

Theophilus of Antioch, in the Second Century, with reference probably to the rite of Confirmation, refers to this use of chrism. "What work (says he) has either ornament or beauty, unless it have chrism applied and be burnished? And are you unwilling to be anointed with the oil of God?"

Some mis-readings, however, are more startling than this. One Clergyman, resplendent in a Doctor's hood, was wont at times to puzzle his hearers with strange utterances. A favorite pronunciation of his was to utter the word "Libertines" (Acts vi. 9) as four syllables, "Li-ber-ti-nes," instead of three.

The final *e*, which was retained in old spelling, but not pronounced, and has not been omitted in some words, has proved a trap to the unwary. It has been our lot to hear the full-bodied voice of a high-placed Ecclesiastic roll down a Cathedral the illiterate mistake of reading "Urbanee" (Romans xvi. 9) as if it were a woman's name, instead of the not unusual Urban.

The next letter in the alphabet is sometimes troublesome to hearer and reader. It must be remembered that in many words the letter *f* was pronounced with a dull pronunciation like the letter *v*; as is common in the West of England to this day. About 1540 a phonetic scribe attached to Salisbury Cathedral wrote of a "vollen ash," meaning the *wind-fall* of a fallen ash tree, or one that had been blown down. In common books the spelling has been altered in some words, but in the Bible the old spelling retains its position. For example, the word phial is now commonly spelt and pronounced *vial*. But how few persons seem to realize that in the words "press-fat," "wine-fat," the vessel now known as a *vat* is intended? When as a sign of great plenty it is said that "the fats should overflow" (Joel ii. 24, iii. 13), the pronunciation should be such as would convey to modern ears that the *vats* would be insufficient to contain the unusual yield of wine and oil. Similarly, when "fitches" are spoken of, why should the reader be ignorant that the common English plant *vetches* were intended? The Romans had no special symbol or letter to denote our soft consonant *v*, and the Emperor Claudius endeavoured to introduce an inverted F ( $\text{𐌶}$ ) to supply its place. The

innovation did not find acceptance, and it is only found in inscriptions during the reign of its author. With us the *f* often remains and is pronounced like *v*. For an interesting example of a change of the letter *p* into *v*, we may note the word pavilion, which is used seven times in the Bible. This word comes from papilio, a butterfly.

There are other words where the old spelling has been retained, and the old pronunciation has been forgotten. For example, when the term "plat of ground" (II. Kings ix. 26) is spoken of, almost all readers pronounce the word as we now pronounce *plait*, and the hearers are perplexed. But the common pronunciation of the word has caused the spelling to be altered, and in modern vocabularies it appears as "plot." It should then be read "*plot* of ground."

In the same way constant use has abbreviated the word "marishes" into *marshes*. He, therefore, that reads the First Lesson in the morning of September 13 should pronounce the word as modern usage demands, for who would know what a "marish" was?

The Queen's Printers are still pleased to spell "rearward" in the ancient manner, "rereward." This spelling was unknown to a worthy reader, who was further perplexed by his natural enemy the printer, who had divided the word unnaturally "re-reward." The poor reader, after one or two attempts to persuade himself that the printer had made a mistake and had repeated the *re* once too often, and the word, after all, was only *reward*, clearly determined to throw the whole blame on the printer and read the unknown word just as it was printed; so he said manfully, "they re-re-ward."

The unnatural division of a word is often puzzling to a person taken unawares. A clever old lady was once perplexed by what she regarded and pronounced as a French word adopted into our language, "po-thouse"; it proved to be the not unknown English word "pot-house." On one side of a sign of an English inn there was painted HOPP, on the other OLES. Some learned antiquaries on the search for wonders were much struck with this and discussed its meaning. After some valuable suggestions as to the meaning of the word, a passing yokel said, "We calls it 'the hop poles.'"