

THE VOWELS.

1. TREATMENT OF *a*.

1. Tonic *a* in open syllable.

This becomes a sound which is neither *ê* nor *g*, but an intermediate sound *ê*:

FRATREM > *frêr*; CLARUM > *klêr*; PATREM > *pêr*; AMATUM > *emê*; HOSPITALEM > *ptêl*; MORTALEM > *mortêl*.

In order that the sound *a* should become *ê* it must have passed through the sound *g*, for the latter stands between *ê* and *a* in the vowel scale. While the French shows in this case a front wide vowel, the vowel of the patois has passed through this stage, and is on its way to the state of a front narrow vowel. Thus, although the tendency of the French is towards frontness and narrowness,³ the patois goes still farther in this direction.

The Latin verbs of the first conjugation change the *a* to *i*, according to the regular law of the patois for this class of words: VOLARE > *voli*; MANDUCARE > *mênzi*; CAMBIARE > *kâzi*. In Crinon the same peculiarity is found, although not invariably: MANDUCARE > *maingi* (Crinon, Sat. i. 1.); CAMBIARE > *cangi* (Sat. v. 54.); but PERDONARE > *bardonner* (Sat. i. 36.); PROMINARE > *proum'ner* (Sat. v. 14). In the *Franc. Picard* the form ending in *i* does not occur, but the termination in *-er* for verbs of the first conjugation alone is found:—*meiner*, *prier*, (F. Pic. 1882, p. 148); *canter* (*ibid.*, p. 151); *laissier* (*ibid.*, 1872, 2. 203).

In the *Bonhomme-Picard*, however, printed and published, like the last named work, at Amiens, the termination in *-i* is found:—*aconti* (1887, p. 93); *quittii* (*ibid.*, p. 96). As the *-i* termination is not used by the natives of Amiens, the writer of these stories in the *Bonhomme-Picard* belongs to a territory farther east;—in the 'Célèbre mariage de Jeannin et de Prignon,' it is always represented by *ê*: *ontê* (Suite, 14); *aconquiê* (*ibid.*, 39).

The termination *-i* for verbs of the first conjugation is not found in the selections from the different patois given by Corblet in his Glossary; there is no example in the 'Dis dou vrai aniel,' 'Durmarte Galois,' 'Li Chevaliers as deus Espees,' 'Aucassin et Nicolète,' nor in any other Picard text to which the writer has had access.

At the present time the part of the Department of the Somme in which this peculiarity is found is extremely limited. It is not found at Amiens (that is, it is not used by those native to that city), nor in

³ Beyer, 'Franz. Phonetik,' p. 54.