

# The Herald.

DEVOTED TO PRONUNCIATION AND AMENDED SPELLING.

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## MUCH TU BE DONE

While the SSB. and SSS. break up or remove the worst boulders and erect finger-posts and boards for guidance and security of them hu walk theron, the greater work of making an extensiv practical survey [of all the highway] awaits comencement. It is not intended tu disparage the work done and success achievd by disinterested and largely unrecognized services of many [hu sowd where others reap].—Anything aproaching adequat survey of speling questions and a consistent atempt tu co-ordinate information resulting from the experience of these workers has yet tu be undertaken.—T. T. LODGE, in *Jur. Orthoepy & Orthog.*, 1909, page 23.

## HISTORY OF FRENCH ACCENTS

[Translated and condensd from Kr. Nyrop's *Gram. Historique de la Langue Francaise*, vol. i, p. 101, Copenhagen, 1899.]

The Midl Age copyists rarely uzed accents except in abreviations. Only in the 16th cent. printers and gramarians begin tu uze them regularly, boroing them from Greek, but putting them tu new use. They generally indicate difrence of pronunciation or of *timbre* between the same leters. (In Greek they mark especialy voice tension on a sylabl greater (plutôt) or lesthan that on surrounding sylabls).

The *acute* accent was introduced by the printer Geoffroy Tory tu mark close e final: seuerité, félicité; plural, seueritez, felicitez. This is the custom til the 17th cent. Vaugelas does the same but uzes the acute for open e, as dés, après, cét.

P. Corneille first tried a rational distinction between é and ê. See *Avis au lecteur* in his *Théâtre*, 1664, *ed. de luxe*. Aspres, verite, apres, he rote apres, verlté, après.

The *grave* accent dates from the 16th cent. but its use was at first very sparing and uncertn. Dubois, 1531, uzes it for e feminin; Dolet, 1540, puts it on *a* and *la*; Ramus, 1572, marks open e, riting mièl, fêrmete, ênfêr. Only in 17th century do modern rules emerge.

EXPLANATION: OMIT useles letters; CHANGE (if sounded so) *d* tu *l*, *ph* or *gh* tu *f*.

For fuller explanation and Platform see cover of *Annual of New Speling* (postpaid, 10 c.)

The *circumflex* accent was first uzed by Dolet, 1540, hu calld it "apocope," as shoing fall of a vowel: mani<sup>^</sup>ment, vrai<sup>^</sup>ment. Périon, 1555, uzed it tu mark vowel length. Poisson, 1609, put it on *t* preceded by *s* amuï. Godard, 1618, begins modern uzage: tu replace this *s* amuï, as adopted by the Academy with restrictions in 1740.

The circumflex is at once a sign of derivation and of pronunciation: 1. It marks supresion of a letter, consonant or vowel. 2. Dropping a fone comonly elongates the vowel preceding. Hence it servd tu sho vowel prolongation. Use of the circumflex to sho pronunciation is trivial.

The *Cedilla* was first uzed by Tory in 1529, but was slo tu come intu general use.

*Tréma* (diëresis) was first uzed by Dolet.

The *Apostrofe* was introduced by Tory in 1529, was uzed oftener than now, as tu mark a final silent letter (vowel or cons.)

The *Trait d'union* (hyfen) apeard first in Nicot's *Dictionnaire*, 1584.

## A SYMBOL ACCEPTED, BUT MISUZED

In Jan., 1897, we began tu uze *i* for the vowel in *eat*, *machine*, *grieve*, etc.—result of trial with several forms from 1885. *i* was preferd tu *i*, tho *i* may be considerd as an acceptabl alternat.

About 1900 Passy adopted *i* for the *i* in *it*, etc., in printing German and English more especialy. This came about becaus his alfabet had a French basis, as stated by Sweet in another colum, and had *i* for *v*. in *eat*, thus dislocating *i* from historic uzage in even early periods in the Graeko-Roman world.

From 1899 on, others, foloing Passy, began tu misuze it in one way or another. This misuse is very wide and very general. Montgomery in his *Types* goes astray so far as tu put *i* for weak *i* (our *i*).

Such general use for a dozen years, quite apart from its mistaken fone-value, proves its acceptability as nothing els cud, for only what wil work deservs adoption. "Try all; adopt what is good" enuf tu work is Paulin doctrin up-to-date.

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