

## CHAPTER II

### VOWEL SOUNDS

The vowels and diphthongs are more difficult to deal with than the consonants, mainly for three reasons—

(1) Because we have fewer letters available in proportion to the sounds to be represented.

(2) Because the local and personal varieties of pronunciation are greater in the case of vowels than in the case of consonants.

(3) Because in unaccented syllables vowels become “obscure,” and thus difficult to represent with any accuracy.

Our first step, however, is clear enough. We find that in the current spelling the value by far most commonly assigned to the symbols *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, is the short value, as in *bat*, *bet*, *pit*, *pot*, *but*. In the case of the first four the preponderance of this value is very considerable; it is less marked in the case of *u*. It is clear, then, that to these symbols must be allotted the representation of five of the six so-called short vowel sounds. For the short vowel written *oo* in *good*, see pp. 51, 52, and Appendix III. For the unstressed *i*-sound see p. 41, and Appendix IV.

#### Short Vowels

##### 1. Sound of **a** in *bat*.

Present spelling: *a*, e.g. *cat*, *happy*, very many cases.

Observe *ua* in *guarantee*, *ai* in *plait*, *plaid*.

Suggested spelling: **a**.

Examples: *kat*, *hapy*, *garrantee*, *plat*.

2. Sound of **e** in *bet*.

Present spelling: *e*, e.g. *bet*, very many cases.  
*ea*, e.g. *head*, 57 cases.

*Uncommon*: *a*, in *any*, *many*; *ai*, in *again(st)*, *said*, *ay*, in *says*; *ei*, in *heifer*, *leisure*; *eo*, in *leopard jeopardy*, *feoff*; *ie*, in *friend*; *u*, in *bury*.

Observe *ue*, e.g. in *guest*, 5 cases.

Suggested spelling: **e**.

Examples: *bet*, *hed*, *meny*, *sez*, *hefer*, *trend*, *gest*.

3. Sound of **i** in *pit*.

Present spelling: I. *initially and medially*.

*i*, e.g. *pit*, very many cases.

*y*, e.g. *abyss*, many cases.

*Fairly common*: *e*, in unstressed positions before another vowel (e.g. *area*, *subterranean*, *linear*, *lineal*, *meteor*, *meteoric*) and before consonants (e.g. *integral*, *supplement*, and words with various prefixes and endings, such as *bridges*, *goodness*, *waited*, *deduct*, *remain*).

*Uncommon*: *ee*, in *breeches*; *ei*, in *forfeit*, *surfeit*, *foreign*, *sovereign*; *ie*, in *kerchief*, *mischief*, *sieve*; *o*, in *women*; *u*, in *busy*, *lettuce*, *minute* (subst.); *ui*, e.g. *build*, 10 cases.

II. *finally*.

*y*, e.g. *pity*, very many cases.

*ey*, e.g. *barley*, 34 cases.

*Uncommon*: *ie*, e.g. *prairie*, 7 cases; *e*, e.g. *simile*, 8 cases; *ee*, in *committee*; *is*, in *chassis*.

Suggested spelling: (when stressed) **i**; (when unstressed) normally **i**, but **y** finally and before another vowel, and **e** where now written with *e* finally or before a consonant.

Examples: (1) *pit*, *bild*; *timid*, *mischif*, *inkwizitiv*, *sitiz*; *envid*; (2) *pity*, *badly*, *barly*; *aerya*, *seeryus*, *meetyorrik*, (3) *simile*; *brijez*, *goodnes*, *waeted*, *dedukt*, *remaen*.

Note. Australians, New Zealanders and many English people pronounce the *y* of *pity*, *badly*, etc., as *ee*. We do not, however, consider it necessary for this reason to admit *-ee* as an alternative spelling for final *-y*; we feel that *y* with the appropriate convention will suffice.

4. Sound of **o** in *pot*.

Present spelling: *o*, e.g. *pot*, very many cases.

*a* after *w*, *wh*, e.g. *swan*, 44 cases.

*a* after *qu*, e.g. *squad*, 17 cases.

*Uncommon*: *a* (in other positions), in *yacht*.

Suggested spelling: **o**.

Examples: *pot*, *swon*, *skwod*, *yot*.

5. Sound of **u** in *but*.

Present spelling: *u*, e.g. *but*, very many cases.

*o*. e.g. *mother*, 49 cases.

before *m* (8), *n* (11), *ng* (3), *nk* (2), *r* (1), *s* (1), *th* (5), *v* (16), *z* (2).

*ou*, e.g. *double*, 18 cases;

and in *-ous* suffix, very many cases.

*Uncommon*: *oe*, in *does*; *oo*, in *blood*, *flood*.

Suggested spelling: **u**.

Examples: *but*, *mudher*, *dubl*, *duz*, *flud*.

## Long Vowels and Diphthongs

### General Considerations

In the present book no attempt has been made to bring the representation of long vowels or diphthongs into phonetic agreement with the representation of the short vowels.

The alternative usually adopted is to employ that combination of letters which represents a particular sound most frequently. Where this seemed inadvisable, the simplest and clearest representation has been selected.

Before considering the sounds, in detail, it will be well to explain in the first place why we have found it impossible to recommend the representation of long

vowels by the system “vowel plus consonant plus *e*,” as in *fade, cede, ride, rode, rude*. This is a very common mode of representing the sounds concerned in present spelling, and it must therefore be given careful consideration. It has indeed no phonetic argument in its favour, and has no parallel in the better-known languages of the present day. But these objections are not grave. The proposal must stand or fall on its merits in practical application.

A few of the resulting spellings will probably suffice to show that the system has very serious disadvantages.

In the first place, it is not clear in what way the sounds in question are to be spelt when final. The logical spelling according to this system would be, e.g., “a + consonant + e” in *wane*, therefore “a + e” in *plae* (i.e. *play*); and, similarly, *see, krie, goe*. In the plural we should then have *plaze*; in the third singular, *plaze, gaze*; in the past participle, *plade, kride*. If, on the other hand, an existing spelling, e.g. *ay*, be suggested to denote the sound when final, we should have *way*, and plural presumably *wayz* (in accordance with the general rule for the formation of the plural); or *waze*, like *blaze*.

When *-ing* is added to a verb stem, the *e* might be retained, thus *bete* (i.e. *beat*), *beteing*; if omitted, the form concerned would then become identical with *beting* (i.e. *betting*), to avoid which confusion the double consonant in the latter word would have to be preserved. Since examples of this type are very numerous (e.g. the *-ing* forms of *cite, sight, site, sit, mate, mat; seat, set, etc.*), this alternative obviously becomes impossible.

In the past participle the spelling would be somewhat complicated, as the following examples will show—

*mate*: p.p. *mated* (and therefore *mat: matted*).

*plase* (i.e. *place*): p.p. *plaset* or *plaste*?

*fale* (i.e. *fail*): p.p. *faled* or *falde*?

*fere* (i.e. *fear*): p.p. *fered* or *ferde*?

*lae* (i.e. *lay*): p.p. *lade*.

This raises the question of what is to be done when two consonants intervene between the vowel and *e*. On the analogy of *waste*, are we to write *plaste*, *beste* (i.e. *beast*), *sliste* (i.e. *sliced*), *roste* (i.e. *roast*)? The difficulty is also noticeable in the plural of substantives, e.g.—

*bene* (i.e. *bean*): plural, *benez* or *benze*?

*rode* (i.e. *road*). plural, *rodez* or *rodze*?

and the third singular of verbs, e.g.—

*name*: 3rd singular, *namez* or *namze*?

*fele* (i.e. *feel*): 3rd singular, *felez* or *felze*?

Again, if we are to write *stranje*, how are we to indicate that the *a* is not short in *stranger*, *strangest*? If *rose* is to be written *roze*, how about *rosy*? What is to be the spelling of *vary*, *various*, *nation*, *serious*, and many similar words?

Taking even these few examples into consideration, it appears that the resulting forms would present very strange combinations and inconsistencies, which would be completely out of place in a logical system. The rules of accident, too, would be less simple than those given in our *Proposals* (see Chap. IV).

If the use of digraphs (which may be reduced to single letters in certain circumstances) be the best available means of representing long vowels and diphthongs, or sounds which are pronounced as long vowels by some and diphthongs by others, or as diphthongs by some and as triphthongs by others—then we may consider whether the scheme of digraphs suggested below is not the best that can be devised.

The combination of vowel or diphthong with *r*, not followed by a vowel, is variously pronounced by English speakers, and this variation has to be taken into account.

It has, however, proved possible to dispense with the combinations *aar*, *air*, *ear*, *eir*, *oar*, *oor*, *yr*. The combinations that remain are *ar* (e.g. *farther*), *aer* (e.g. *faer*, present spelling *fair*), *ur* (e.g. *burn*), *eer* (e.g. *peer*), *ier* (e.g. *fier*, present spelling *fire*), *or*<sup>1</sup> (e.g. *for*), *oer* (e.g. *loer*, present spelling *lower*), *oir* (e.g. *emploir*, present spelling *employer*), *uur* (e.g. *puur*, present spelling *poor*), *our* (e.g. *our*), and *uer* (e.g. *puer*, present spelling *pure*).

#### The Long Vowels in Detail

6. Sound of **a** in *spa*, *father*, *palm*, *after*, *ask*, and of **ar** in *bar*.

The *a* in *spa*, *father*, *palm* has a fairly uniform pronunciation in Britain, but that in *after*, *ask*, and many other words varies in different parts of the country; these facts must be taken into account. Although the digraph *aa* is very rare in present spelling, its use seems necessary if Southern pronunciation is to be recorded. There might be no objection to retaining the single *a* in a few words such as *spa*, *father*, *rather*. But this procedure could hardly be extended to such words as *palm*, *calf*: it would give us the forms *pam*, *kaf*, which many would consider unacceptable.

Some of our Northern colleagues are, however, in favour of this mode of writing. They have expressed the opinion that no harm is done by ignoring the distinction between *aa* and ordinary short *a*, since (1) many in the North do not make it, and (2) no serious confusion of words would result for those who do make it.<sup>2</sup> Others favour the use of single *a* when *f*, *s*, *th*, *ns*, *nt*, *nd* follow (e.g. *after*, *ask*, *pass*, *bath*, *dance*, *plant*, *demand*), but would admit *aa* in *father*, *palm*, etc.

The best solution appears to be to write *aa* wherever

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 55, 56.

<sup>2</sup> Eg. if *calm* were written *kam*, the context would always show whether *calm* or *cam* was meant.

the long sound is commonly used in Southern pronunciation. Those who pronounce short *a* in place of it may either regard *aa* as an alternative way of writing the sound in certain words, or they may write these words with single *a* in accordance with their pronunciation.

Present spelling (Southern pronunciation): I. *a*, e.g. *father*, many cases:

finally in *aha*, *ha*, *mamma*, *papa*, *spa*.

before *f*, e.g. *after*, *chaff*, 14 cases; *n* + cons., e.g. *advance*, 21; *s*, e.g. *ask*, *class*, 38; *th*, e.g. *bath*, 6; mute *l*, e.g. *half*, 9.

Uncommon: *au*, e.g. *aunt*, *draught*, *laughter*; *aa* in *baa*; *ah* in *hurrah*.

II. *ar*, very many cases:

final stressed, e.g. *bar*, 15 cases.

before *b* (12), *c* (2), *ce* (1), *ch* (8), *d* (21), *f* (1), *g* (8), *ge* (4), *k* (13), *l* (10), *m* (10), *n* (13), *p* (9), *s* (7), *sh* (2), *t* (25), *v* (2).

Uncommon: *aar*, in *bazaar*; *ah*, in *ah*, *hah*; *are*, in *are*; *ear*, in *hearken*, *heart*, *hearth*; *uar*, in *guard*, *er*, in *clerk*, *sergeant*.

Suggested spelling: I. On the whole it seems best to use **aa** for the sound heard in Southern English *father*, *spa*, *palm*. The alternative spelling with **a** would be admissible for those who use short *a* in such words as *after*, *class*.

II. Although in Southern English there has ceased to be any difference in pronunciation between *a* in *father* and *ar* (e.g. in *farther*), a distinction is made in many parts of Great Britain, not to mention other English-speaking countries. The **ar** must therefore be retained (or substituted for *ear* in *heart*, for *uar* in *guard*, etc.).

Formations like *starry*, *tarry* (covered with tar) can be adequately represented by adding *y* to the simple word, thus *stary*, *tary*. The distinction, between words of this type and such words as *carry*, *tarry* (*wait*), *parish* involves certain difficulties. The best solution appears to be to write words of the latter class with *rr* (*karry*, *tarry*,

*parrish*). We recommend that the same principle be adopted in the case of *or* and *ur* (see pp. 56, 59). The question is discussed at length in Appendix VII.

For the sounds represented in *fee*, *fie*, and *foe*, we choose without hesitation the symbols now used in these words. *Ee* and *oe* are very familiar in this value, and have no other value in common usage; *ie* has only one other common value—as in *pier*, *siege*. Moreover, in the large number of words in which *e*, *i*, and *o* are modified by an *e* following a consonant (for example, *mete*, *mite*, *mote*), the only change required would be the transposition of the *e* from after the consonant to before it (*meet*, *miet*, *moet*).

For the sake of economy we suggest that the *e* need not be added to the *e*, *i*, *o* when they occur before a vowel. This rule is of especial value in the case of affixes and inflexions in *-er*, *-est*, *-ing*, etc., not only effecting considerable economy, but obviating various lengthy conjunctions of vowels. Thus we may write *drier* (in preference to *drieer*), *being* (for *beeing*), *fliing* (for *flieing*), *going* (for *goeing*). When such abbreviations are made, we think that the diaeresis ought to be employed to distinguish the digraph-vowels *ee*, *ie*, from the same vowels abbreviated before a syllable beginning with *e*.<sup>1</sup> For instance, it is necessary to distinguish *quite* from *quiet* (thus, respectively, *kwiet*, *kwiët*) and *sliced* from *slyest* (thus, respectively, *sliest*, *sliëst*).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For some English speakers, notably north of the Tweed, the same difficulty may arise in distinguishing between *more* and *mower*. But it would seem that on the basis of Southern pronunciation *more* should be represented by *mor*, and *mower* by *moer*,

<sup>2</sup> The American Simpler Spelling Association recommends always writing the long vowels in full, and using a hyphen in preference to the diaeresis. In accordance with this scheme the above words would be written *beeing*, *flieing*, *goeing*, *drie-er*, *kwie-et*, *slie-est*. There is much to be said in favour of this plan.



In the case of a small number of monosyllables, chiefly pronouns, the second members of the vowel digraphs may very conveniently be dropped, because, firstly, of the frequent occurrence of the words concerned, and, secondly, of the resulting economy in letters. These words, which may be regarded as “word-signs,” are: *I, U* (abbreviated from *Ue*, i.e. *you*, pp. 52, 53), *he, me, she, we, be, dhe, a, and to* (abbreviated from *too*). Later on it might prove advantageous to abbreviate more of the commoner monosyllables in the same way. For a possible extension of the word-sign treatment, see Appendix II, p. 101.

7. Sound of **ee** in *feel*, and of **eer** in *beer*.

Present spelling: *ee*, e.g. *feel*, 164 cases:

final, e.g. *fee*, 29 cases, *-ee* suffix, 13 cases.

before *ch* (6), *d* (14), *k* (9), *l* (10), *m* (4), *x* (14), *t* (9), *r* 13 + *-eer* suffix, 15), *t* (10), *ze* (5), sundry (13).

*e*, e.g. *be*, many cases:

final: *he, he, me, she, the, me*;

before other vowels, e.g. *theory*, many cases;

before consonants, e.g. *cedar*, many cases.

*ea*, 181 cases:

final, e.g. *pea*, 6 cases;

before *c* (3), *ch* (10), *d* (7), *h* (16), *l* (20), *m* (12), *n* (8), *p* (5), *r* (20), *s* (25), *t* (21), *th* (6), *v* (11), sundry (11).

*e + cons. + e*, 58 cases.

*-ede* (5), *eme* (5), *ene* (12), *ere* (14), *ese* (4), *ete* (10), sundry (8).

*i*, e.g. *police*, 41 cases:

before *n* (23), *qu* (8), sundry (10).

*ie*, e.g. *chief*, 36 cases, + *-ier* suffix, 20 cases.

Uncommon: *e'e*, in *e'en*; *ei*, in *receive*, 7 cases; *eo*, in *people*; *ay*, in *quay*; *ey*, in *key*.

Suggested spelling: **ee**; but **e** before vowels, and in the words *me, he, she, we, be, and dhe*.

Examples: *feel, peech, polees, cheef, sinseer; kreaet, theorem.*

#### 8. Sound of *ie* in *cries*, and of *ire* in *fire*.

Present spelling: *ie*, many cases:

final, e.g. *die*, 7 cases; 3rd sing. pres. ind. and preterite of verbs in *-y* (13), e.g. *cries, cried* + *-fy* verbs (58); plur. of substantives in *-y* (5).

*i*, very many cases:

final: *alibi, alkali, rabbi*;

before vowel: *a* (25 + *dia-* prefix, many cases), *e* (8 + *-iety* suffix, 11 cases), *o* (15), *u* (2);

before consonant: *ld* (3), *nd* (9), sundry (102).

*igh*, 24 cases:

final, e.g. *high*, 4 cases; before *t*, e.g. *bright* (18 cases); *igh*, in *height, sleight*.

*i* + *cons.* + *e*, e.g. *type*, very many cases:

*ibe* (7), *ire* (18), *ide* (21), *ife* (6), *ike* (7), *ile* (20 + suffix 40), *ime*

(14.), *ire* (35 + suffix 36), *ipe* (8), *ire* (26), *ise* (18 + *ise* verbs, many), *ite* (44), *ithe* (5), *ive* (18), *ize* (3 + *ize* verbs, very many), sundry (13).

*y*, many cases:

final, e.g. *cry*, 28 cases, and *-fy* verbs, 58 cases; not final (words from Greek), many cases.

*y* + *cons.* + *e*, e.g. *type*, 26 cases.

*Uncommon*: *ai*, in *aisle*; *ay*, in *ay* (*aye*); *ei*, e.g. *seismic*, 6 cases; *ey*, in one pronunciation of *geyser*; *ig* + *n*, e.g. *sign*, 4 cases; *ig* + *m*, in *paradigm*; *oi* = *wi* in *choir* (variant spelling *quire*); *ui* + *cons.* + *e*, in *guide, guile, guise*; *uy*, in *buy, guy*; *ye*, final, 4 cases; *eye*, in *eye*.

Suggested spelling: **ie**; but reduced to **i** before vowels and in the word *I*.

Examples: *kriez, wiep, miend; dial, priory, diurnal.*

#### 9. Sound of *oe* in *goes*, and of *ower* in *lower*.

The use of *oe* for the vowel element in *goes, road, etc.*, has sometimes been adversely criticized because of its infrequency. Though by no means rare in English

4-(C.64)

Comment [J1]:

(like *ae*), *oe* is certainly less common than *oa*, which itself is not in very frequent use. The argument of frequency is therefore not greatly in favour of *oa*; the numerous cases of “*o* + consonant + *e*” favour *oe* rather than *oa*; and the use of *e* as the second component of *ee*, *ie*, as well as of *ae* (see p. 54, below), also favours the selection of *oe*.

Present spelling: *oe*, final, e.g. *toe*, 12 cases; and

*before s*, e.g. *goes* and plurals of words in *o* and *oe*, many cases.

*o*, final, e.g. *cargo*, 88 cases; before consonant, e.g. *post*, 183 cases:

before *b* (4), *c* (15 + *ocious*, 3), *d* (8), *g* (5), *k* (4), *l* (56), mute *l* (2), *m* (12), *n* (17), *p* (7), *s* (11 + *osion*, 2), *t* (16 + *otion*, 5), *th* (4), *v* (8), sundry (4).

*o* before other vowels, e.g. *boa*, sundry cases.

*oa*, 50 cases:

final, e.g. *cocoa*, *halloa*; before *ch* (6), *d* (5), *k* (6), *l* (4), *m* (4), *n* (4), *st* (4) *t* (11), sundry (6).

*o* + *cons.* + *e*, 164 cases:

*obe* (4), *ode* (15), *ogue* (7), *oke* (13), *ole* (73), *ome* (6), *one* (1), *ope* (18), *ose* (12 + suffix, 6), *ote* (17), *ove* (13), sundry (12).

*ow*, 72 cases:

final, e.g. *arrow*, 61 cases; before *n* (8), sundry (3).

Uncommon: *au*, in *hauthoy*, *mauve*; *eau*, e.g. *bureau*, 8 cases; *eo*, in *yeoman*; *ew*, in *sew* (*shew*); *oo*, in *brooch*; *ough*, e.g. *though*, 5 cases; *ou* + *l*, e.g. *soul*, 10 cases; *owe*, in *owe*.

Suggested spelling: **œ**; but reduced to **o** before vowels.

Examples: *goez*, *roeb*, *loer* (= lower); *heroïk*, *koalishon*.

10. Sounds of **oo** in *good* and in *moon* and of **oor** in *poor*. The present spelling of these sounds is very unsatisfactory as will be seen by the statistics below. It is clear, however, that there is no alternative but to use **oo** for one of the above sounds and to adopt a special digraph for the other. The digraph **uu** appears to us to be the best for this purpose, and we propose to assign it to the long sound. This choice enables us to make a reduction to *u* when another vowel follows, as in *bluish, ruin*; when *e* follows, a diaeresis may be added or the sound may be written in full, e.g. *truër* or *truuer* (see p. 109). See further Appendix III.

Many Scottish speakers make no distinction between the vowels of *good* and *moon*. Those who pronounce thus might write *oo* for *uu*. In this case the *oo* would have to be written in full before another vowel: *blooish, etc.*

Many Southern speakers pronounce *poor* as *por*. We think, however, that the renunciation with the long *oo*-sound should be selected for the purpose of New Spelling, thus: *puur*. The same applies to *sure* (N.S. *shuur*) and a few other words.

Present spelling: *ue*, 8 cases:

after *r* (5), 1 (3).

*u*, 87 cases:

final, 2 cases;

before *l* (9), *sh* (4), after *j* (16), *l* (15), *r* (31), sundry (10).

before vowel, 8 cases (after *r*).

*u + cons. + e*, 35 cases:

*ube* (1), *uce* (2), *ude* (7), *uke* (3), *ule* (1), *uple* (1), *ume* (3), *une* (3), *ure* (4), *ucree* (1), *ure* (3), *ute* (6). [Of these after *r* (15), *l* (13), *j* (5), *s* (2)].

Uncommon: *ui*, after *r* (5), *l* (1), *j* (1); *eu*, in *rheumatism*; *ieu*, in *lieu*; *ew*, after *r* (12), *l* (4), *sh* (2), *j* (2), *y* (1).

*oo*, 109 cases:

final, 11 cases; before *d* (9), *f* (6), *k* (10), *l* (8), *m* (11), *n* (24), *p* (12), *r* (3), *t* (10), *th* (4), sundry (12).

**ou**, e.g. *could*, 30 cases:

*Uncommon*: *o*, final, e.g. *do* (5); *sundry*, e.g. *wolf* (6).

*o* + *cons.* + *e*, in *move*, *prove*, *lose*, *whose*.

*oe*, in *shoe*, *canoe*; *oeu*, in *manoeuvre*.

*ough*, in *through*, *brougham*.

The chief words containing the short oo sound are *good*, *hood*, *wood*, *stood*, *understood*, *hook*, *cook*, *hook*, *look*, *nook*, *shook*, *took*, *brook*, *crook*, *crooked*, *rook*, *foot*, *wool*, *soot*, *room*<sup>1</sup>, *broom*<sup>1</sup>, *groom*<sup>1</sup>; *put*, *push*, *bush*, *butcher*, *bull*, *bullet*, *bully*, *pull*, *pullet*, *full*, *hurrah*, *hussar*, *could*, *should*, *would*, *caoutchouc*, *camouflage*, *silhouette*; *wolf*, *woman*.

*Note*. An examination of the statistics of the words of commonest occurrence in connected speech, as given in Dewey's "Relativ Frequency of English Speech Sounds" shows that in the spellings here proposed the digraph *oo* (including its shortened form in the word-sign *to*) will occur on the page more than twice as often as the digraph *uu*.

Suggested spelling: (for short *oo*) **oo**; (for long *oo*) **uu**, reduced to **u** before another Vowel.<sup>2</sup>

Examples: *good*, *pool* (= pull), *boosh*; *muun*, *fuud*, *ruul*, *puur*; *bluish*, *fluid*, *ruin*.

#### 11. Sound of **ue** in *due* and of **ure** in *pure*.

This sound is equivalent to *yu*, but we feel that this mode of representation would be unnecessarily cumbrous. The sound is represented in a great many ways in present spelling (see statistics below). One of these, *ue*, appears to be well suited as a representation of the sound in New Spelling. By adopting it, *e* has the function of a length mark, as it also has in *ae*, *ee*, *ie*, *oe*.

Many Southern speakers pronounce *pure* as *pyor*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Also said with long *oo*.

<sup>2</sup> It has been suggested that *-fl* might be used as a "word-sign" to denote the termination now written *-ful* (N.S. *-fool*). This seems at first sight a convenient solution of a difficult problem, but we do not feel able to recommend it on account of difficulties which would arise in the representation of the derived adverbs.

<sup>3</sup> Shown, for instance, in Wyld's *Universal English Dictionary*.

We think, however, that the pronunciation with *ue* should be selected for the purpose of New Spelling (*puer*).

Certain words with alternative pronunciations provide a minor complication. By no means numerically insignificant, they are exemplified by *lute* and *absolute*. In accordance with the above rules, we must allow to all these words alternative spellings with *uu* and *ue*, and, further, continue so to write them until one or other of the pronunciations in question is generalized.

The pronoun *you* would according to the above system be written *ue*. We obtain, however, the maximum amount of simplification if, on the analogy of the word-sign *I*, we drop the final *e* and use a capital for the remaining letter, thus writing *U*. This very convenient simplification we propose to adopt.<sup>1</sup>

It is not possible to make any reduction of *ue* before another vowel: *e* will have to be written in such words as *aktueal*, *ambigueity*.

In present spelling *u* sometimes denotes the short sound *yoo* in unstressed positions, e.g. in *monument*, *calculate*. *Ue* can be written without ambiguity in such cases. *monuement*, *kalkulaet*.

Present spelling: *ue*, 26 cases.

*u*, 334 cases:

final, 3 cases;

before *b* (13), *c* (11), *d* (7), *g* (4), *l* (24) + *-ular* (47), *-ulate* (42), *-ulent* (14), *-ulous* (18), *m* (40), *n* (12), *p* (21), *r* (34), *s* (10), *t* (24), + *-ution* (8), sundry (5).

for final *-ure* see p. 74..

before vowel, many cases.

*u* + cons. + *e*, very many cases:

*ube* (2), *uce* (4), *ude* (2 + *-tude* suffix, many), *uge* (3), *uke* (3), *uble* (2), *ule* (17), *ugle* (i), *uple* (i), *ume* (9), *une* (9), *upe* (i), *ure* (2i), *use* (9), *ute* (25).

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 101.

*Uncommon:* *ui*, in *suit, nuisance*; *eu*, 19 cases; *ieu*, in *adieu*; *ew*, 24 cases; *iew*, in *view*; *eau*, in *beauty*; *ewe*, in *ewe*.

Suggested spelling: **ue**.

Examples: *due, muet, ueth*<sup>1</sup> *puer*; reduced to *u* in *U* (you).

## 12. Sounds of **ai** in *maid*, and of **air** in *fair*.

For the vowel sound in *came, maid, veil*, etc., we propose the unmistakable digraph *ae*. We shall thus be able to use each of the five short vowel symbols (*a, e, i, o, u*) in combination with the letter *e* to form a digraph denoting a long vowel or a diphthong. This in itself will constitute a great gain to uniformity of practice.

Present spelling: *ai*, e.g. *maid*, 125 cases:

before *d* (10), *l* (21), *m* (3), *n* or *gn* (stressed: 44, unstressed: 12), *r* (18), *t* (5), sundry (12).

*ay*, e.g. *bay*, 40 cases.

*a*, e.g. *lady*, very many cases:

before *b* (5), *c* (11), *d* (7), *g* (12), *l* (15), *m* (15), *n* (13), *p* (14), *r* (11, and in suffixes *-arian, -arious, -areous*), *s* (7), *t* (very many, note especially *-ation*), *v* (13), sundry (9).

also before vowel, e.g. *chaos, mosaic*, many cases.

*a + consonant + e*, e.g. *game*, very many cases:

*ace* (stressed: 13 cases, unstressed: 7), *ade* (51), *age* (stressed: 11, unstressed: 64), *ange* (5), *ake* (23), *ale* (20), *able* (stressed: 7, unstressed: very many), *ame* (12), *ane* (23), *ape* (14), *are* (25), *ase* (9), *ate* (stressed: 28, unstressed: very many), *aste* (6), *ave* (23), *aze* (11), sundry (14).

*Uncommon:* *ae*, in *Gaelic, maelstrom, sundae*; *ao*, in *gaol* (also *jail*); *au + cons. + e*, in *gauge*; *ea*, e.g. *great*, 10 cases; *e + cons. + e*, in *ere, there, where*; *e'e*, in *e'er, ne'er*; *ei*, e.g. *veil*, 22 cases; *eih*, e.g. *neigh*, 3 cases; *ey*, e.g. *obey*, 7 cases.

Suggested spelling: **æ**; but reduced to **a** before vowels.

Examples: *maed, bae, laedy, dhaer, kaer; kaotik, saing*.

---

<sup>1</sup> = *youth*, the initial *y* being unnecessary. Similarly *yew* and *ewe* will both be spelt *ue*.

13. Sounds of **au** in *haul* and of **or** in *short, nor, port, more, story*.

For the vowel sound in *haul* we propose to retain the notation *au*, which would, of course, also be used where the sound is represented in the current spelling by *aw* (*draw*, etc.), *ou* (*bought*, etc.), and other symbols.

The choice of a suitable means of symbolizing the sounds of *or* in such words as *short, nor, port, more, story* presents difficulty because of the variability in the pronunciation of such words. Taking first the case of *or*-sounds in final position (e.g. *nor, more*), it must be noted firstly that many people do not pronounce them with the same sound as in *haul*. Some use a “close” *o* in words like *more*, while others use a diphthongal sound ending in an obscure vowel in many of the words; the first element of the diphthong varies between a “close” *o* and an “open” *o*. When we come to examine words containing *or* followed by a consonant, we find that they fall into two categories, (1) those which are always said with an “open” *o*, e.g. *short, horn north*, and (2) those in which many speakers use a “close” *o* or a diphthongal sound, e.g. *port, divorce, forth*, and which might therefore be appropriately written in New Spelling with *oe*. This distinction is shown in many dictionaries, including the *Oxford English Dictionary*; it is not capricious, but rather traditional and apparently also regional. It is not made by large numbers of speakers of Southern English.

This being the situation, we may in a reformed spelling represent either the speech of those who make these distinctions or the speech of those who do not make them; or again we may treat this case as one where alternative spellings should properly be admitted. To fix the spelling on the basis of those who make the above distinctions would mean that a great many people would have to



memorize the words written with *oe*. On the other hand, to ignore this distinction would be illogical to large numbers of people, and would increase the already large number of homonyms by reducing to one spelling such pairs of words as *for* and *fore*. On the whole we favour for general purposes the spelling *or* in all the above words. We feel however that *oer* should be regarded as an admissible alternative in the words which so many pronounce with “close” *o*; these words are marked with an asterisk in the Society’s *Dictionary of New Spelling*. The present spellings *oar* (as in *boar*, *board*), *our* (as in *four*, *course*), *oor* (as in *door*, *floor*) may likewise be for general purposes reduced to *or*, thus: *bor*, *bord*, *for*, *kors*, *dor*, *flor*; we think however that an alternative spelling with *oer* should be available for those who pronounce in this way.<sup>1</sup>

It remains to deal with the words in which a vowel follows, such as *story*, *explorer*, *historian*, *oral*, *chorus*. After careful consideration of all the possibilities we have come to the conclusion that these too are generally best written simply with *or*: *story*, *eksplorer*, *historyan*, *oral*, *korus*. But here again we feel that *oer*, which accords with the pronunciation of many, should be regarded as an admissible alternative. When a stressed short *o* is followed by *r* and a vowel, as in *sorry*, *horrid*, *quarrel*, *historic*, the use of *rr* will meet the case: *sorry*, *horrid*, *kworrel*, *historrik*. These spellings are analogous to those of *stary*, *karry*, etc. (p. 46).

It is recommended, however, that *aur* be retained in the words which have it at present, e.g. *aural*, *aurist*, *saurian*. *Aural* will thus be still distinguished from *oral*

---

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with these recommendations the spelling *or* has been used in most of the Society’s publications. It has, however, been found desirable to use *oer* in the “close” *o* words in the Society’s edition of *Hamlet*. (See the Preface to that work.)

in accordance with the pronunciation of many speakers.

As the question of words spelt with *or* presents such peculiar difficulties, an Appendix has been added (Appendix VII) in which these are set out more fully, and possible solutions are discussed at length.

Present spelling: *au*, e.g. *haul*, 45 cases:

also the words with *aunch* (4), *aund* (2), *aunt* (9), e.g. *launch*, *laundry*, *haunt* in which some give *au* the value of *a* in *father*.

*a*, e.g. *bald*, 52 cases:

before *ld* (8), *lt* (14), *ll* (13), mute *l* (7), final *l* (1), *l* + various consonants (7), and in *water*, *wrath*.

*aw*, e.g. *claw*, 54 cases:

final (22), before *k* (6), *l* (10), *n* (12), *sundry*

*Uncommon*: *awe*, in *awe*; *oa*, in *broad*; *ough*, e.g. *bought*, 7 cases.

*or*, final, stressed, e.g. *nor* (5), unstressed, very many cases;

before *b* (6), *ce* (2), *ch* (4), *d* (15), *g* (1), *ge* (2), *l* (4), *m* (7), *n* (20); *p* (6), *s* (9), *t* (24), *th* (3).

*ore*, e.g. *more*, 28 cases.

*Uncommon*: *ar*, in *quart*, *war*, *wharf*, 15 cases; *oar*, e.g. *boar*, 9 cases, *o'er*, in *o'er*; *oor*, in *door*, *floor*; *our*, e.g. *four*, 7 cases, and suffix *-our*, e.g. *honour*, 35 cases.

Suggested spelling: **au**, but **or** in *short*, etc.,<sup>1</sup> and finally, and before vowels; **aur** in words at present written with **aur**.

Examples: *haul*, *bauld*, *klau*, *braud*, *baut*; *short*, *port*, *bor*, *dor*, *story*;<sup>2</sup> *aurist*.

#### Sounds of **oi** and **ou**.

The spelling of the diphthongs *oi* and *ou*, by means of

<sup>1</sup> With *oer* as a possible alternative in the case of the words marked with \* in the Society's *Dictionary of New Spelling*.

<sup>2</sup> The last four with *oer* as an admissible variant

these signs, commends itself at once. *Oy* and *ow*, which may suggest themselves to some readers, would be unsatisfactory. *Oy* is the N.S. contracted form of *oey*, as in *shoy* (O.S. *showy*), *doy* (O.S. *doughy*). *Ow* is very ambiguous in present spelling; *ou* is less so.

14. Sound of **oi** in *coin*, and of **oyer** in *employer*.

Present spelling. *oi*, e.g. *coin*, many cases:

before *d* (3 + *-oid* suffix), *l* (13), *n* (6), *nt* (3), *t* (4), sundry (5).

*oy*, 21 cases—

final, e.g. *boy*, 13 cases;

before vowel (4) and derivatives of *-oy* words (4)

*Uncommon*: *oig*, in *coign*; *uoy*, in *buoy*.

Suggested spelling: **oi**.

Examples: *koin*, *boi*, *emploir*.

---

15. Sound of **ou** in *count*, and of **our** in *sour*.

Present spelling: *ou*, e.g. *count*, many cases—

before *ch* (6), *d* (4), *nce* (6), *nd* (18), *ount* (7 + *counter-* prefix), *r* (6), *se* (7), *t* (18), sundry (8).

*ow*, 58 cases:

final, e.g. *cow*, 12; before *l* (8), *el* (6), *n* (9), *n* (5), sundry (11).

*Uncommon*: *ough*, e.g. *bough*, 4 cases.

Suggested spelling: **ou**.

Examples: *kount*, *kou*, *bou*, *sour*.

---

16. Sound of **ur** in *fur*, and of **er** in *further*.

Finally there is a long vowel in stressed syllables which in many forms of English is closely akin to the short obscure vowel in the unstressed syllables of *speaker*, *further*, etc. The vowel in question is now written *er* in *fern*, *ir* in *fir*, and *ur* in *fur*. Although some speakers

(especially in Scotland) differentiate between these three groups in pronunciation, most make no such distinction and pronounce them all alike. This being so, only one spelling is necessary to denote the long vowel concerned. We therefore have no hesitation in recommending *ur* for this purpose, and to use it in all stressed and semi-stressed positions, thus: *furn* (O.S. *fern*), *fur* (O.S. *fir* as well as *fur*), *vursatiel*, *vursatility*.

For the corresponding short unstressed vowel we propose as a rule to write *er*, which is its commonest representation in present spelling, e.g. *furdher*, *wauter*, *serpriez*, *perswaed*, agent nouns from verbs such as *baeker*, *teecher*, comparatives of adjectives such as *harder*, *tauler*.<sup>1</sup> When in Southern English the long *ur*-sound occurs unstressed, it is convenient to represent it also by *er*, e.g. *advers*, *adverb*, *uenivers*.

This scheme enables us to distinguish between such pairs of words as the noun *purmit* and the verb *permit*.

Words like *stirring*, *erring*, *purring* are distinguished in Southern English, though not by any means in all types of English, from such words as *hurry*, *worry*. It seems desirable to show this distinction in spelling; this may be done by writing *rr* in the latter case, thus *sturing*, *uring*, *puring*, but *hurry*, *wurry*. See p. 113.

Owing to the variation of pronunciation of *were* (pronounced *waer* and *wur*) and its frequent use in unstressed position, we recommend a special word-sign *wer* for it.

Present spelling: *er*, very many cases:

final (unstressed) very many cases; before *b* (5), *d* (4), *ge* (6), *m* (13),  
*n* (24), *s* (15), *t* (23), sundry (14).  
*ear*, 12 cases.

---

<sup>1</sup> On unstressed *-ar* and *-or*, see p. 64.

*ir*, 46 cases:

final, 7 cases; before *k* (7), *t* (10), *th* (4) sundry (18).

*ur*, many cases:

final (11); *sur-* prefix (16); before *b* (10), *ch* (4), *d* (8), *f* (4), *g* (12), *k* (4), *l* (12), *n* (18), *p* (5), *r* (6), *s* (11), *y* (10), *v* (7), sundry (11).

Uncommon: *re*, e.g. *centre*, 21 cases [after *b* (4), *c* (4), *g* (1), *ch* (2), *t* (10)]; *or* (after *w* or *wh*), e.g. *word*, 11 cases; also in *attorney*; *our*, in *journey*, *scourge*; *olo*, in *colonel*, *yr*, e.g. *myrtle*, 5 cases.

Suggested spelling: **ur** when stressed or semi-stressed, **er** when unstressed.

Examples: *fur*, *furn*, *surly*, *hurt*, *wurd*, *sturing*, *tueburkueloesis*, *sister*, *senter*. Special case: *wer*.

For other special cases see pp. 64, 65.

### Mute Vowel Letters

The scheme of suggested spellings of the vowels implies the omission of the following Mute Vowel letters—

a in *ea* (*head*, etc.); *oa* (*boar*, etc.)

e in *ea* (*heart*, etc.); *ei* (*forfeit*, etc.); *ey* (*barley*, etc.); *ie* (*mischief*, etc.).

Final e disappears from the combinations: *a* + *cons.* + *e* (*babe*, etc.); (*are*); (*mauve*); *e* + *cons.* + *e* (*cede*, etc.); *i* + *cons.* + *e* (*ice*, etc.); *o* + *cons.* + *e* (*ode*, etc.), (*more*, etc.), (*move*, etc.); *u* + *cons.* + *e* (*cube*, etc.); *y* + *cons.* + *e* (*type*, etc.).

i in *ei* (*heifer*, *leisure*); *io* (*marchioness*).

o in *eo* (*leopard*, etc.); *oo* (*door*, etc.); *ou* (*double*, etc.).

u in *au* (*draught*, etc.); *ua* (*guarantee*), (*guard*); *ue* (*guest*, etc.); *ui* (*build*, etc.), (*guide*, etc.); *uy* (*buy*, etc.); *uoy* (*buov*); *ou* (*four*, etc.).

In addition to the above, there is a mute final *e* in the following endings, apart from those dealt with above and in connexion with double consonants, mute consonants (*stle*, p. 38), and consonants requiring change (*ce*, p. 27; *ge*, *dge*, p. 33).

Stressed vowel + *ble* (*feeble*, 3); suffixes *-able* (*capable*, very many), *ible* (*flexible*, many), *-uble* (*soluble*, *voluble*, *chasuble*); *-mble* (*amble*, 21); *-rble* (*garble*, 3); *-acle* (*oracle*, 13); *-icle* (*article*, 14); *-ocle* (*monocle*);

cons. + *cle* (*uncle*, 5); vowel + *dle* (*needle*, 7); *-ndle* (*candle*, 11); *-rdle* (*curdle*, 3); *-gle* (*eagle*, 5; *-ngle*, 23); *-kle* (*sparkle*; *-nkle*, 8); vowel + *ple* (*triple*, 4); *-mple* (*ample*, 11); vowel + *tle* (*beetle*, 4); *-ntle* (*gentle*, 3); *-rtle* (*startle*, 5); *-ine* (*famine*, 24.); *-se* (*dense*, 74); *-ite* (*definite*, 7); *-ve* (*carve*, 50); *-ive* suffix (*festive*, very many); *-ze* (*baize*, 14).

In all the above cases, the final *e* will be dropped.

There is also a mute final *ue* (e.g. *fatigue*) in 15 cases; the *ue* will be dropped in these words.

Note. — Final *-re* after a consonant becomes *-er*, see p. 60.

### Summary of Suggested Spellings of Vowel Sounds

**a** in *bat* (see p. 40). N.B. —*karry*.

**e** in *bet* (see p. 41).

**i** in *pit*, **y** in *pity*, *pityus* (see p. 41).

**o** in *pot* (see p. 42). N.B. —*sorry*.

**u** in *but* (see p. 42). N.B. —*hurry*.

**oo** in *good* (see pp. 51, 52). N.B. —*to*.

**aa** in *faadher*, **ar** in *bar* (see pp. 45, 46). N.B. —*stary*.

**ae** in *maed*, **aer** in *faer*; but **a** before vowels (see p. 54).

**ee** in *feel*, **eer** in *beer*; but **e** before vowels (see p. 48). N.B.

—*me, he, she, we, be, dhe*.

**au** in *haul*, or in *short* (see pp. 55-57). N.B. —*story*.

**oe** in *goez*; but **o** before vowels (see pp. 49, 50).

**uu** in *fuud*, **uur** in *puur*; but **u** before vowels (see pp. 51, 52).

**ie** in *kriez*, **ier** in *fier*; but **i** before vowels (see p. 49).

N.B.—*I*.

**ou** in *kount*, **our** in *sour* (see pp. 57, 58).

**oi** in *koin*, **oir** in *emploir* (see pp. 57, 58).

**ue** in *hue*, **uer** in *puer* (see pp. 52-54). N.B. —*U*.

**ur** in *fur*, **er** in *furdher* (see pp. 58-60). N.B. —*sturing*.

**wer** (see p. 59).

### **Vowels in Unstressed Positions**

In ordinary speech the vowels in unstressed positions are often reduced to an obscure neutral sound, while in public speaking, and generally when speech is deliberate, as also in the ordinary speech of very precise speakers, a fuller vowel sound may at times be heard.

On the question of how these vowels should be represented, there will probably be two schools of opinion. There are many who deplore this use of obscure vowels, and strive to counteract it in their speech. They consider the weaker forms as indicating carelessness, and describe a variety of pronunciation in which they are common as slipshod. It is noteworthy, however, that their own speech usually contains a much larger number of reduced vowels than they are willing to acknowledge.

Others regard this use of obscure vowels as perfectly natural, and in fact advantageous, as giving greater prominences to the more important vowels. They point to kindred languages, such as German, where the spelling has (in the main) kept pace with the pronunciation, and suggest that in English it is unnecessary to restore sounds which actually disappeared from pronunciation long ago. And they regard it as particularly undesirable to substitute for obscure vowels other vowel-sounds which in all probability have never been used at all.

These points of view are obviously irreconcilable; only a considerable period of earnest thought on the part of many about these problems will be likely to turn the balance one way or the other.

Moreover there are many words, e.g. pronouns, prepositions, and auxiliary verbs, that have both stressed and unstressed forms according to their position in the sentence. In the former case the vowel will normally

have full quality; in the latter, however, it may become reduced to the obscure vowel. Obviously, in a practical orthography, no allowance can be made for alternative pronunciations arising out of such variations in sentence stress. Accordingly our chief concern here is with the unstressed vowel within the individual word.

From what has been said above it will be clear that if at the present time an attempt were made to simplify the vowel sounds of unstressed syllables with due regard to consistency, the prevailing phonetic instability of the sounds they represent would clearly tend to produce a corresponding diversity in the spelling. Inevitably confusion would arise.

To give some examples. Few, if any, make any difference in the pronunciation of terminal *-ent* and *-ant* (e.g. *latent*, *blatant*), and for the moment, therefore, *-ent* might reasonably be considered worth generalizing. The same is true of the endings *-ence* and *-ance* (e.g. *silence*, *assistance*), for both of which *-ens* might appear to be a suitable substitute. Nevertheless there is a complication. It often happens that a certain vowel symbol in a suffix may denote the usual unstressed obscure sound, whereas in derivatives of the same word it may have full quality. Compare, e.g., *resident*, *residential*, and *pestilent*, *pestilential*; *pedant*, *pedantic*, and *consonant*, *consonantal*. It thus seems very questionable whether any real gain is secured by writing *-ant* and *-ance* with *e* as suggested above.

The ending *-an* is common. So too is *-on*. But *-en* is much more frequent than either, and, since all three are usually pronounced alike, is entitled to our preference. Yet those people who already do, or may choose to, differentiate between the spoken forms of these terminals, will wish to show the distinction in writing. Further, the existence of derivatives (cf., e.g., *organ*, *organic*; *canon*,



*canonical*) will induce others to disapprove of using *-en* to the exclusion of *-on* and *-an*.

Again, there is no difference in the usual pronunciation of the terminations of *label* and *fable*, *chattel* and *cattle*, *chapel* and *apple*, *mantel* and *mantle*; nor in *bridle* and *bridal*, *conventicle* and *identical*, *eagle* and *legal*, *gentle* and *dental*; nor in *gamble* and *gambol*, *thimble* and *symbol*, *idle* and *idol*, *crystal* and *pistol*. While, however, in the case of *-le* the omission of *e* is desirable and unobjectionable, the omission of the vowel in the remaining endings involves difficulty on account of the derivatives (e.g. *symbolic*, *idolatry*, *legality*).

In the case of *-ar*, *-er*, *-or* it would be helpful to the learner if there were only one form (perhaps *-er*). A case of special difficulty is presented by the names of agents. Thus we find *jailer* beside *sailor*, *carrier* beside *warrior*, *deliverer* beside *conqueror*, *dissenter* beside *inventor*, *baker* beside *beggar*, *teacher* beside *scholar*.

To the general use of *-er* some will doubtless object on account of the derivatives (e.g. *regularity*, *professorial*); but even these might eventually agree to the use of *-er* in words designating an agent.

Further cases are mentioned in the chapter on word formation (see pp. 72-75).

In some of the cases just considered, the vowel of the unstressed syllable is the so-called neutral vowel,<sup>1</sup> which is somewhat similar in quality to the (Southern English) sound written *er* in *fern*; the two vowels in *further* are very much alike, except in length. In other cases the vowel has disappeared altogether; thus in *able*, *label*, the sound following the *b* is syllabic *l*.

That the selection of an entirely satisfactory repre-

---

<sup>1</sup>Written *ə* in the International Phonetic Alphabet

sentative for the short vowel of unstressed syllables involves peculiar difficulties, will be readily acknowledged. The wisest course appears to be to refrain from making any revolutionary changes and keep the present spelling unchanged, except where simplification may be easily carried out, or is required in order to show relationships with cognate words. This can be done in the following cases:

(i) Obscure vowel. The unstressed terminations now spelt *-ous* and *-our* may well be written *-us* and *-or* (e.g. *relijus*, *onor*). The termination *-ure* may be written *-er* when *sh*, *zh* or *j* precedes (e.g. *presher*, *mezher*, *injer*), see p. 74. The termination *-yr* may be appropriately changed to *-ir* (e.g. *martir*, *zefir*). The indefinite article *a*, which is generally pronounced as the obscure vowel in connected speech, may well be left in its present form *a*; this may be regarded as a “word-sign.”

(ii) Unstressed short *i*-sound. As a rule the sound is represented in the current spelling by *i* (cf. p. 41), and this symbol may therefore be usefully retained with this function. To avoid ambiguity<sup>2</sup> it is, however, necessary to substitute *y* when another vowel follows, as in *fiasco* (cf. *diameter*), *superiority* (cf. *priority*), *acquiesce* (cf. *quiescent*). For the sake of consistency *y* should also replace *e* in *lineal*, *subterranean*, *phraseology*, etc.; see Appendix IV. The short *i*-sound is also now denoted by final *-y* as in *lily*, *pity*, etc., and we propose to retain *y* in this position for the reasons set out in Appendix IVf. Again, the sound is often written *e*, as in the first syllable of *because*, *emit*, *return*, *demand*, *prevent*, etc., and in the second syllable of *houses*, *goodness*, etc. Some speakers incline to

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 74, § 8.

<sup>2</sup> On account of the reduction of *ie* to *i* before another vowel.

give this *e* the value of *e* in *bed*, many others firmly believe that they habitually do likewise, and others use the above-mentioned obscure vowel. Whichever pronunciation is used, it is convenient to retain the existing spelling with *e*.

The same short *i*-sound may often be heard in suffixes like *-age*, *-ate*, *-ain*, *-ace*, and *-ade* (as in respectively *cottage*, *plumage*; *magistrate*; *certain*, *fountain*; *palace*, *furnace*; *comrade*). Here, too, many people employ the obscure vowel, while others aim at pronouncing the terminations with full quality (as in *cage*, *gate*, *rain*, etc.). Again, the one spelling may denote two different pronunciations according as it represents two distinct meanings: cf., e.g., *estimate* as noun and as verb, and *separate* as adjective and as verb. Accordingly, in view of the prevailing diversity of practice, we seem justified in recommending that these endings be spelled *-ej*, *-et*, *-en*, *-es*, *-ed*, thus *kotej*, *prievet*, *founten*, *furnes*, *komred*. Exception must be made in the case of verbs like *estimate*, *separate* where the vowel is long, and which would end in *-aet*. It may be noted that *foreign* and *sovereign* will become *forren* and *soveren*, while *boatswain* and *coxswain* will be *boesen* and *koksen*.

This short *i*-sound also occurs finally as *-e* in such words as *acme*, *simile*, *andante*, *apostrophe*. We recommend that this *e* be retained. Where the short *i*-sound is at present written *-ee* (as in *committee*), *-is* (as in *chassis*), it has been suggested that *i* might be written. We do not think, however, that there is sufficient justification for departing from the general principle in these cases; we accordingly recommend that these words be spelt *komity*, *shasy*. (It will generally be clear from the context whether *komity* stands for the present *committee* or *comity*.)

**(1) THE NEW SPELLING IN BRIEF**

Arranged on an phonetic basis

CONSONANT SOUNDS					
<b>pin</b>	<b>bin</b>	<b>tin</b>	<b>din</b>	<b>kin</b>	<b>got</b>
<b>fat</b>	<b>vat</b>	<b>set</b>	<b>zest</b>	<b>chat</b>	<b>jet</b>
<b>hot</b>	<b>lot</b>	<b>rot</b>	<b>win</b>	<b>whim</b>	<b>yet</b>
			(N.B. karry sorry, hurry)		
<b>met</b>	<b>net</b>	<b>sing</b>	(N.B. thank)		(lokh)
<b>shut</b>	<b>vizhon</b>	<b>thing</b>		<b>dhis</b>	
VOWEL SOUNDS					
<b>bat</b>	<b>bet</b>	<b>pit</b>	<b>pot</b>	<b>but</b>	<b>good</b>
		<b>pity</b>			
		<b>pityus</b>			
<b>faadher)</b>	<b>maed)</b>	<b>feel)</b>	<b>haul)</b>	<b>goez)</b>	<b>rnuun)</b>
<b>far)</b>	<b>faer)</b>	<b>feer)</b>	<b>short)</b>	<b>loer)</b>	<b>puur)</b>
<b>stary)</b>	<b>kaotik)</b>	<b>being)</b>	<b>story)</b>	<b>heroik)</b>	<b>bluish)</b>
	<b>krie)</b>				
	<b>fier)</b>	<b>kount)</b>	<b>koin)</b>	<b>hue)</b>	
	<b>dial)</b>	<b>sour)</b>	<b>emploir)</b>	<b>puer)</b>	
		<b>fur)</b>			
		<b>sturing)</b>	<b>sister</b>		

**(2) THE NEW SPELLING IN BRIEF**

Arranged on an alphabetic basis

CONSONANT SOUNDS		VOWEL SOUNDS
<b>bin</b>	<b>vat</b>	<b>bat; karry</b>
<b>chat</b>	<b>win</b>	<b>faadher, far; stary</b>
<b>din</b>	<b>whim</b>	<b>maed, faer, kaotik</b>
<b>dhis</b>	<b>yet</b>	<b>haul, short; story</b>
<b>fat</b>	<b>zest</b>	<b>bet</b>
<b>got</b>	<b>vizhon</b>	<b>feel, feer, being</b>
<b>hot</b>		<b>sister</b>
<b>jet</b>		<b>pit</b>
<b>kin</b>		<b>krie, fier, dial</b>
<b>(lokh)</b>		<b>pot; sorry</b>
<b>lot</b>		<b>goez, loer, heroïk</b>
<b>met</b>		<b>koin, emploir</b>
<b>net</b>		<b>good</b>
<b>sing )</b>		<b>kount, sour</b>
<b>thank)</b>		<b>but; hurry</b>
<b>pin</b>		<b>hue, puer</b>
<b>rot</b>		<b>fur, sturing</b>
<b>set</b>		<b>rnuun, puur, bluish</b>
<b>shut</b>		<b>pity, pityus</b>
<b>tin</b>		
<b>thing</b>		