

" If straight they track, or if *oblique*,
Thou knowest not; shadows thou dost
strike,
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like."

It is to be noticed that all three rhymes are identical in these two triplets.

That the once fashionable pronunciations *tay* and *jine*, for "tea" and "join," still linger—both of them with the Irish peasantry, and the latter with many other uneducated people as well—may be partly due to Pope's famous couplet :

" There thou, great Anna, whom three
realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take, and some-
times tea."

and his still more famous triplet :¹

" Waller was smooth ; but Dryden taught to
join
The varying verse, the full resounding line.
The long majestic march, and energy di-
vine."

But for the conservative force of rhyme the obsolescent *wound* for "wound" would probably be obsolete. In the opening lines of Dryden's "Hind and Panther;" in Scott's tribute to Fox's "genius high and lore profound, And wit that loved to play not *wound*," in the preface to "Marmion;" twice in the most striking passage of "Rokeby" (Bertram's death); and in scores of less important contexts, "wound" occurs in assonance with such words as "ground," "hound," "bound."

The word "avalanche" is at present in a transition state; but the inevitable triumph of the Anglicized over the French pronunciation has probably been hastened by Longfellow's couplet :

" Beware the pine-tree's withered branch,
Beware the awful avalanche !"

I consider that the popular song containing the lines,

" I have trod the desert *path* ;
I have seen the storm arise,
Like a giant in his *wrath*,"

is an efficient ally of those who wish to sentence the pronunciation *wrazoth* to death or transportation. And every such rhyme as Sir Walter Scott's,

" But Basil's voice the deed *forbade* ;
A mantle o'er his corse he laid,"

I view as partly responsible for our divided usage as to the italicized word. From such a rhyme as Tenyson's,

" We left behind the painted *buoy*
That tosses at the harbour mouth ;
And madly danced our hearts with *joy*,
As fast we flected to the South,"

we cannot tell whether the poet himself sounded the *u* in "buoy" or not; but we may infer that he never dreamed of that complicated pronunciation which Webster prefers, and which the orthography *buwooy* expresses as closely as it can be expressed. Hood's pun about the buoy at the Nore and the girl at the Needles shows still more exactly how *he* pronounced the word. In regard to this word I am inclined to prophesy the sailors, poets, and punsters will finally prevail over the orthoëpists.

There has always been a common tendency in baffled rhymers to substitute what are rhymes to the eye, for what are rhymes to the ear. Even Milton, in his "L'Allegro," makes "melancholy" rhyme with "holy." This tendency I believe to be one of the factors (others being the infection of foreign pronunciation, and the vanity of semi-educated persons—multiplied by the common schools—who are fond of indirectly displaying their knowledge of spelling) which have made most Americans substitute a distinct for an obscure vowel sound, and place two accents, in spite of Webster and the genius of our language, on many words ending in *ary*, *ory*, *mony*, *ate*, etc.

The exigencies of rhyme sometimes make versifiers transgress other rules than those of pronunciation :