avoir, en traversant un champ, il se
mit à, en généreux ennemi, au pis aller (pi-zal-lé), ce qui pis est (pi-zè).

N.B.—Dix-huit (di-zuit) although the h is aspirate, and also dix-neuf (diz’-neuf).

6. It is usual to avoid too many successive and similar liaisons, e.g.:

Les Indes occidentales; cela me fit venir les larmes aux yeux; Dix heures ont sonné; fiez-vous en à moi; il est trois heures et demie; tout vient à point à qui sait attendre;

but we may say, c'était un homme très habile.

A comma will, of course, prevent a liaison:

Quoi que vous écriviez, évitez la bassesse.

(Boileau.)

A final d becomes a t in liaison:

coud'elle ? = kou-telle.
répond-il ? = ré-pon-til.
il s'assied avant moi = il sa-sié-ta-van-moi.
un grand homme = un-gran-tomm-me.
le second air = le-s'gon-tair.
quand il = kan-til.
un pied-à-terre = un-pié-ta-ter-re, but in 'mettre pied à terre' there is no liaison (pié-à-ter-re).
de pied en cap = de-pié-ten-kap.

7. A liaison is not made in quatre vingt un, cent un, vers les un(e) heure, or before onze, e.g. quatre
vingt-onze, cent-onze, cela fait-onze, which reminds me of a riddle that may interest those who have not heard it:

"Dit-on quatre et six font-onze ou font-onze?"

I may safely leave the answer to the reader.

*Note.*—A liaison is not made between a singular noun and a following adjective, e.g. un enfant-aimable.

8. Certain words, *six*, *dix*, *plus*, need special attention as their final consonant may be mute, or make *ss* (*s sifflant*) or *z* in liaison. In the same way the final syllable of *neuf* may be mute, or make *f*, or *v*, in liaison. This will appear most clear if tabulated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MUTE</th>
<th>s sifflant (siss, diss, pluss)</th>
<th>s = z.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le six mai, \ or with le six-avril.</td>
<td>six hommes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le six aout, / s sifflant. le six-octobre.</td>
<td>six_ans.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six kilomètres.</td>
<td>il y en a six.</td>
<td>il est six heures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six francs.</td>
<td>le six de carreau.</td>
<td>sixième.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six mois.</td>
<td>le six du mois.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charles VI.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>un six peu lisible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le dix mars, ) or with le dix-avril.</td>
<td>dix-enfants.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le dix aout, / s sifflant. le dix-octobre.</td>
<td>dix_ans.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dix mètres.</td>
<td>j'en ai dix.</td>
<td>il est dix heures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dix bouteilles.</td>
<td>le dix de cœur.</td>
<td>dix-eight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dix jours.</td>
<td>le dix du mois.</td>
<td>dix-neuf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charles X.</td>
<td>dixième.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>un dix en chiffres.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dix-sept.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus haut.</td>
<td>j'en ai plus que vous. plus-aimable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus puissant.</td>
<td>bien plus.</td>
<td>plus heureux.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIAISON

MUTE.

s sifflant (siss, diss, pluss).

il ne pleut plus.
rien ne va plus.

s = z.
d’autant plus.
trois de plus.
3 + 4.
plus-que-parfait.

\{ plus_on_est de
fous, plus_on rit.
plus_ou moins.
ce qui plus_est.
de plus_en plus.

\( f = ff, \)
\( f = v. \)

le neuf janvier, or le neuf_avril.
le neuf aout, with le neuf_octobre.
neuf kilometres.
nous en avons neuf.
neuf jours.
neuf hommes.
neuf_ans.
neuf heures.


9. \( H \) aspirate, of course, prevents liaison—a very awkward matter sometimes, e.g. les_hordes, des_haricots, les_homards, il pleut des_hallebardes, les_héros (but les_héroïnes), les_houblons, les_Halles centrales, en_haillons, en_haut (very great care should be taken not to say a-nô), les_harengs, les_hauteurs, très_hideux.
CHAPTER VI

H ASPIRATE: FRENCH R

1. THIS brings us to the question of the h aspirate in French apart from liaison. From the point of view of pronunciation it plays quite an important part in the language. The above phrases, for instance, would sound very strange to a Frenchman's ear if the liaisons were made; indeed, he finds in les haricots an unending source of pleasure. No matter who says les haricots, be he English or French, the Frenchman is comfortably certain to laugh at it. Not that that matters in the least, because we must not mind making mistakes. If we wish to succeed in a language there is no room for self-consciousness, and who is more self-conscious than an Englishman when speaking a foreign tongue? No one is any the worse for a mistake if he profits by it, and no one is ever going to learn a language without making mistakes.

However, it is as well to be alive to the fact that some—indeed, a good many—French words do begin with an h aspirate, thus preventing elision in the article, necessitating au or à la instead of à l', and, as already shown, preventing liaisons with all
sorts of preceding words. We have to realize that out of 1250 words beginning with H, 421 are aspirate, i.e. a third. This is a greater proportion than one would think.

2. Now as to what an h aspirate really is. It is not (except in certain parts of France) an h as in the English word hard or the German hart, which is a full-throated h, to drop which in either language is a mark of no education. Anyone who has heard the average Frenchman speak English knows what difficulty he finds in saying 'half-holiday,' 'Hampstead Heath,' etc.

The h aspirate, then, is not the English h, but neither is it the h of honour, which is mute. A good definition of it is found in 'Petit Larousse illustré': "L'h est aspiré quand il fait prononcer du gosier la voyelle qui le suit." That is just what the h aspirate does. You can say the vowel a or é in the ordinary way, and you can also push it further back and produce it with more effort from the throat, when it will sound with a breath in front of it. This 'breath' is the h aspirate.

However, I have heard Frenchmen and Frenchwomen pronouncing les haies, en haut, etc., with a full h as in English. In France such an h is provincial—Norman or Gascon. That being the case, there is no harm in an Englishman sounding it as an English h, as long as he is sure that the h in question is aspirate.
3. To the Parisian, h aspirate simply prevents elision and liaison, and so causes hiatus. He says le héros or le héraut as le-é-ro. The important thing to remember is the point about elision and liaison. In reading we are concerned only with the latter, and occasionally it proves a difficulty. I think a little trouble should be taken over the question and that it should not be ignored. Personally I find among boys the most widespread ignorance on the subject, often extending as far as not knowing that two such kinds of h exist, to say nothing of their properties.

4. Perhaps the following list of fairly common words beginning with an h aspirate will be useful for reference:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le hâbleur (eu)</td>
<td>le halage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la hâbleuse (eu)</td>
<td>(haler)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la hache</td>
<td>hâlé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le haché</td>
<td>(hâler)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(le style haché)</td>
<td>tout haletant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le hachis</td>
<td>la halle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la hachure</td>
<td>la hallebarde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hagard</td>
<td>le halo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la haie</td>
<td>la halte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le haillon</td>
<td>le hamac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le Hainaut</td>
<td>(=ha-mak)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la haine</td>
<td>le hameau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haïr</td>
<td>la hanche</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
le handicap [le] haut
le hangar très hautain
le hanneton le hautbois
hanter la hauteur
le happement le haut-relief
happer la Havane
la harangue le Havre
le haras le havresac
harasser le heaume
harceler hein
les hardes hennir
très hardi le hennissement
la hardiesse (see p. 44, § 3)
le harem le héraut
(see p. 44, § 3)
le hareng le hérison
le haricot le héron
harnacher le héros ¹
le harnais la herse
la harpe le hêtre
la harpie heurter
le harpiste le heurtoir
le harpon le hibou
le hasard fort hideux
à la hâte hisser
hausser le hochet
(je hausse les épaules) le hockey

¹ But in l'héroïne, l'héroïsme, héroïque, héroiquement, the h is mute.
le Hollandais  la houlette
la Hollande    la houppé
le homard    le houx
le home      la huche
la Hongrie    la huée
le Hongrois   huer
la honte     le Huguenot
honteusement [le] huit
honteux      la huitaine
le hoquet    [le] huitième
la horde     le humbug (heùm'-beûg')
hors         la hune
(le hors d'œuvre) le hurlement
le houblon   hurler
la houe      le hurrah (hourrah)
la houille   le hussard
la houle     la hutte

5. Note.—(1) In words beginning hach-, hai-, han-, hou- the h is always aspirate, while in all words beginning hy- the h is mute.

(2) Medial h cannot be aspirate,¹ e.g. adhérent, bohémien, brouhaha, Cahors, dehors, exhiber, souhaiter, Spahi, tomahawk (to-ma-ok), trahison, véhément, véhicule.

(3) The recital of an occasional tense of a verb in h aspirate is useful to show the absence of elision and liaison and to enable one to get used to the sound of such a verb. E.g. je hante, tu hantes, il hante,

   nous hantons, vous hantez, ils hantent.

Cf. vous avez hanté, etc.

¹ Except the combinations ch-, sch-, sh-, and in the words enhardir, enharnacher. Note also ph = f, e.g. philosophie (see p. 109), diphtongue.
French R

6. Some discussion of the French R may be a help. It is what is known as 'rolled'; so that first of all we have to explain the nature of a 'rolled' consonant. There are three different organs belonging to the mouth which may be called upon to effect this rolling: the lips, the tip of the tongue, and the uvula.

So far as is known, I believe, the lips are not called upon to produce a rolled consonant in any language. Nevertheless anyone can make them do so, and we in England often use them in this way, onomatopoeically, when we are cold or when we wish to show contempt for anything. We blow air through the lips which makes them 'chatter' or vibrate quickly. It would be interesting to find a language with a word in it containing this sound.

Now as to the tip of the tongue. This can be made to vibrate against the upper teeth so as to allow only an intermittent passage of air to pass out of the mouth. We can say the word right or red with a roll of this nature, as in fact we do in public speaking or in singing. This is the tip of the tongue R, or forward R.

A third kind of rolling can be produced by making the uvula (the fleshy conical appendix which hangs from the soft palate over the back of the tongue)
vibrate—as in gargling—against the back of the tongue. In this way another R, the backward R, can be produced—different in sound from the forward R.

The following diagrams will make this clear. In

![Diagram of Forward R and Backward R]

the first, breath comes up over the vocal chords (A) and makes the tip of the tongue (B) vibrate against the upper teeth, as shown by the plain and dotted lines, thus giving the rolling.

In the second, the rolling is produced by the uvula (C), which vibrates as shown. In the forward
H ASPIRATE: FRENCH R

The sound is produced at B, in the backward at C.

7. Now as to which of these R's is the so-called French R. Both may claim the distinction. The original and more 'correct' is the forward one; but the fashion has changed, and nowadays the backward one (called by the French 'R grasse') has supplanted it in towns—notably Paris, where, however, it is very gently rolled.

In the country (even a few miles from Paris) and in small towns both are heard, though personally I have heard the R grasse more often than the forward R. The German and Italian R is the forward variety, well rolled; yet in many parts of Germany the R grasse is heard (except on the stage); indeed, for purposes of oratory or singing the forward R is in vogue in England, France, Italy, and Germany.

8. Now the question arises, Which are we to teach in our schools? I think the answer to it is that every individual may choose whichever comes easier. Whatever their respective merits in France, it should be clear that both are right for us.

Some—for instance, Welshmen, Northumbrians and Scotsmen—have a natural forward R in their native tongue. They can therefore quite easily use the same in speaking French. Southerners may try the R grasse, but (and this is essential) each individual should endeavour to make his R 'felt'
—that is, rolled one way or the other—and not be content with such an R as in Mary, very, arm, which is no R at all. Practise such words as rinser, rage, rue, roue, repos, trouver, retrouver. The last word is one of the most difficult words I know for Englishmen, especially with the R grasseyé. The English words right, wrong, frightful, etc., also make suitable practice words for a rolled R.

In words like marcher, parchemin, parler, unless care is taken, the R will be lost altogether before the ch or l. Practise keeping it and do not let these words sound like marsh or harsh in Southern English—a very prevalent mistake.

Again let me plead for a mirror. With it one can quite easily see the tip of the tongue or the uvula vibrate, and thus the matter may be decided according to individual ability.
 CHAPTER VII

ILL, IL, AND GN MOUILLÉS

1. EXCEPT in comparatively few words the combination ill has the sound of i-ye and gn of 'n-ye. These sounds also need careful teaching and practice in order that the ill, as soon as seen, may suggest the sound of i-ye and gn of 'n-ye.

Such words are: que j’aille (jà-i-ye), ailleurs (à-i-yeûr), Bastille (bas-ti-ye), bataille (ba-tà-i-ye), billet (bi-yè), bouteille (bou-tè-i-ye), Corneille (-né-i-ye), cuiller (kü-i-yère, cf. p. 82), famille (fa-mi-ye), feuille (feû-i-ye), fille (fi-ye), Guillaume (ghi-yô-me), guillemets (ghi-ye-mè), guillotine (ghi-yô-ti-ne), meilleur (mè-i-yeûr), œillet (eû-i-yè), papillon (pa-pi-yon), pillage (pi-ya-je), travaille (tra-và-i-ye), Versailles (vèr-sà-i-ye), veuille (veû-i-ye).

2. The question of tonic accent is important in these words. It does not fall on the i of i-ye unless no syllable precedes it, but on the syllable before the i. It is rather a strong tonic accent, and the syllable receiving it is drawn out and a pause follows before -i-ye is added rather softly. The syllable receiving this pause is marked _._. Perhaps the
following representations will make this quite clear:

que jā . . . (i)-ye, fēū . . . (i)-ye, vēū . . . (i)-ye, etc.

Extra special care, I find, is required for words in -ouille, to prevent the stress falling on the -ill instead of on ou. The word grenouille, for instance, is gre-nōū . . . i-ye, des nouilles is des nōū . . . i-ye, and patrouille pa-trōū . . . i-ye.

Other words are bōūiller, bōūilloire, bōūillon, broūillard, fōūille, mōūillé, quenōūille, rōūiller.

Words in -euillir, e.g. accueillir, cueillir, enorgueillir (remember that the en is nasal here: cf. p. 43, 2) are similarly sounded, but we have to realize that cue, which takes the stress, is pronounced keū (cf. p. 28), and gue like gheū; that is to say, there is no sound of French u to be heard. These words may be represented keū . . . i-yir, 2 en-nor-gheū . . . i-yir.

It is as well not to be content with pronouncing the infinitives but to say whole tenses, e.g. je keū . . . i-ye, tu keū . . . i-ye, il keū . . . i-ye, etc.

3. In the following cases ill is not mouillé, the l's being divided and each having consonantal value.

(a) All words beginning with ill-, mill- (except millet=mi-ye), and vill-; e.g. Illinois (il-li), illogique (il-lo), illusion, illustre; mille, millimètre, million; villa, village, villageois, ville.
(b) And the following words: Achille (a-shil), bill, billevesée,\(^1\) billion, capillaire, codicille, distiller (and derivatives), imbécillité, Lille, lilliputien, maxillaire, osciller (and derivatives), pupille (and derivatives), scintiller\(^1\) (and derivatives, scin=sn, cf. p. 98), Séville, tranquille (and derivatives), vaciller (and derivatives), vaudeville.

4. Il mouillé.—For il to be mouillé it must be final, and final l (as will be seen later, p. 81) may be mute, sounded, or mouillé. It is mouillé in the following words: accueil (ak-keũ-i-ye), ail (ã-i-ye), appareil (a-pa-rẽ-i-ye), bail, bouvreuil (bou-vřeu-i-ye), cercueil (sẽr-keũ-i-ye), corail, détail, deuil, écureuil, éventail, fauteuil, fenouil (fe-noũ-i-ye), gentil (before a vowel), e.g. gentil enfant (jen-ti-yen-fant), gentil-homme (jen-ti-yom-me), grésil (or gré-zi, cf. p. 82), œil (ẽu-ye), oil (langue d'), orgueil, pareil, rail, seuil, soleil (so-lẽ-i-ye), travail, treuil, vermeil.

Note.—(i) The same remarks apply with regard to tonic accent as applied to ill mouillé.

(ii) All these words in il mouillé appear to have more syllables in their pronunciation than their spelling would warrant.

5. Gn mouillé.—This is another frequently overlooked sound. Montagne is to my certain knowledge nearly always spoken of as mon-tain or something very similar. To correct effectively such a pronunciation in words like montagne, campagne, com-

\(^1\) May also be mouillé.
pagne, etc., I think one should insist, at first, on hearing four syllables, not two, as one generally hears in England. It is not easy to show graphically what these four syllables are; however, we have a very similar sound in English in companion, onion, opinion, Spaniard, so that perhaps mon-tá-een-nye may convey the idea. This is the word said slowly. After these four syllables are distinct, one may allow a slight diphthongization of tâ and een (tâeen), care being taken, however, to keep a fairly strong tonic accent on tâ and a distinct -nye at the end. Similarly with campagne and compagne, and in these attention must be paid to the different nasal vowel sounds with which they begin.

Various vowels may precede the Gn, e.g. aign, eign, oign, oign, ign, and less commonly, égn, ègn, ugn. They all require careful early teaching, and for practice the following examples are suggested:

agn (a-een-ye):
agneau, Charlemagne, espagnol, gagner, magnétique, magnétisme, magnifique.

aign (e-een-ye):
vous craignez, vous plaignez.

eign (é-een-ye):
nous atteignons, éteignant, il feignit, que je peigne.
ogn (ó-een-ye):
Boulogne, cognac, Cologne, encognure, incognito, ivrogne, ognon.

oign (wâ-een-ye):
éloigner, joignant, poignée, soigner, but not en-coignure, oignon; see ogn above.

ign (eën-ye):
clignoter, digne, ignoble, ignorant, rossignol, signe, also cygne.

ègn (é-een-ye):
régner, imprégnation).

ègn (é-een-ye):
règne, which one often hears mispronounced as reine.

ugn (ú-een-ye):
répugnance, répugner.

6. In the following words Gn is not mouillé, i.e. the g is hard, and the n=n.
All words from Lat. ignis, e.g. ignifuger, ignition (ig-ni); also in agnosticisme, Agnus Dei, expugnable, gnome (ghe-no-me), gnostique, inexpugnable, magnificat, récognition, stagnant, stagnation.
CHAPTER VIII

FINAL CONSONANTS

1. Final consonants may be divided into (i) those which are usually sounded, (ii) those which are usually mute.

Final c, f, l, r are usually sounded, also b and k, which are rare; the rest are usually mute. We will take them seriatim for reference.

2. Final C.

Final c is usually sounded, e.g. arc, arc-en-ciel (ar-kan-sy-èl), bac, bec, bivouac, bric-à-brac, de bric ou de broc, caduc, choc, clic ! clac !, cognac, cric ! crac !, duc, échec ('reverse,' 'rebuff,' 'check!'—for échecs, 'chess,' see below and cf. p. 23); flic flac !, frac, grec, hamac (cf. p. 68), lac, but mute in lacs ('noose,' Lat. laqueus, pronounced la), loustic, pic, à pic, but mute in pic-vert (commonly spelled pivert), public, sac, sec, suc, tic ('mannerism'), trac ('gait of animals,' 'stage-fright'), trictrac, truc, turc.

Final c is mute after the n of a nasal vowel sound, e.g. vainc, banc, blanc, flanc, franc, ajonc, tronc, except 1donc, zinc, in which it is sounded (donk, 

1 Thus distinguishing it orally from dont.
zink). It is also mute in accroc, broc (before a vowel brok), caout-chouc (ka-out-chou), clerc, cric (jack for lifting), croc, échecs (‘chess’; see above and cf. p. 23), escroc, estomac, porc (but sounded in porc-épic; por-ké-pik), raccroc (‘fluke’ at billiards), tabac (before a vowel tabak).

3. **Final F.**

Final f is usually sounded, e.g. actif, bluff (bleûf), bref, canif, if, juif, kif-kif, nef, relief, serf, soif, vif.

bœuf, œuf, nerf. In these the f is sounded in the singular but not in the plural: e.g. un beûf, des beû; eû-neûf (see p. 43), deû-zeû; etc.

cerf. In the singular may be sèr or sèrf; in plural usually sèr. In cerf-volant it is always mute (sèr-vol-lan); in serf it is sounded in singular and plural.

chef. In chef, ‘head,’ the f is sounded (chêf); also in chef de cuisine, chef de gare, chef d’orchestre (-kès-tre), chef-lieu, en chef, de son chef.

But in chef-d’œuvre, singular and plural, it is mute (chê-deû-vre).

clef. Also spelt clé, a fact which helps us to remember that the f is mute in singular and plural (u-ne clé).

Note.—For neuf, see p. 65.

4. **Final L** (for 1 mouillé see p. 77).

Final l is sounded in accul, avril, babil, bol, Brésil, calcul, ciel, cil, col, consul, fenil (or better mute, fe-ni), fil, fil de fer, nul, péril, profil, vol.
It is mute in baril, chenil, coutil, cul, cul de sac, etc., fenil (or fe-nil), fournil, fusil (fu-zî), Gentil, 'Gentile,' gentil, 'nice' (cf. p. 77), grésil (or mouillé, cf. p. 77), outil, persil, saoul (also written souûl, and both pronounced sou), sourcil (cf. cil above).

5. Final R.

Final r may occur in a variety of endings. It is usually sounded. These endings with examples are tabulated below:

- **-air**, e.g. air, chair, impair, pair (both words), vair, etc.
- **-ar**, ,, car, par, etc.
- **-er**, ,, amer, aster, cancer, carter, 'gear-case,' cher, cuiller (also spelt cuillère, which shows its pronunciation), enfer, Esther, éther, fer, geyser (jé-zèr or ghé-zèr), hiver, Jupiter, Kaiser, Lucifer, mâchefer, mer, Niger, papaver (pavot), pater, Quimper, Saint-Omer, Stathouder, steamer (sti-meûr), tender, ulster, ver, etc.; but not, of course, in 1st conjugation infinitives, e.g. aimer, etc., or when -**er** is a suffix (Lat. -arius), e.g. boucher, boulanger, horloger, quincaillier, etc.
- **-eur**, ,, acteur, chœur,¹ cœur,¹ peur, stupeur, etc. (cf. p. 28).

¹ These two words are sounded exactly alike (keûr).
-ier,  e.g. avant-hier, fier (adj. ‘proud’); hier, but not in 1st conjugation infinitives, e.g. fier, plier, etc., or when -ier is a suffix (Lat. -arius), e.g. dernier, jardinier, peuplier, portier, premier, etc.

-ieur, ,, inférieur, Monseigneur, prieur, seigneur, sieur, supérieur, etc.; but not in monsieur, messieurs (cf. pp. 28, 107).

-ir, ,, in all 2nd conjugation infinitives, e.g. remplir, etc., also elzévir, émir, etc.

-oir, ,, in all 3rd conjugation infinitives, e.g. devoir, pouvoir, voir, etc., also noir, etc.

-or, ,, butor, cor, or, etc.

-our, ,, calembour, four, jour, pour, etc.

-uir, ,, cuir, fuir, etc.

-ur, ,, dur, mur, mûr, obscur, pur, sur, sûr, etc.

Note.—Pages 73 and 74 should be read again in this connection.

Final r’s are usually treated badly by English boys. It will not do to rest content with the English pronunciation of air, i.e. ai-er; the r all but assumes an e after it, i.e. ai-r(e), ac-teur(e). Considerable practice is required for such words as car, peur, pour, devoir, voir, in order to make the r ‘felt.’ Every teacher is aware how often voir is perverted into voi.

6. Final B.

A rare ending, generally foreign. It is sounded in baobab, cab, club, cob, nabob, radoub (‘ship-repair,’ more usually pronounced radou), rob (also spelt robre), snob, tub (teüb). It is mute in aplomb, Colomb, plomb (plon).
Final K.

Also rare and foreign. It is sounded where it occurs, e.g. alpenstock, bifteck, bluebook, bock, break, brick (‘brig’), carrick, cheik (shèk), colback, copeck, dock, five-o’clock, hack, lack (100,000, e.g. ‘un lack de roupies’), moujik (‘Russian peasant’), odd-trick, pibrock, rumsteck (cf. p. 45), smack, stock, talpack, tomahawk (cf. p. 70, note 2), trick.

(ii) Final Consonants usually Mute

7. Final D.

Final d is usually mute, e.g. bord, canard, coud, étendard, froid, Gounod, laid (lè), lard, lord, lourd, milord, nid, nord, pied (in liaison d=t: cf. p. 63), plaid (‘rug’).

It is sounded in Bagdad, celluloïd, Cid, compound (machine compound), David, éphod, (fod), farad, nord-est, nord-ouest (nor-dest,1 nor-douest1 by liaison), raid (réd), George Sand, stand, steward, stud (steûd), sud (cf. nord), Talmud, yard.

8. Final G.

Generally mute (and always so in a nasal vowel sound), e.g. bourg, Cherbourg, coing, Edimbourg, étang, faubourg, hareng, long, orang-outang, poing, Saint-Pétersbourg, rang, sang, schelling, seing, shampooing (shan-poo-in), Souchong (thé), sterling (lin); but

1 Some people say nor-rest, nor-rouest; and sailors still further change these words to nor-ré, nor-roué.
is sounded in Bourg (bourk), gong, joug (may also be mute, jou). In the following the English pronunciation is imitated: betting, filibeg (also spelt philibeg, 'kilt'), grog, humbug (cf. p. 70), meeting, pouding, pudding (may also be spelt and pronounced poudingue), shilling, shocking, skating, Whig, yachting, zig-zag.

9. Final P.

Final p is mute in beaucoup, coup, galop, loup, sirop, trop (cf. p. 62), etc.

It is sounded in cap, cep, croup, Gap (Hautes Alpes), hanap, julep, sloop, stop.

Note.—Medial p is mute in baptême (ba-tè-me) and derivatives, e.g. baptiser, Baptiste; sculpter and derivatives, e.g. sculpture; sept (sè, in liaison sèt); but is sounded in antisep- tique, apte, aptitude, exemption (cf. p. 44), inapte, opter, péremp- toire (cf. p. 44), rédemption (cf. p. 44), septante, septembre, septemvirat (cf. p. 44), septentrional, septique, somptuaire, somptueux (sonp), symptôme (sînp, (cf. p. 34).

10. Final S.

Final s, though as a rule mute, is sounded in a great many words. In proper names, for instance, it is usually safe to sound it, though not in Charles, Cinq-Mars, Georges, Jacques.

It is sounded in the following:

A Adonis, albatros, albinos, aloës, angélus, Argus, Arras, as, atlas, autobus.

B Bacchus (ba-kuss), biceps, bis ('twice,' 'encore')—but not in bis ('brown'), e.g. pain bis (bi)—blaps, blocus, Britannicus, Brutus.
C  cactus, Cadédís, Calvados, Caractacus, cassis
   ('black currant,' but mute in cassis, 'cross drain'), cens, Cérès, Cervantes (tèss), chorus, Christmas (kriss-mass), Claudius, consensus (cf. p. 42), convolvulus (liseron), cosinus, Crésus (zuss), crocus, Cujas, cumulus, Cyrus.

D  Damas (Damascus)—as the fabric it is mute (da-ma), Damoclès, demi-londrès.

E  ès (bachelier ès lettres), eucalyptus (N.B.—The first syllable is eu not yu), express.

F  fils (fiss, 'son,' but not sounded as plural of fil), florès, fongus, forceps.

G  gens ('Roman family,' cf. p. 42), gibus, gradus, gratis.

H  hélas, hiatus.

I  ibis, iris.

J  jadis.

L  laïus ('discours' on Speech-Day), laps, lapsus, lawn-tennis, lis (mute in 'fleur de lis'), londrès, lotos (also spelt lotus).

M  Madras, maïs, mars (but mute in Cinq-Mars), Mathias, mérinos, mess, miss, mœurs (or silent s), mordicus ('with tooth and nail'), motus! ('mum's the word'), mucus, myosotis (-zo-tiss).

N  nimbus, non-sens, Notus.

O  oasis (o-a-ziss), obus (or silent s), omnibus, orémus, os (in singular ôss, plural dé-zó), ours.

P  palmarès ('prize-list,' 'Speech-Day'), palus,
papyrus, Parisis (ziss or zi), pataquès, pathos (tôss), Périclès, phébus, plexus, prospectus.

Q quibus (cf. p. 93).

R rébus, Reims (rinss), reps, rhinocéros, rictus, Rubens (see p. 42).

S Saint-Saëns (see p. 34), sanctus, sens,¹ sinus, Stanislas, Stradivarius, strass (also spelt stras), sus, syllabus.

T tennis, terminus, tétanos, tournevis, tous (pronoun), triceps, tumulus, Tunis, typhus.

U us (les us et coutumes d’un pays).

V vasistas, Vénus, virus, vis (une viss), but not in vis-à-vis (Lat. visum, vi-za-vi).

X Xérès (‘ sherry,’ ké-rèss), Xerxès (gzèr-sèss).

Note.—In encens the s is usually mute. It is not incorrect, however, to sound it.

II. Final T.

Usually mute, but pronounced in the following:

A abject, abrupt, accessit (ak-sè-sit), aconit, affidavit, antéchrist (or kri).

B ballast, bat (cricket), Brest, brut, Buda-Pest, but.

C cant, catgut, Christ (but mute in Jésus Christ, jé-zu-kri), chut, cobalt, compact, contact, convict, correct,

D dead-heat (dè-dit), déficit, direct, distinct, district, dot.

¹ The final s is sounded in ‘ sens commun,’ ‘ les cinq sens,’ ‘Dans quel sens allez-vous ?’ but not in ‘sens dessus dessous’ or ‘sens devant derrière.’
E est (‘ east ’), exact (eg-zakt).
F fat.
G granit (or -ni).
H huit (when final or before a vowel; cf. p. 108).
I incorrect, indirect, indistinct, inexact (cf. p. 42, Excep. 2, i), infect, intact, intellect, introït (tro-it, see p. 102).
J Saint-Just.
K kilt.
L lest.
M malt, mat (both ‘ mate ’ in chess and ‘ dull ’).
N net, nugget (neû-ghêt).
O occiput, ouest.
P pat (‘ stalemate ’ at chess), pickpocket, prétérit.
R rapt, rit (older spelling of rite).
S shunt, snowboot, soit ! (‘ Good ! ’ ‘ So be it ! ’), Soult, sprat, stout (sta-out), strict, suspect (or sus-pè; in masc. plur. always sus-pè).
T tact, toast, transit (zit), trust (treüst).
U ut.
V veldt, verdict, vivat, volt. (For vingt see below.)¹
W watt, whist, wicket, writ.
Z zest, zut.

Note.—The following words, though similar in form to several of the above, do not pronounce the t:
aspect (as-pè), circonspect (spè or spèk), instinct (ins-tin), respect (respè or pèk), succinct (suk-sin).

¹ Vingt : The t of vingt is sounded before a vowel (vingt-en-fants, 20 hommes), also in the numerals vingt et un . . . vingt-neuf. It is mute in other cases, e.g. Il y en a vingt; le 20 mai; quatre-vingt-un . . . quatre-vingt-dix-neuf.
12. Final X.

Final x is usually mute, e.g. affreux, animaux, chaux, choix, courroux, croix, crucifix, deux, doux, flux, perdrix, prix, reflux.

But in the following it is sounded as ks:

Aix (éks), Ajax, Cadiz, Chaix (indicateur, shèks), Dax, Dupleix (plèks), Félix, income-tax, index, larynx, lynx, onyx, opopanax, pharynx, phénix, phlox, préfix (jour préfix), silex, sphinx, Styx.

13. It will be convenient here to add a note about medial x. As a matter of fact it presents little difficulty except in an odd word or two, the English equivalent being a fairly sure guide. Medial x has the sound of ks except that initial ex- or inex- followed by a vowel=ègz. For convenience the examples are arranged in two columns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medial x = ks</th>
<th>Initial Ex (Inex) + Vowel = ègz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>annexe.</td>
<td>exact, inexact, (see p. 88).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anxiété.</td>
<td>exagérer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>axe.</td>
<td>examen (cf. p. 42, § 8).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>axiome.</td>
<td>exaucer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bissextile.</td>
<td>exeat (èg-zé-at).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boxe.</td>
<td>exécrable (cf. p. 52, § 4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connexion.</td>
<td>exemple.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dextérité.</td>
<td>exempt (see p. 34).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excellent.</td>
<td>exercice, inexercé.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excepter.</td>
<td>exhiber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excès.</td>
<td>exhorter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expansif.</td>
<td>(see p. 70, note 2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exiger.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medial \( x = ks \).  

Initial \( Ex (Inex) + \text{Vowel} = \text{égz} \).

express.  
exquis.  
s'extasier.  
extreme.  
fixe.  
flexible.  
inexcusable.  
inexpérience.  
luxe.  
maxime.  
oxygène.  
rixe.  

Note.—(1) In the following

inexcusable. \( x = ss \) : Auxonne (o-sonne),
inexpérience. Bruxelles (sè-le), soixante
luxe. (swas-san-te).

(2) In deuxième, \( x = z \).

(3) hexagone = èg-za.

(4) For six, dix, see p. 64.

sexagénaire (also sèg-za-).

sexe.
taxe.
taximètre.
textile.
vexation.
vexer.

14. Final \( Z \).

Usually mute, e.g. assez, cache-nez, chez, lez (Lat. latus, e.g. Plessis-lez-Tours), nez, rez (de chaussée), riz, and in the 2nd person plural of verbs.

It is sounded in Austerlitz (tz = ts), Biarritz (tz = ts), Cortez, Fernandez, fez, gaz, Metz (tz = ts), quartz (tz = ts, see p. 92), ranz (‘Swiss pastoral air,’ also pronounced rants), Santa-Cruz, eau de Seltz (selss), Suez (Suèz or Suess), Vera-Cruz.
CHAPTER IX
QU AND GU: MEDIAL T: SC AND CC

Qu and Gu

1. THE sounds made with Qu- and a following vowel are not as obvious as they look. There are three possibilities: Qu may=K or Ku or Kou, according to circumstances. Perhaps the following lists will guide pronunciation and check any errors that may have passed unobserved.

2. The possible vowels after qu- are a, e, i, o, and in one case u (qu’un, where qu=ṅ). We will take these in order.

Qua.—(1) Generally qua=ka.
(2) Sometimes , =koua.

Examples of (1) Antiquaire (kèr), choquant (and all present participles of verbs in -quer), cinquante, disqualifier, équarrir, équarrisseur, piquant, quadrille, quai, qualifie, qualité, quand, quant, quantité, quarante, quart, quartier, quartier-maitre, quasi (zi), quatorze, quattremain, quatre, toquade (also spelt tocade, ‘bee in one’s bonnet’).

(2) The more important words in which Qua= koua are : adéquat, aquarelle, aquarium (see p. 45),
aquatique, équateur, équation, équatorial, in-quarto ('quarto'—size of paper), loquace, loquacité, quadrilatère, quadruplicate, quadrupège (N.B.—The second syllable is dru-not drou-), quadruple, quaker (kou-a-kèr), quantum (cf. p 45), quartette, quartetto, quartz, quatuor, quinquagénaire (ku-in-kou-a-jé-nè-re), quinquagésime (cf. p. 48), squale, square (skou-a-re and skou-ère), squatter.

3. Que.—In the group que, qu always =k, except in équestre, questeur, quinquennal, of which the pronunciation is é-ku-èstre, ku-ès-teur, ku-in-kuenn-nal, though équestre may also be é-kèst-tre. The following are important examples of Qu(e)=K(e):

aquedux (a-ke-duc), aqueux (a-keú), conséquemment (cf. p. 44, § 3), coquelicot, équerre (é-kè-re), freluquet (kè), fréquent (kan), idyllique, illogique, indiquer (kè), laqué, liquéfaction, liqueur (cf. p. 28), Pâques, piqueur (cf. p. 28), publique, Québec, qu’en, quenouille (cf. p. 76), querelle (ke-rè-le), question, queue (cf. p. 26), quinquet, risquer, séquence, squelette (ske-lè-te), variqueux (keú).

4. Qui.—In the same way qu(i)=k(i) (as in the pronoun qui), with rare though important exceptions, when qui=ku-i. Examples of qu(i)=k(i) are:

acquitter, aquilin, aquilon, bouquin, cinquième, coquille, coquin, Don Quichotte, équilibre, équinôxe, équipage, équipe, équipée ('escapade'), équipement,
équitable, équivalent, équivaloir, esquif, exquis, inquiétant, inquiétude, jonquille, liquide, quiconque, quincaillier, quinine, quinquet, quiproquo, Quito, quitter, requin, taquiner, vilebrequin.

The above are selected from a great number of such words, because, in several cases, the English equivalent is apt to suggest a false pronunciation.

The more important exceptions are given below. In them qui=ku-i, i.e. dissyllabic, but the first sound must not be heard as kou.

équiangle, équidistant, équilatéral, équitation (less usually ki), obliquité, obséquieux (or ki-eux), quibus, quiétisme, quiétiste, quiétude (or ki), quinquagénaire, quinquagésime, quinquennal (cf. pp. 92, 48), quintette, quintetto, quintuple, Quirinal, requiem.

5. Quo.—Quo=ko, and Quoi=koi (kwa).

E.g. aquosite (a-ko-zi-te), carquois, liquoreux, pourquoi, quiproquo, quoi, qu’on, quorum (cf. p. 45), quotidien, quotient (ko-si-an, cf. p. 42), turquoise.

Thus it will be seen that qu=k in the vast majority of such words, that kou can only develop before an a, and ku before an i, except in équestre, questeur, quinquennal.

Gu

6. The vowel u after g almost invariably serves to make the g hard (i.e. gh) before the vowel which follows u.
Examples are numerous. Among the more common are: aiguière (è-ghi-ère: cf. aiguille below), alanguir (ghir), anguille (an-ghi-ye), bague (ba-ghe), déguisement (dé-ghi-ze-man), déguiser (cf. aiguiser below), distinguant, distinguer, figuier (fi-ghi-é), guenille, guère, guerre, Du Guesclin (ghè-klin), guetter (ghè-té), gueule (gheû-le), gueux (gheû), gui (ghi), guichet, guide, guillotine (ghi-yo-ti-ne), guignon guimbarde (ghin-, cf. p. 48), guise (ghi-ze, cf. Guise below), guitare, languir, léguer, ligueur, longueur (cf. p. 28), manguier (ghi), naviguer, onguent (on-gan), orgue, orgueil (cf. p. 77), orgueilleux, rigueur, se targuer, vigueur (cf. p. 28).

7. But in the following the gu is syllabic and is pronounced gu, not gou, except in guano and lingual (gou):

aiguë (è-gu), aiguille (è-gu-i-ye: cf. anguille above), aiguiller, aiguilleur, aiguillon, aiguiser (cf. déguiser above), arguer (ar-gu-é: cf. distinguer, naviguer), guano (gou-a-no), Guise (town and family, gu-i-ze: cf. guise above), inextinguible (i-neks-tin-gu-i-ble), lingual (lin-gou-al), linguiste (lin-gu-is-te), linguistique.

Medial T

8. It is not uncommon to hear a mistake in pronunciation over words with the combination
tie, tien, tier, etc., in them. I suggest the following general rule: If there is an s or sh sound in the corresponding English translation of the word, pronounce the t as s; if not pronounce it as t; e.g. essentiel (si-el), quotient (si-an), initier (si-é), conversation (si-on), but question, admixture, ortie ('nettle') have the sound ti.

9. To take such words in more detail, the combinations to be considered (arranged according as the t is (i) always s, (ii) always t, (iii) s or t, are:

Always s. Always t. s or t.

-til. -tie. -tiaire, -tia(l), -tian, -tie, -tien,
-tieux. -tième. -tier, -tion, and the verbal 
-tière. endings -tions, -tiez.

(i) Always s.

-til : e.g. essentiel, partiel (une éclipse partielle), présidentiel, etc.

-tieux : e.g. ambitieux, factieux, minutieux, prétentieux, etc.

(ii) Always t.

-tie : e.g. amitié, moitié, etc.; but not in past participles of verbs in -tier which make s (see under -tier).

-tièmè : e.g. centième, quantième, septième, etc.
-tière : e.g. altière, cafetière, gantière, matière, etc.
(iii) s or t.

-tiaire. An s preceding -tiaire preserves the sound of t by dissimilation; in other cases the sound is siaire; e.g. bestiaire, vestiaire, with t, but pénitentiaire with s.

-tia(l). In the same way a preceding s preserves the t; e.g. bestial; also centiaire, étiage, galimatias, tiare, with t; but initial, insatiable, martial, nuptial, partial (un arbitre partial), transubstantiation, with s.

-tian. The same remark applies in christianiser, christianisme.

-tie. The general rule (p. 95) applies particularly here: If there is an s or sh sound in the English equivalent then tie=sie in French; e.g. autocratie, facétie, inertie, minutie, prophétie, with s; also ineptie, peripétie, although with t in English.

The following are pronounced with t (a t in the English or a preceding s helps one to decide): abrutie, amortie, apprentie, assortie, ortie, partie, rôtie, sacristie, sortie, sotie.

-tien. This is generally sounded with s, a few words make t, the English equivalent will usually settle which: bétien, helvétien, impatience, lilliputien, patient, quotient, venitien, are all with s; while antienne, chrétien, chrétienté, entretien, maintient, obtiens, etc., are all with t.
-tier. Nouns and adjectives in -tier—as in the case of tière (q.v.)—keep the t; e.g. altier, bénitier, charcutier, charretier, coquetier, entier, hérétique, portier, sabotier.

Verbs in -tier, except châtier, ortier, make s; e.g. balbutier, différentier, initier (throughout their conjugation) are sounded with s, but châtier (s before t) and ortier (cf. ortie) are sounded with t.

-tion. With regard to this combination, which concerns a very large number of words, it is pronounced sion where possible; i.e. as long as s or x does not precede it. This s or x necessitates a following t sound. Thus when c, n, p, r, or any vowel, precedes -tion, the s develops; e.g.

c preceding: construction, fonction.
n ,, invention, mention.
p ,, corruption, exception.
r ,, désertion, insertion.
vowel ,, conversation, ration, rationner, discrétion, ambition, éditions (cf. nous éditions, p. 98), tradition, motion, potion, ablution, constitution.

N.B.—Care has to be taken not to introduce (à l’anglaise) any suspicion of sh into these words: -tion is dissyllabic (si-on) with a well-pronounced and slightly stressed No. 3 nasal vowel sound at the end.
In **s+tion**, *e.g.* bastion, combustion, digestion, question, etc., and in **x+tion**, *e.g.* admixture, mixtionner, the sound is **t**, as already stated.

- **tions**, -tiez. The pronunciation of these verbal endings follows the verb to which they belong:

*e.g.* nous agitions (*agiter*), vous châtiez (*châtier*), nous éditions (*éditer*), nous balbutions (*balbutier*), vous initiez (*initier*).

For **strontium**, see p. 45.

### Sc and cc

10. The pronunciation of these will give no trouble if it be remembered that, just as *c* is hard before *a*, *o*, *u*, and soft before *e*, *i*, in the same way *sc* = **sk** and *cc* = **k** before *a*, *o*, *u*, and **ss** and **ks** respectively before *e* and *i*.

- **a** (sk) cascade, escarpolette, scandaliser.
- **e** (ss) ascension, sceau (*cf.* seau), sceptique (*cf.* septique and Eng. sceptical).
- **sc**
  - **i** (ss) fascicule, irascible, scie, scintiller.
- **o** (sk) scolaire, sclastique.
- **u** (sk) bascule, opuscule, scuplter (*cf.* p. 85).

*sc* also becomes **sk** before *l*, *r*; *e.g.* esclave, muscle, scrupule, scrutier; but in **Du Guesclin** the *s* is silent (see p. 94). In schisme the *c* is silent (shis-me). Similarly for **schème** (shème) and schooner (shou-nèr).
QU AND GU: MEDIAL T: SC AND CC

a (k) accaparer, occasion.
e (ks) accent, accepter, accès, ecce homo, succès.
c (ks) accident, occident, occiput, siccité.
o (k) accompagner, accord.
u (k) accueil, accuser, Bacchus, occuper.

cc also becomes k before l, r; e.g. acclamation, ecclésiastique, accréditer, accrocher.
CHAPTER X

WORDS FREQUENTLY MISPRONOUNCED: INTONATION

I propose to conclude these notes on pronunciation with a few words taken more or less at random. They are the result of observation and collection, and they find a place here because they are very frequently mispronounced, not only in the class-room, but elsewhere. In many cases a false pronunciation occurs by the mere sight of the word suggesting the sound of an English word similarly spelt. We have to be constantly on our guard against this not only in reading but also in speaking. I hope the list will prove useful and will bring into mind other examples which cause difficulty to the individual, for it does not pretend to be complete.

May I suggest, too, that these chapters on Pronunciation be read through from time to time and used as reference by the teacher, and that the lists, although not memorized, be revised occasionally? If, in this way, interest and curiosity are aroused in the spoken language, these notes on Pronunciation will have attained one of their chief aims.
MISPRONUNCIATION: INTONATION 101

A

abbaye.  ab-bè-i : cf. paye.

absence.  It is correct to pronounce b as p in words containing abs+vowel and obs+vowel; e.g. absence, absinthe, absolument, absoudre, absurde, (ap); obséder, obsèques, observer, obsidional, obsolète, (op).

admirable.  Tonic accent on mi-.

aéroplane.  Separate a and é, tonic accent on é, thus a-é-ro-plane; similarly for aérer (une maison a-é-rée), aéronaute, etc.

aile.  Pronounced exactly as elle (è-le).

almanach.  ch mute.

août.  Pronounce ou, with silent a, not a-ou as often heard.  (In the South it is heard as out.)

Cf. caoutchoucs (‘goloshes’ = ka-out-shou), curaçao (cu-ra-só), Saône (Só-ne), saoul (see p. 82).

appeler.  As already pointed out (p. 56), the tonic accent falls on ap, the weak e which follows being coupled with it (ap’-lé).

archaïsme.  See baïonnette.

archiépiscopal (ar-ki-é).  In all other compounds of archi- ch=sh, e.g. archiduc, archipel, architecte, architecture.

armistice.  Do not confuse with the English word.  Put tonic accent on 2nd syllable, ar-mîs-tice.

arriver.  a-ri-vé, not eu-ri-vé (à l’anglaise).  The first syllable needs insisting upon.
-asme. This ending is pronounced -assme, e.g. marasme, pléonasme. Cf. -isme.

asthmatic ; asthme. The th is mute in these words: ass-ma-tique; ass-me. So with isthme (iss-me).

athlétique. h mute. It is apt to be sounded through confusion with English: cf. such words as bibliothèque, Corinthien (ti-en), enthousiasme (en-tou-zis-me), éther (é-tèr), gothique, orthographe (-to-), rythmique (rit), sympathie, sympathique. Note that the sound which we represent by th, either voiced as in 'this' or voiceless as in 'thistle,' does not exist in French. Hence the difficulty Frenchmen have over words containing these sounds.

automne. See p. 44.

B

baïonnette. The syllable ba must be quite distinct from the i, and a regular hiatus cultivated between them, thus: ba-i-onn-nè-te. So for archaïsme (ar-ka-iss-me), faïence, laïque, laïus (cf. p. 86), mosaique, naïf, and other words having the tréma, e.g. caïman, Caïn (ka-in), celluloïd (cf. p. 84), ciguë (si-gu), contiguë (ti-gu), introït (tro-it), Saül (sa-ul). These may be compared with collègue, démagogue, ligue, etc., which have no tréma. In Madame de Staël the pronunciation is stál.
bibliothèque. See athlétique.
bienfaisance, bienfaisant. See faisable.
bruit. See persuader.
Bruxelles. See p. 90, note 1.
buisson. See persuader.

C

câïman. See baïonnette.
Caïn. See baïonnette.
calme, calmer. The 1 is pronounced and both words are dissyllabic (kal-me, kal-mé).
caoutchouc. See août.
chaos. ká-ó.
chuchoter. Ch in each case is pronounced sh (shu-sho-té). It is of interest to note that this word is onomatopoetic in several languages. Eng. whisper; Ger. flüstern; Ital. bisbigliare, pispigliare, susurrare.; Sp. susurrar.
chuinter. See persuader. Ch=sh (naturally).
ciguë. See baïonnette.
cipaye. See and cf. paye.
commencer. The first syllable is not keù as in English, but komm. However quickly the word is said this syllable is still komm.
conduite. See persuader.
contiguë. See baïonnette.
conversation. See exercer.
Corinthien. See athlétique.
cueillir. keù-yir. (Cf. p. 76, and note that there is no sound of French u in this word or in its derivatives.
curiosité. o-zi.

D
développer. Tonic accent on lo, not as in English, but thus: dév-ló-pé. The second syllable disappears according to the principle explained on p. 56.
diphtérie, diphtongue. ph = f; cf. philosophie.

E
Eiffel. è-fel; (la tou rè-fel).
éman<er>. Tonic accent on ci.
encoignure. See oignon.
enthousiasme. See athlétique.
éruption. See excursion.
éther. See athlétique.
eucalyptus. See Europe.
euphonie. See Europe.
Europe. The first syllable is eu as in heure, and not that of you as in English. So for eucalyptus (see p. 86), européen, euphonie, etc. (eù.)
évidemment. There is no tonic accent on vi. It falls on da. See p. 44.
excellent. Give a strong tonic accent to the second syllable: ek-sél-lan.
excursion. The second syllable is kur. The
MISPRONUNCIATION: INTONATION 105

English word suggests keür, which must be avoided. Similarly for éruption (rup, not reûp), multiplier, murmurant (mur, not meû or me), surprise (sur, not se as in English).

exercer, exercice. See p. 89, and note that, unlike the English equivalent, the second syllable is zêr and receives a strong tonic accent. Similarly for conversation, mercredi, permis, permission, persuader, and countless others; also for universel, université, the first syllable of which is u (not you) and the third vêr as in hiver.

extraordinaire. The older pronunciation eks-trordi-nère is more usual than eks-tra-or-di-nère.

F

faïence. See baïonnette.

faisable, faisant, faiseur, faisons. In these words fai must be pronounced feu or fe (to rime with le, me, etc.), thus: fe-zâ-ble, fe-zân, fe-zeûr, fe-zon. Similarly for the compounds bienfaisant, bienfaisance. Faisan (‘pheasant’) may be fê or fe.

fréquemment. Tonic accent on fré. See also p. 44.

G

géâlier. (jô-lyé.)
goûthique. See athlétique.

goûths. go. (See Ostrogoths.)
H

hiver.  See exercer.
huit.  See persuader.

I

impayable.  See paye.
infécond.  See second.
introït.  See baïonnette.

-isme.  This ending is pronounced -issme, not -izme.  Cf.  -asme.  E.g. égoïsme, euphémisme, gallicisme, gargarisme, idiotisme, provincialisme, rhumatisme, etc.

isthme.  See asthme.

K

kyrié.  ki-ri-é.

L

laïque, laïus.  See baïonnette and p. 86.
legs.  Ñe.
loch.  lok (‘log’ of a ship).
luth.  lut.

M

Machiavel (ki-a); but in machiavélique, machiavéliste, etc., ch=sh.
mangeant, mangeons.  These two words are dissyllabic.  The e merely softens the g;  

manjan, man-jon.
mercredi. See exercer.
Michel. (ch=sh); but ch=k in Michel-Ange.
moelle. moil'. So moelleux, poêle (poil').
monsieur. Pronounce me-sieú (cf. pp. 28, 83).
mosaïque. See baïonnette.
multiplier. See excursion.
murmurant. See excursion.
muscle. The final syllable is kle or kleù, as already pointed out, p. 52.

N
naïf. See baïonnette.
ausée. nó-zé.
neveu. ne-veú (cf. p. 26).

O
observer. See absence, and note that the s=ss, not z as in English.
oignon, ognon. The second spelling gives the pronunciation; similarly with encoignure (encognure). For all these see p. 79.
orthographe. See athlétique.
Ostrogoths. (gó.)

P
paix. Pronounce pè.
paye. Pronounced pè-ye, as one would naturally expect from payer. There is also the spelling paie (pè). So impayable (in-pè-ya-ble), mean-
ing admirable, comique: cf. abbaye (ab-bè-i), cipaye (si-pa-i).

pays. This word has two syllables, a fact that gives great trouble to drive home. Pronounce pè-yi, or pè-i.

peloton. plo-ton; tonic accent on plo.

permis, permission. See exercer.

persuader. This word has four syllables. Avoid pronouncing sua as swa or even sou-a. It is su-a. To ensure this, say the past participle of savoir, add a, thus: su-a, and then pèr-su-a-dé. The su-a may be run together, but the great danger then is to pronounce as sou-a or swa. Similarly with suis, which is at any rate to be learned as a dissyllable, i.e. su (past part. of savoir) + i; only after considerable proficiency is acquired should the two sounds be allowed to be run together (cf. p. 20). It is rare for an Englishman to say ‘I am’ correctly in French. He does not suspect that he is saying souis or swis. This perversion of sui into sou-i, so naturally and easily done, strikes a Frenchman’s ear at once.

Other words to practise upon are huit, which is not pronounced wheat or 'ou-it but 'u-it; bruit, buisson, chuinter, conduite, pluie (not plou-i), puisque, puissance, suinter, suisse, tuile, etc.
philosophie. fi-lò-zò-fi (tonic accent on zò); cf. diphterie, diphtongue.
pluie. See persuader.
pneu ('tyre'), pneumonie. The p is sounded:
leùp-neú, lap-neù-mo-nie is the division.
la poêle. pwal. Le poêle, the better spelling of
which is poile, also le poil, are pronounced
in exactly the same way.
pouls. pou; ls silent.
psaume, psautier. The p is sounded, leùp-só-me,
unp-só-ti-é.
psychologie. The p is sounded: lap-si-ko-lo-ji.
puisque. See persuader.
puissance. See persuader.

Q
queue. keú (cf. p. 26).

R
reine-Claude. See second.
rythmique. See athlétique.

S
Saône. See août.
saoul (soul). See p. 82.
Saül. See baïonnette.
second. The c has the sound of g. It requires
insisting upon the first time the word is met,
(se-gon). Similarly for reine-Claude (rèn-
glôde). Fécond, fécondité, etc., infécond, etc., are pronounced as spelt: (fé-kon).

soixante. See p. 90, note (1).

souhait, souhaiter. (sou-è, sou-è-té, with no sound of h: cf. p. 70, note 2).

Staël (Madame de). See baïonnette.

subtil, subtilité. These words are pronounced exactly as spelt.

suggérer. The g's are separated and the second g=j, i.e. sug-jè-ré. Similarly for suggestif, suggestion.

suisse. See persuader.

surprise. See excursion.

sympathie, sympathique. The English pronunciation is apt to influence these words. Pronounce sin-pa-ti, etc. See athlétique, and cf. p. 34.

T

tuile. See persuader.

U

universel, université. See exercer.

V

veille, vieille, vielle. These words cause a degree of trouble and confusion quite out of proportion to their difficulty. The first is vè-yè (2 syllables), the second vi-è-yè (3 syllables), and the third vi-el-le (3 syllables).
wagon (va-gon).
Waterloo (va-tèr-ló).

zoologique. The two o's are separated and do not make zou as in English, but zo-ô-î-ji-que.

2. One last word, and this not on pronunciation but on intonation. With regard to intonation (by which we mean relative tone and pitch of the component syllables of a phrase), it has certain broad principles which are common to most languages, and the varying moods of anger, surprise, doubt, contempt or pity are expressed with similar voice inflections by different peoples.

But for the Englishman I think it were best that he realized that, while in his own language he is repeatedly dropping his voice, especially at full-stops, in French a full-stop is not necessarily the sign for a lower pitch, but often for a higher one. In a general way we may represent the curves of sound for English thus:
that is to say, a rise in pitch has to be cultivated at the end of a sentence in French.

To our ears this gives to French intonation a monotonous, singing sound. French is certainly more 'sung' than English, though, as to its monotony, the Frenchman considers our speech much more monotonous than his own, due to our constantly dropping the voice at the end of a sentence. Be this as it may—and no doubt it is hard for one people to judge another's language from the point of view of monotony—the general trend of voice inflection in French is upward and in English downward, whatever the effect upon the listener may be.

Whether this upward tendency can be cultivated in the class-room is not an easy question to answer, for I do not think we lay any stress on intonation at all. There is so much to be taught, and we are only too glad to hear a pupil say anything correctly, that we do not worry about his intonation.

Of course we notice it at once when a Frenchman speaks English with a French intonation; and a good pronunciation is often spoilt through faulty
intonation, so that I do not think it should be lost sight of altogether. It is, of course, entirely a matter of ear, and we cannot hope to get anything like a proper intonation from all our pupils. Perhaps some will experiment with it and see how far such voice inflections can be imitated by individuals or by classes as a whole.
CHAPTER XI

DICTATION: THE TOLÉRANCES

I. I SUPPOSE there are very few Language teachers—whatever their method—who do not consider it part of their work to give out a piece of Dictation occasionally. Some lay great store by it, others very little; some insist on a phonetic script—a sound practice if adopted at the beginning (see Chapter I., § 3); others give out passages of varying length and watch for their pupils to improve as the term proceeds.

I wonder how many of us are satisfied with the progress made by a class in Dictation during a term. The subject is, of course, closely connected with pronunciation, and to improve one will mean improvement in the other; indeed, we must not look for any great improvement in Dictation without one in pronunciation.

Dictation should find a place in the very earliest lessons, and should be taught, so far as possible, upon a uniform system. It is a subject which, in a foreign language, requires to be taught before it is tested; we are apt to do much of the latter but little or none of the former.
In my opinion the first Dictation exercises should be single vowel sounds. The sound á should be given, followed by la, ma, sa, ta, etc.; then e (e sourd) as in de, je, le, me, ne, que, etc.; next é (see p. 24) as in bé, dé, et, j’ai, lait; then è (see p. 25) as in air, bec, cher, est, fer, mer, pair, quai, vrai, etc. (cf. note, p. 24). The sound i will cause little difficulty: examples are dis, dit, fit, lit, ni, nid, n’ya, qui, riz, y, etc. For ó (cf. p. 18), dos, eau, faute, faux, gros, saut, seau, sot may be given. Closely connected with ó and from which it must be distinguished is ou, e.g. cou, coup, d’où, fou, nous, tout, etc. For u (cf. p. 19) a good deal of practice is necessary, and it may be obtained with bu, du, eu, fus, fut, lu, lus, lut, mur, nu, pu, su, sur, etc.

The great point at this stage is for the class to recognize these various vowels when they hear them; the actual spelling which they write will not be the criterion, at the beginning, for right and wrong. Thus if you call out the sound air you should count èr as right, j’ai may also be je; seau, sau; d’où, dou, etc. I mean this remark to apply to the dictation of single syllables. I do not mean that in a sentence seau may be written sau or sot, or that nou would count right for nous. On the other hand, if you call out me, and mé is written, this is an impossible spelling, as it represents a different sound; and if ré be given, re and ra are both impossible. Again, if you say vœu,
you may accept *vœux*, or *veu*, but not *vau* or *vou*.

Following closely the dictation of single vowel sounds should be that of words containing these sounds: *e.g.*

ami, camarade, dame, détacha, aura, etc., for á.
âge, aide, belle, devenir, faisais, jeter, monsieur,
   premier, querelle, regret, revenir, etc., for e.
aimé, aimer, aimai, premier, for é.
aimais, aimerais, dernier, regret, for è.
fillette, finis, guide, illustre, initial, inutile, etc., for i.
aussitôt, chevaux, faubourg, nos, la nôtre, etc.,
   for ó.
enveloppe, homme, locomotive, monotone, noble,
   notre, etc., for ô.
aout, couru, fourche, pourvu, toujours, etc.,
   for ou.
battu, couru, mesure, minute, plus, pourvu, salut,
   une, etc., for u.

Following these there should be practice with the double sounds ail and oi, *e.g.* bataille, rail, travail, travaille (*cf.* pp. 75 and 77), and désarroi, foi, foire, fois, moi, pourquoi, roi, soi, soie, soif, soir, trois,
voir, voix, etc.

Practice must also be given in hearing the consonant *r*, *e.g.* the distinction between âme and arme, le and leur, peu and peur, soi and soir, vois and voir, a frequent source of error in Dictation.
Words containing ill, il, and gn mouillés also need practice. A supply of words will be found in Chapter VII.

After the exercises just described the nasal vowel sounds, as already explained (Chapter III.), should be taken again and again. For No. 1 any of the spellings under that number may be accepted, *e.g.* in, im, ain, aim, ein, eim; but not an or en. Similarly if an is given none of the No. 1 spellings will do. Much care will be needed with an and on, and one has to be particular oneself to make these sounds accurate and characteristic, especially in such combinations as rencontrer, en conséquence, en grondant (see pp. 36, 38, and 39). Be careful to distinguish quand (No. 2) and qu'on (No. 3); the former may also be written qu’en, quant, camp, and Caen, with no difference of sound (see p. 47); but these will not do for qu’on. In the same way give out portant and portons, commençant and commençons, etc., often saying the same one twice in succession to disappoint anticipation. Continue with cinq ans, cinquante ans, cinq cents ans, St Quentin, distinguishing those who get the right sound but the wrong spelling from those who get the sound wrong. Also give out an isolated nasal vowel sound and ask for the number to be given, and you will find confusion between dans, donc, dont, d’un. In these exercises get the class to watch your mouth (see diagrams, Chapter III.) as
an additional guide, and then from time to time encourage reliance upon the ear alone by saying these sounds with your back turned or your hand in front of your mouth. This applies particularly to Nos. 2 and 3. It is unnecessary, here, to quote any further words for practice. (See Chapter III., and in particular p. 47.)

As already stated, such phonetic exercises as the foregoing should come in very early lessons. To omit them at the beginning and to plunge straight away into continuous Dictation extracts, however easy, is equivalent to attempting to play a Polonaise of Chopin on the piano before one's fingers have mastered the technique of a simple scale. As long as we go on term after term without our pupils being able to distinguish the various vowel sounds and nasal vowel sounds; just so long shall we have tiresome holes to fill up in even the simplest Dictation. There are other difficulties to battle with, but they will gradually disappear (some will never even appear) if the scales and exercises of vowel sounds and nasal vowel sounds are properly practised.

On arriving at the stage when a continuous passage of Dictation is given, I suggest correcting it sentence by sentence, or rather phrase by phrase, on the board, at any rate to begin with, and whenever one is teaching Dictation and not testing it. The boys should spell the words out, each boy taking a word or two in turn, the teacher writing the passage on
the board, the boys correcting their own work from it.

I think they should spell in French too—it is very quickly learned—because there is a much closer connection between the resulting sound of a French word and the spelling of the individual sounds in French which make up the word than there is between it and English sounds: e.g. the spellings 1, a (ah); 1, e (eu), anticipate la and le, but 1, a (ay); 1, e (ee), do not.

Similarly with a (ah), m, i (ee), ami; and i (ee), c (cé), i (ee), ici. After spelling the sounds in French the boy should say the word: e.g. 1, apostrophe, é, accent aigu, l, è, accent grave, v (vé), e (eu) —l’élève. It is to be noted that e should always be spelt out as e (i.e. eu) unless it is accented, in which case it will be called either é (é fermé), or è (è ouvert), e.g. mené should be spelt m, e (eu), n, é, accent aigu; and mène, m, è, accent grave, n, e (eu), etc. Insist, too, on having the accent said immediately after the letter to which it belongs and before the next letter is said. I find that boys are very fond of spelling a word through to the end and then picking up accents and sprinkling them about on what they call the first or second e (ee), to the confusion of everybody; agréée must be spelt a (ah), g (jé), r (ér), é accent aigu, é accent aigu, e (eu).

When one phrase has been corrected in this way and the mistakes noted by the individuals concerned,
another phrase may be given out and then treated in the same way.

Much quicker progress will be made by this method, correcting phrase by phrase while the sound is still fresh in a boy’s mind than by dictating half a dozen or more lines and then correcting them afterwards when the sound of what you said and how you said it is forgotten.

Common mistakes which fall to every teacher’s lot to correct are: the inevitable orthographical confusion between ce, se; c’est, s’est, sait, etc.; the indiscriminate use of such words as montrer, montré, montrai; l’ai, les, l’é-; le, leur. Dans will often be written for d’un or dont, comment for comme en, qui for qu’y, etc. With regard to tout ce qui, so often written as the impossible tous qui, it has already been mentioned (see p. 56, footnote).

2. The ‘Tolérances.’

Perhaps I may add a word here about the attitude which the teacher of French should adopt towards the “Arrêté ministériel relatif à la simplification de l’enseignement de la syntaxe française.”

As a result of circularizing a number of French schools, I have come to the conclusion that the teacher may know the ‘Tolérances’ but not ‘tolerate’ them.¹ That is to say, he should teach his

¹ Among the many replies I received, I may mention the courteous letter from Dr L. Sudre, the eminent grammarian and master at the Lycée Louis le Grand.
syntax as though the Tolerances did not exist. It is true that in the recommendation issued by the ‘Arrêté ministériel’ we read: “Dans les établissements d’enseignement public de tout ordre, les usages et prescriptions contraires aux indications énoncées dans la liste annexée au présent arrêté ne seront pas enseignés comme règles”; but this recommendation is not, so far as I am able to judge, being followed in any French lycées. The ‘usages et prescriptions contraires aux indications...’ are still being taught, and yet the recommendation is over eighteen years old.

This being so, we shall be doing quite ineffective work by teaching or even tolerating the Tolerances. There are no signs, either in newly printed books or in the Press generally, of any orthographical change; and we cannot but wonder at the time and effort expended by any ministerial body with so little effective result.

Educated Frenchmen cannot bring themselves to say ‘la peine que j’ai pris,’ nor can schoolmasters suffer their pupils to say it. In such a phrase as ‘le peu de peine que j’ai pris (prise),’ whether we write ‘pris’ or ‘prise’ depends on the incidence of emphasis and not on a grammatical rule. I think, therefore, that the ‘Arrêté’ is a disastrous mistake, because it fails to reckon with human nature. It is an attempt—no doubt with the best intentions—to simplify grammatical niceties; but no
people will allow itself to be cut adrift from its grammatical niceties by so drastic and unnatural a measure. Any loosening of the bonds of grammar has to be a gradual, an imperceptible process—a thing of years, of centuries—and cannot be speeded up by a decree from a High Court. The teacher may therefore teach his syntax as of old, with the full assurance that any new departure from the time-honoured difficulties must first take root in French schools before we attempt to inculcate it over here.
CHAPTER XII

PRONUNCIATION TESTS: ORAL EXAMINATIONS

I. UNTIL Oral Examinations become general, we shall do well, I think, to test the pronunciation of our pupils on paper. This ought to be quite practicable. We might include such questions as: ‘Number the nasal vowel sounds in longtemps’; ‘Why is there no nasal vowel sound in inutile, paysanne, etc.? ’; ‘Underline the nasal vowel sounds in such and such a line’; ‘Write an imitated pronunciation of aéroplane, dix-neuf, faisais, pays, patient, serai, etc.’

In the answers to such questions as these one will not (unless a phonetic script has been learnt) be too exacting about the script used. For aéroplane, as long as the ‘a’ is separated from the ‘é,’ and plane is not shown as a nasal vowel, the answer would be accepted; e.g. a-é-ro-plane; deez-neuf (or diez, or diz) will do for dix-neuf. Similarly fe-zais or fe-zè for faisais; pé-i or pé-ee for pays; pa-si-an for patient; seu-rai or s’rai or s’ré for serai, etc.

Other pronunciation questions may be: ‘Show
how you would pronounce *les hérois,* and the class should write *les xhéro(s)* or *lé 'éro*; 'restes-y,' which they may represent by *res-te-zy,* 'What letter is mute in *arithmétique?* *in bap'tême?* *in Laon?* etc.'; 'Divide *venir, recommencer,* into syllables,' etc.

Questions such as the above may well be asked in daily tests along with linguistic questions, and thus the importance of pronunciation will be driven home just at a time when a class is apt to think it does not matter. Moreover, it teaches them how to indicate in their note-books the pronunciation of a word they have mispronounced or forgotten.

Before leaving this subject, may I suggest, too, that I see no valid reason why Public Examinations should not do their share in the matter of Phonetics? It is the rarest thing ever to see a general French paper include any questions about sound. The London Matriculation appears to have 'abandoned them in recent years. It is surely as important to know how to pronounce *compagnon* as to know its feminine, and more important to know how to pronounce *cueillir* than to know its future tense. If Public Examinations were to begin some of their papers with two or three questions on pronunciation on the lines of those suggested above, not with the intent to puzzle candidates with recondite forms, but simply to show them that they cannot afford to ignore the sounds of a living language—if they did
this, then one and all in schools and universities
would be forced to make the necessary preparation;
for, whatever the ethical ends may be of our studies,
it is useless to ignore the fact that we shape them to
a very large extent on some particular form of examination.¹ That such questions should be in-
cluded seems all the more desirable, since we have prac-
tically no Public Oral Examinations in French.

2. And with the question of Oral Examinations
I will conclude. Whatever the difficulties of Public
Oral Examinations may be, it is only a matter of a
little extra organization and trouble to have every
Form in a school tested orally once a term. It
takes time, of course, for anything less than five
minutes per candidate is useless. This would mean
at least two hours for an average class if all the
members were examined. But it would be time and
trouble well spent, for it would show our pupils
that we regard the language, amongst other things,
as a medium of conversation and that it is part of
their business to learn something about it.

An examination at the end of term is a great
incentive to preparation, and we shall not get the
greatest possible enthusiasm in our pupils for the

¹ We may note a few further suggestions: Passages which
have done duty in another part of the paper can be re-written in
a phonetic script. In a given passage examples of é or of è
can be underlined; liaison indicated; the words with sounded
final consonants can be marked; examples of a particular nasal
vowel (e.g. in) can be given; the words whose vowels, although
followed by m or n, are not nasal may be shown, etc., etc.
spoken language unless we crown our efforts—and theirs—by a definitely marked oral test.

Perhaps I may throw out a few hints as to how such an examination may be conducted. Allowances being assumed for a candidate’s age and probable attainments, to hand him a card on which is printed a short anecdote is a good beginning, and if there are some numbers in it printed in figures, so much the better. He reads it aloud. There follows the inevitable question: ‘Avez-vous compris ce que vous avez lu?’ and one need not feel in the least surprised, even after an apparently intelligent rendering, at receiving a candid ‘Non, Monsieur,’ or ‘Un peu, Monsieur,’ by way of reply. To read an unseen passage aloud with one’s mind intent upon a good delivery is not in the least conducive to understanding the sense of it, especially in a foreign language and under disturbing conditions. We should therefore anticipate this difficulty and give the candidate a reasonable chance, by asking him to read the passage through to himself for a minute or two minutes, to find out what it is about. The time thus spent will be more than compensated in the subsequent ‘questionnaire,’ and the answers will be brighter and brisker if a fair chance has been given to the candidate to wrestle with the passage alone before one starts catechizing him.

After the time allotted to him has passed, he
should be asked to read it aloud, and be marked for this reading straight away—\textit{i.e.} for tone, pronunciation, expression, intonation.

Then follow the questions on it, and the piece should be of such a nature as to admit of great variety in these questions: \textit{e.g.} the words, the subject matter, and the syntax. For these answers marks may be given in another column, and in assessing them, the immediacy and fluency of the answer should be considered—an answer which follows the question after an interim of five seconds and which is halting in delivery should not, unless the question demanded real thought, be marked quite as highly as an immediate and brisk answer.

Finally, questions of a general nature may be put, varying with the age of the candidate and his powers of expression as revealed by his answers to the previous questions. The difficulty with general questions, especially when time is limited, is to avoid those which provoke one-word answers: \textit{e.g.} 'Avez-vous lu le journal aujourd'hui ?'; 'Avez-vous jamais été en France?' The answer may easily be, 'Non, Monsieur,' to each of these questions, whereupon we gather that he has understood, but that is all. One or two such questions may be of use for a very weak candidate, but, generally speaking, questions which evoke a short sentence will save time: \textit{e.g.} 'Qu'est-ce que vous pensez du temps aujourd'hui ?'; 'Quelle heure est-il maintenant ?'; 'Pourquoi
regarde-t-on une montre?'; 'Quels animaux avez-vous chez vous?'; 'Qu’est-ce que c’est que la douane?' etc.

Instead of a card with an anecdote printed on it, a picture may be given with enough 'life' in it to give the candidate something to describe.

Public Oral Examinations might well be of the same kind, but the point at present with them is, not so much how to conduct them, as to bring them into being. There are difficulties, e.g. the extra expense to candidates of travelling to a common centre, the question of time in examining a thousand or more candidates, and the difficulty of consistent marking where many examiners are concerned. However, the need for such examinations once established, initial difficulties should not be allowed to stand in the way. All the Baccalauréat candidates in France have to take an oral examination in both parts, and that of the second part is most elaborate.

Why should not the London Matriculation, the Army and Navy candidates pass an oral test in whatever Modern Language they offer?

And with that unanswered question I will bring these notes to a close.
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(2) It may contain x, in which case see "Medial x" (Index).

(3) It may contain -eu-, -gu-, -qu-, -gn-, -ill-, or -il-, mouillés; -sc- or -cc-, in which case see Index under these groups.

(4) In the case of words with -ti- in them, see Index under "Medial T."

(5) There is also an alphabetical list of words in Chapter X.

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Stanley W.

NAME OF BORROWER.

C. T. Barton

Lupmanis

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