

In the sixteenth century there was a tendency in the French itself to assimilate the forms of the first conjugation to those of the second.⁴

This peculiarity is in very extensive use in the Wallonian,⁵ and particularly at Liège.⁶ The communes of Paifve, Wilhagne, Taprelle, Allenr, Rocour, Liers, Voroux, Oupeye, with many others are cited by Wilmotte⁷ as having this peculiarity for verbs ending in *y+n+are*.

There is thus a direct territorial connection, by way of Péronne and Comblès, between the Wallonian and that part of the Somme in which this *-i* termination is found.

This connection, and the fact that it is not found on the west of Amiens, nor on the south-west, nor south of the Santerre, and the wedge-shape of the district itself, justify the conclusion that it has spread west and south from Wallonian to Picard territory.

In the Chartes of Vermandois,⁸ tonic *a libre* very often gives *ei*. This is not found, however, in the documents belonging to the western part of the Picard territory (in the Ponthieu and Aire), but only in the Vermandois and the region east and north of it. And here this *ei* is only found in certain positions: before a dental; in the infinitive termination (*donneir*, xxxvii, 10); before a mute + *r* (*freires*, xxxii, ii; *meire*, iii, 6; *peire*, xxxv, 10); before a labial + *r*; before *l* *g*

b. Tonic *a* preceded by *k* gives the same result as in French:—

CANEM > *čjẽ*; DECANUM > *dnčjẽ*; PAGAVUM > *pčjẽ*; *quien* (pron. *čjẽ*, Crimon, Sat. ii, 2); *cien* (Auc. et Nic., x, 27, 71)

c. Pretonic *a* preceded by *k*.

CADERE > *čgr*; CAVALLUM > *gčq*; CAMINUM > *knč*; CANALEM > *kānāl*.

In all words of popular formation it falls; in words of learned origin, such as *kānāl*, it is retained.

The fall of this sound was due to its pretonic position; the voice passed lightly over it in its haste to reach the tonic vowel. The sound has passed through the following changes:—*a* > *ɛ* > *ɔ* > and then fell.¹⁰

⁴ "Au seizième siècle, on assimila parfois la première conjugaison à la seconde, et l'on dit: *f'aimis, tu aimis, il aimit*, etc. Robert Etienne dans sa *grammaire française* le déclare explicitement." Darmesteter et Hatfield—"Le Seizième Siècle en France," p. 237.

⁵ "Solche Formen [forms of the first conjugation in *-i*] sind im 15 und 16 Jahrhundert auch in der Schriftsprache nicht unbeliebt, und werden von den Grammatikern des 16 Jahrhunderts ins Paradigma aufgenommen. Später werden sie in der gebildeten Sprache wieder ausser Kurs gesetzt, doch haben zahlreiche Patois an dieser Bildung festgehalten"—Suchier in Gröber's "Grundriss," i, 614.

⁶ "Dans quelques localités on dit *dansi*"—Sigart "Dictionnaire du Wallon de Mons," p. 45.

⁷ *abr'ji* [pron. ābrɛʒi], *abr'ɛ* [pron. ābrɛʃi], *ac'igi* [āsiʒi], *aconk* [ākuki].—Forir, "Dictionnaire Liégeois-Français," s. v.

⁸ *Revue des Patois*, vol. i, p. 21, Chart. i.

⁹ "Chartes françaises du Vermandois de 1218 à 1250" par Le Proux. Paris, 1875.

¹⁰ Neumann, "Zur Laut- und Flexionslehre des Altfranzösischen."

¹¹ Beyer, "Franz. Phonetik," p. 23.