

This writer, clinging to old tradition, represents the first vowel sound in *vary* and *wary* and their analogues in the same way as the first in *making* and *taking*—rewriting these examples phonetically *vā-re*, *wā-re*, *mā-king*, and *tā-king*.

He also draws a false distinction between the sound of *oo* in *wood* and *wool* and that of *u* in *full* or *pull*. Is there any difference to the ear, I ask, between *ull* in *pull*, which he writes *pul*, and *ool* in *wool*, which he writes *wōol*? Surely as *pull* is to *poop* so is *wool* to *woof*. In confusion our author at last writes *could kud*, and *would wōod*.

Lastly, Mr. Nuttall wrongly declares the *a* in the suffix *-able* to be the short Italian *a*—the short sound corresponding to the long *a* in *father*; whereas it really has no sound of *a* at all, but the one so commonly occurring in unaccented syllables heard in *ban* on the one hand and *Indian* and *opinion* on the other. Say “*Fret, your rab’ll* kill that fly,” and you utter the word *durable* with a mere difference in the stress; while *readable* is just *redouble* with the accent on the first syllable instead of the second.

Even were Nuttall’s dictionary without these and other flaws besides, and were its system so far altered as invariably to represent a particular sound by a particular letter or group of letters, it would only be a classification of English sounds after all. What we are making our goal here is the complete tabling of all the vowels and vowel compounds uttered by the different nations of the world. It is true that for this purpose we have only examined four languages of western Europe; yet from what we have heard concerning the pronunciation of other tongues and from certain striking features of perfection that the numbers in our collection present, we are led to the conclusion that we have discovered and arranged all the simple vowels that exist.

In the following table, for the composition of which we have thoroughly prepared the reader, we have arranged typical words from each language containing the same sound (where any such exist) in one horizontal line; the words showing the long and short form thereof being placed side by side in pairs. We have underlined in each word the sound exemplified; and further, where the word is polysyllabic we have marked with a thick accent the syllable on which the stress is laid, if it affects the length or species of a vowel in the same syllable or another. We have numbered all the simple sounds in the first double column, or the blanks therein corresponding to sounds in the other columns, by pairs; giving a figure with the long mark over it to each long vowel, and the same figure with a short mark to the corresponding short vowel. Lastly, we have used the same numbers to identify the simple sounds that take part in forming each diphthong. (The stress is marked with an accent thicker than the conventional one.)