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PHONETIC ANOMALIES OBSERVED IN SOME MODERN FORMS OF ANCIENT PROPER NAMES.

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(Read before the Canadian Institute, April 18, 1863.)

It is generally allowed that the usual English mode of pronouncing the ancient languages of Italy and Greece is very far from being correct. However thoroughly our learned men may have entered into the genius and grammar of those tongues, the sounds which they reproduce when they come to express audibly with their lips what their eyes gather up from the written or printed page of Tacitus or Thucydides, are, probably, as like the sounds originally intended to be conveyed by the characters before them, as those uttered by the English proof-reader's assistant are, who, in ignorance of Parisian phonetic niceties, delivers aloud a chance sentence in French.

In regard to the vowel-sounds it would almost seem as if at the outset, when our forefathers,

“Teuton or Kelt, or whatever we be,”

were first made acquainted with alphabetical writing, “some one had blundered;” as if the primitive learner had confounded *a* with *e*, and *i* with *ei* or *ai*; and then that the mistakes of childhood, as is some-