

The history of the editions of that poet shows how much uncertainty there is upon that point. Yet, from Chaucer's time to ours, the general structure of the language has remained unchanged; there has been an unbroken succession of writers; nor has the English race been alloyed, or its vocal organs modified, by any large admixture of alien elements from abroad. It is needless to say how entirely these conditions are reversed in the case of Rome, or how vast a chasm, ethnographical, literary and linguistic, divides modern Italy and the other Romance countries from the Rome whose language Professor Peck undertakes to reproduce. It is a thousand to one that to the ear of Cicero or Virgil the Professor's "Roman" would appear an unearthly brogue. Our present mode of pronouncing Latin, as well as our mode of pronouncing Greek, is simply a confession that the ancient pronunciation is lost. If it is proposed, on the ground of international convenience, to adopt a common pronunciation, well and good; and we have nothing to say against the selection of the Italian pronunciation for the purpose. But the revival of Roman pronunciation we believe to be a chimera. Great inconvenience would be caused to scholars by rendering them unintelligible to each other, just as great inconvenience is caused by the fidgetty fancies about ancient orthography, which are setting half the volumes in our classical libraries by the ears with the other half, without adding a particle to our power of appreciating the classics. The Roman pronunciation was the only thing wanting to the banquet given after the manner of the ancients in "Peregrine Pickle." The sow's stomach, filled with a composition of minced pork, hog's brains, eggs, pepper, cloves, garlic, aniseed, rue, ginger, oil, wine, and pickle, which produced such dire effects upon the guests at that memorable entertainment, was probably as accurate a reproduction of the dainties which graced the board of Vitellius, as *wany*, *weedy*, *weechy* is of the proud utterance of the first Cæsar.