

is sometimes herd in America, but very comonly ritn short o sounds like a in artistic—tru among cultivated peopl, more widely extended among those uninfluenced by scools. Exampels : ox, fox, flock, crop, top, dot . . . box, sock . . . rob, honour, bottle, doctor.”—Hist. Eng. Lang., §227.

That *o* has an *a*-sound in so many words from and even before Chaucer is plain to one with both eyes and ears open. Such evidence as the foloing is comon : New Englanders in the 18th cent. wer known to their French-Canadian neighbors as Bostonians (*les Bastonnais* or *Bastonaïs*). For Boston they herd *bost^{on}* or *bost^{an}*, stil prevailling, tho “claims of fasion” and imitaters may say *bost^{an}* too. French ears herd the main vowel as an *a*-sound and recorded it so frequently. See Sanguinet’s *Memoire*, An Eye-witnes of the New Englanders’ War in Canada (Le Temoïn oculaire de la guerre des Bastonnais en Canada), givn in ful in M. l’Abbe Verrault’s *Invasion du Canada par les Americains* (See Kingsford’s Hist. Canada, vol. v, p. 418). Again, Verrault at p. 309 tels how a man named Baker was kild, leader of a party of New Englanders (. . . ils ont tué un nommé Béquier, un des chefs d’un party de Bastonnais.—Ibid., p. 422).

Mr Tuttle rites that he uzed an *a*-sign (not in the strong sylabl of *observe*, but) in the first sylabl of *observation*, which he is tho’t to giv as *ob-zər.vəf.ən*. or els as *ob-zər.vəf.ən*; the pronunciation hwət for *what*, attributed to him, is Passy’s—he naturally says “hwət, to rime with *cut*, *hut*, a form presumably due to restresing weak ə.” He hears wər *were*, wəz *was*, əv *of*, frəm *from*, gət *got*, bikəz *because*, wənt *want*, with ə strong. We had reacht this conclusion that ther is widespred

SHIFTING OF CLOSE *a* AND OPEN *o* TO ə directly without pasing thru weak ə (°). We instance (1) New England “short o” as in *who’e*, *home*, *stone*, is often herd as ə (həl, həm, stən). Readers recall that O. W. Holmes was quoted (vol. i, p. 177)

“Yu no how they read Pope’s line in the smallest town in Massachusetts?—Well, they read it ‘All are but parts of one stupendous HULL.’”

and riming *home* with *come* is comon in the *Biglow Papers*. (2) French *a la mode* has a-la-moð’ alternativt to a-la-məd’ and *l’homme* is ləm as wel as lom. In French, such ə has greater tension and is closer (ə^u) than ours and may not be free from lip-efect as ours comonly is. Such ə must be very near the one (ə:) put in Sweet’s *work*. In Kebec (Quebec) the ful vowel e as in *rən* *run*, *djəmp* *jump*, etc., is givn as ron, djomp, etc., by French-Canadians speaking (not receivd French, but) 15th or 16th cent. French of Normandy modified. Dr Drummond, thruout his volumes of dialect poetry, *L’Habitant* and *Johnnie Courteau* (lab-i-ta, jan-i cūr-tō), spels

the words as “ron,” “jomp,” etc. Hence, this shifting apears not to hav develop’t in cisatlantic Norman. (3) Scottish *mony*, *ony*, *body*, (for *many*, *any*, *body*) ar mən-i, ən-i, bəd-i. (4) The Algonkin word for deity or spirit (manito, manedū, muneto in Cree, Keshamunedoo in Tinnê) apears to vary in first sylabl as man-, mon-, mən. This shifting apears but a particular case of substitution, which, Emerson says,

“in short vowels is limited to those which do not difer greatly in pitch, or in position of vocal organs producing them. . . . More exact study wil probably reveal some fonetic reason for all these changes.”—Ibid., §239.

MODERN AND SHAKSPEARIAN SPELLING.

(By Rev. Prof. SKEAT in Pitman’s Jurnal).

Alow remarks on two comon falacies:

(1) That filologists aprove presnt spelling, becaus it asists them in their work. Anser, they merely regard it for what it is worth: it frequently intimates what Elizabethan pronunciation was like; i. e., they merely get such information as they can from books printed in the Tudorage. The chief value of modern editions of Shakspear is their largely retaining Elizabethan spelings; but even the first folio—with all its carelesnes of execution—is beter.

A filologist who solely relied for information on modern books—as many try to—soon finds himself at sea. As a fact, he does nothing of the kind. He depends on—beyond chance of eror—the word’s modern *pronunciation*. The one elementary fact in all languages is just what our spelling hides, viz., the SPOKEN WORD, the only tru word. All els is convention; riting is merely the handmaid of spoken language and one that does her work in a very negligent and slovenly maner. Old spelings ar, uzually, far more valuabl than modern ones, precisely becaus so much more careful and fonetic. Peopl ofn take their ideas from erly printed books, when the language was changing rapidly and many inconsistencies came into vogue. Yet even these spelings ar much more fonetic, as a rule, than anything wear now acustomd to. If a word is spelt in two or three ways, ther ar ofn reasons for it—reasons aparnt only to students who no what the symbols ment; to others, all is caos, especially if imagining that symbols refer to modern sounds; sounds which, in some cases, did not then anywhere exist!

Briefly, filologists rely on the sounds of modern spoken words, and on symbols employd at dates when sp. was far more fonetic than now. Mere modern sp., when unfonetic, is of no value to them whatever. Like Pat’s watch, it never deceivs, for it is never depended on.

(2) Another comon falacy is that, just