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fragments of Norman-French writing, and with fragments of classical Latin, not to mention the errors of copyists;* and this is what English children have to be taught. The language is full of marks—like *w*, *y*, *i*, *gh*, and *e*—which have no meaning or force whatever to the child, which are simply of value to the philologist as history;† while they are ‘stumbling-blocks and rocks of offence’ in the primary schoolroom.

The dialectic character of the language is everywhere visible. Among scores of instances there is one that shews how our traditional usages of writing and pronouncing not only hinder the progress of the child, but obscure the plainest facts of the language. The simple symbol *one* we pronounce as if it were written *wun*. That is, we have adopted, for this word, a Dorsetshire or West of England pronunciation. We say *wun*; but we draw the line there, and we do not go on to say *wuts* for *oats*, or *woak* for *oak*. Again, in the compounds of o-n-e, we entirely discard the Dorsetshire pronunciation, and give it the simple sound which all analogy entitles it to have, and make it rhyme with *tone*. Thus in *only*, *alone*, and *atone*,‡ *one* has its correct and ‘natural’ sound.

* Such as the philological blunder of the *g* in *foreign* and *sovereign*; and the vulgar blunders in *tongue*, *grocer*, *foxglove*, &c.

† The gutturals of our language now disguise themselves as *w*, *gh*, *y*, *i*, &c.—as *w* in *sorrow*, as *gh* in *light*, as *y* in *day*, and as *i* in *hail*.

‡ *Atone*, in the sixteenth century, meant to come together into one. Thus Shakespeare has (in *As You Like It*, V. iv. 116):

‘When earthly things, made even,
Atone together.’