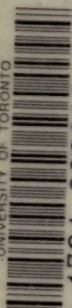


Perfect French Possible

Some Essential and Adequate Helps
to French Pronunciation
and Rhythm

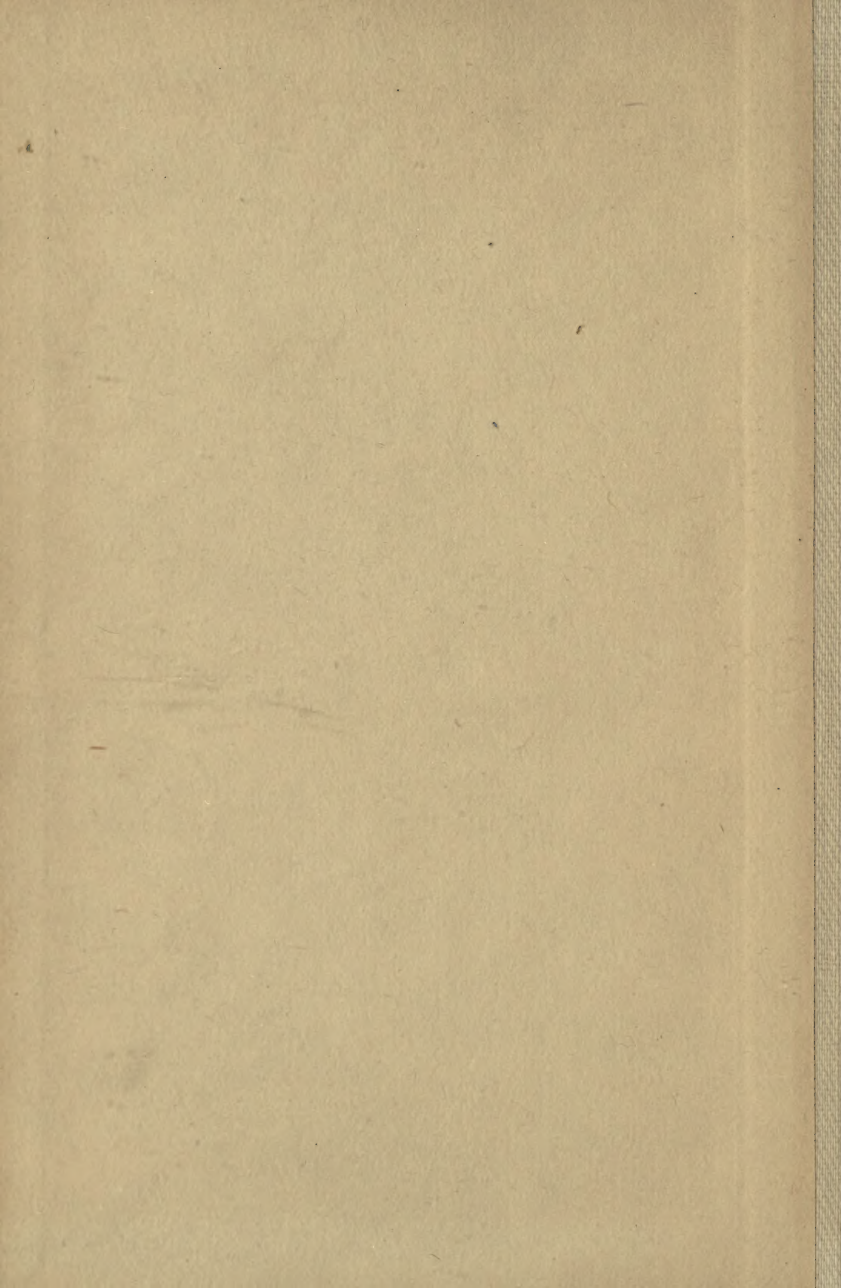
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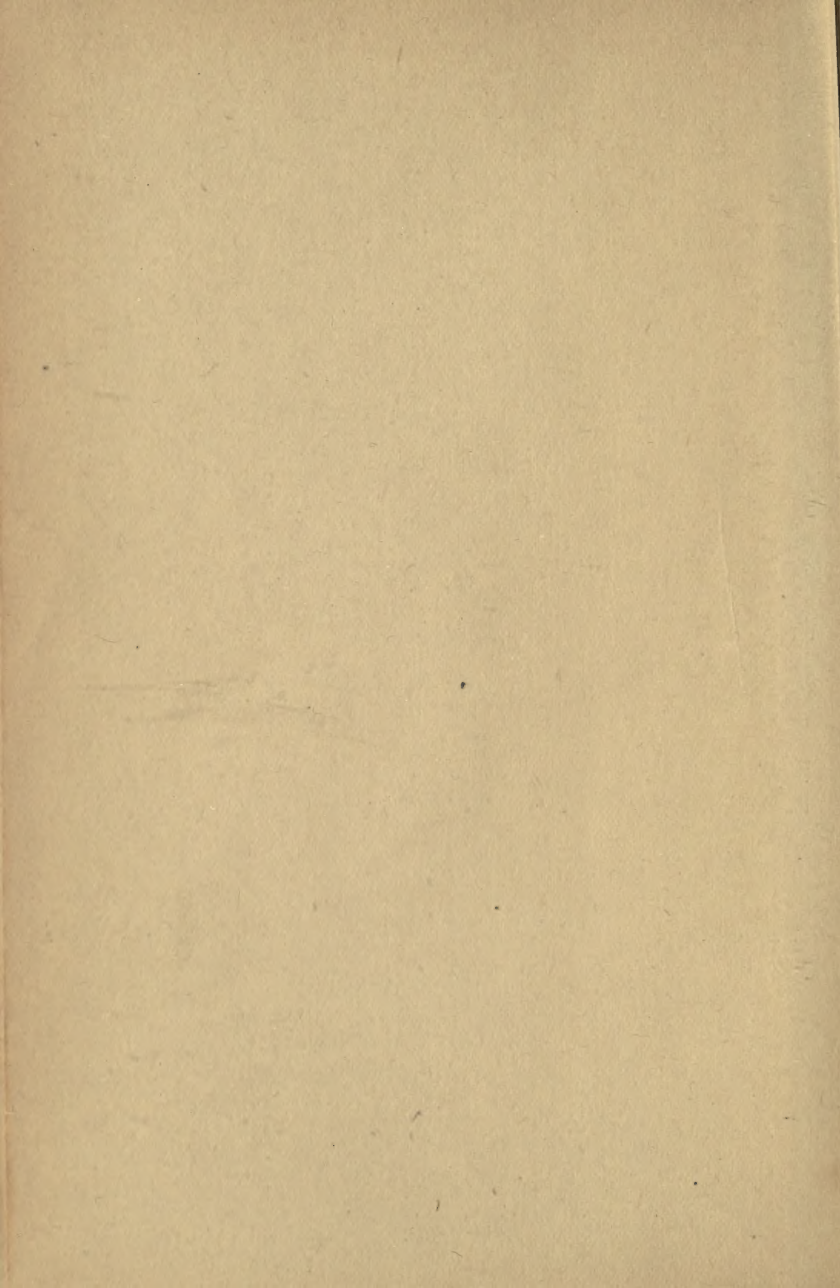
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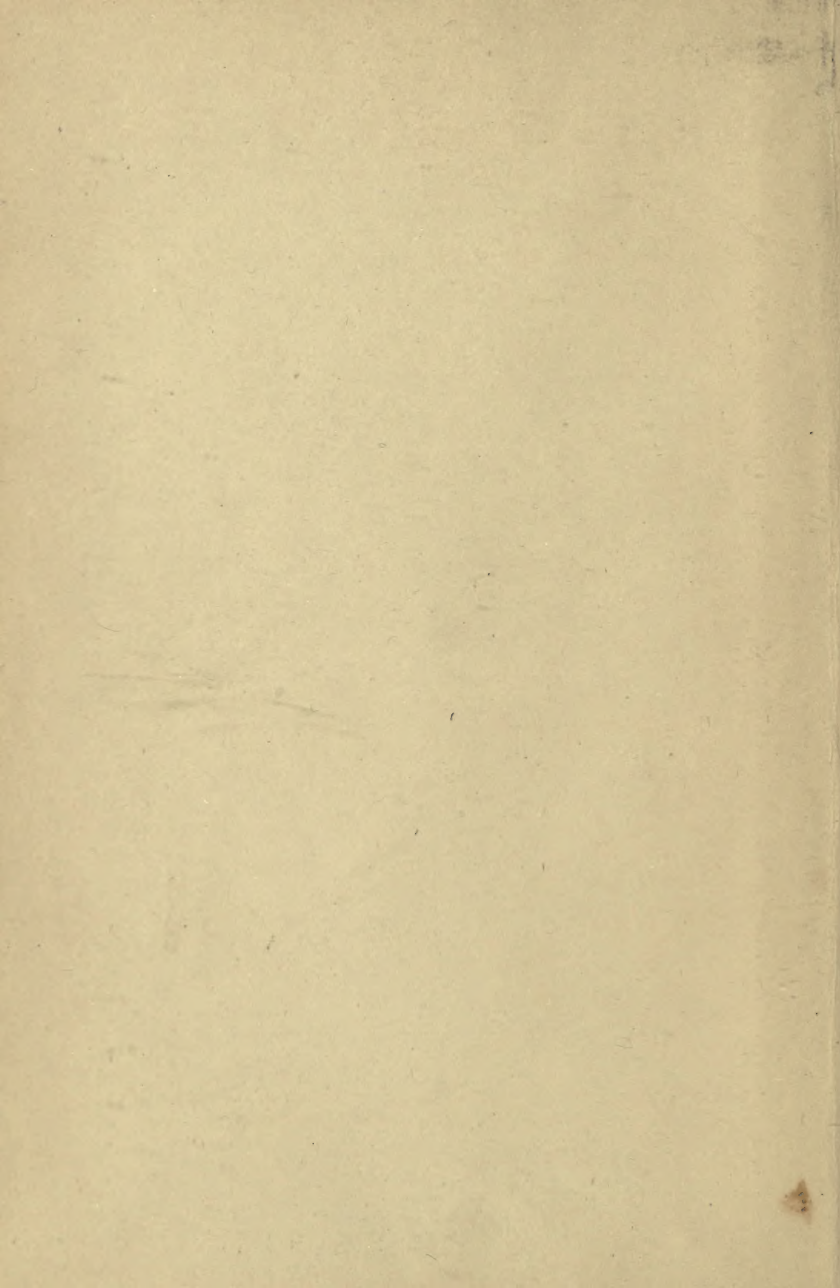
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Perfect French Possible

Some Essential and Adequate Helps
to French Pronunciation
and Rhythm

BY

Enrietta
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AND

BERTHE DES COMBES FAVARD

TEACHER OF FRENCH IN THE HYDE PARK HIGH SCHOOL, CHICAGO.

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PREFACE.

When one reflects that language is made up of sounds, it seems too obvious for mention that the acquisition of a new language should begin by a mastering of its sounds. Notice the word "*mastering*". There are thousands of persons who know perfectly well that French *i* equals English *ee*, and who nevertheless go through life pronouncing the past participle "finished", finny, instead of *fee-nee*, which, had it been firmly fixed in the mind at the outset, would be quite as easy as 'finny', since all the sounds in this word *fini* are English sounds (fee-knee).

We all know what "playing by ear" means to a trained musician. Would it not be pedagogically as absurd for a teacher of language to expect his pupil to speak before he can pronounce, as it would be for a music teacher to expect his pupil to play an air upon the violin, before he has taught him to tune his instrument or to sound each note upon the strings?

This little manual of pronunciation is not a technical work on phonetics. It contains simply those elements of phonetics which are necessary to the correct pronunciation of French, and, by our use of English equivalents and rules for the formation of those sounds which have no English equivalents, we have been able to perfect a system of applied phonetics, without having had recourse to the symbols of the phoneticians, who compel one to learn what appears to the eye to be one foreign language simply as a preparation for the study of another. It differs from other works on pronunciation, because

it leaves out everything but the essentials, and is the only work in which rules for rhythm, as such, are given in a form that will secure correct and musical inflection. It is unique in that it gives infallible rules for the production of those sounds that cannot be approximated in English.

To an objector, who might say that all this takes too much time, we could reply by actual proof with large classes in the school-room, as well as with private pupils, that, on the contrary, by the use of this method a great saving of time is effected; for, when once the learner has mastered the thirty-six sounds of the French language, and the rules for rhythm, he can pronounce any word at sight unerringly. Thousands of words of Latin derivation are the same in the two languages, but the vowel sounds of the two offer so many differences that no beginner would recognize the French word «*éducation*», for instance, when pronounced by a French person, although to the eye it is exactly the same as the English word. A pupil, however, who has been trained in our method, recognizes all these words instantly, no matter how rapidly they may be uttered by a French person, even before he has begun the study of the language as such. Our method has given him at once the key to this large and varied vocabulary.

While we have made an exhaustive study of Nyrop, Littré, L'Abbé Rousselot, Léon Ricquier, Yersin, Ahn, Legouvé, and Paul Passy, and make nowhere any statement which is not backed by one or more of these authorities, we have, in the majority of cases, done away with pages of rules by deducing from them general laws which experience has proved to be true; notably in the treatment of the nasal sounds, in that of the liquid *l*, which has been reduced to three rules of one line each, and, most important of all, in that of the mute *r*, which is disposed of in two rules. These two rules with remarks, footnotes, etc., concerning them, have been condensed into three

pages, and, together with those for the formation of French sounds having no English equivalents (*o*, *u*, *eu*,¹ *eu*² and uvular *r*) as formulated here, are absolutely original, and can be found in no other work.

We feel safe in asserting, that this tabulated system of applied phonetics is the briefest, simplest, and most complete work on pronunciation ever published; its briefness and its simplicity being the most valuable result of our wide experience and long years of study.

It is not a mere theory that we are trying to advance, but the result of long years of practical application in the class-room, where these principles have been slowly evolved, daily practiced, and found to produce the desired results.

We have never believed in the "French Without a Master" systems, for we think that a teacher is an absolute necessity, but, if ever there were a system in which a pupil, determined to learn, and unable to procure a master, could teach himself to pronounce as French people do, this is the one.

Disputed points and exceptions have been purposely omitted, so that the essential principles of pronunciation may become deeply rooted and have unobstructed growth in the mind of the learner, who, in order to keep first impressions clear and fresh, must at first remain in ignorance of disputed points.*

We take pleasure in expressing our sincerest thanks to professors of the University of Chicago, and others, for the valuable help their counsel and kindly criticism have been to us. The rapid sale of our first four editions, unadvertised as they were, and the adoption for use of this book in the Public Schools of Chicago, and schools and colleges elsewhere, have encouraged us to have this enlarged and revised edition published on a larger scale. Great care has been taken in the

* Exceptions to rules for pronunciation are noted in the *Grammaire de la Conversation*.

eleventh edition to correct errors that had crept into the previous ones, and we shall be grateful for any suggestions that will enable us further to perfect our work in succeeding editions.

The most perfect application of this method of pronunciation and drill may be obtained by using it in conjunction with the *Grammaire de la Conversation* (Knowles-Favard), D. C. Heath & Co., publishers. This book, with the exception of a few pages of necessary explanation, is written entirely in French. The lessons are so graduated as to be understood from the first by the beginner. In the first twenty lessons, no abnormal or nasal sounds are included; only those sounds are used which (by proper voice-placing) can be easily pronounced by English-speaking people. In the next twenty lessons, the nasal and the abnormal sounds are taken up in proper order, and in all lessons throughout the book, the practical application of this system of pronunciation and rhythm is further carried out by constant references to *Perfect French Possible* (see page 14).

The careful following-out of the system laid down in these two books, which have been written for each other — or we may more properly say, evolved from and by each other — will give to the ordinary student a rhythmical and musical French, simple in form and correct in idiom.

For particulars in regard to a normal course and other courses in the Knowles-Favard system, address New School of Conversational French, Fine Arts Building, Chicago, Ill.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
A WORD TO TEACHERS	x
SOME ESSENTIAL AND ADEQUATE HELPS TO FRENCH PRONUNCIATION AND RHYTHM.	1
Intrinsic difference between French and English — Three things necessary to perfect French.	
CHART OF FRENCH SOUNDS	2
Thirty-six elementary sounds — a, â, e, é, è, ê, i, ô, o, u, eu, ¹ eu, ² an, in, on, un, ou, ch, b, d, f, g, gn, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, y, z — English equivalents — Signs used in this book.	
THE FRENCH ALPHABET	3
VOWEL SOUNDS.	3
Exercises invaluable to singers — Articulation — Phoneticians' diagram of normal vowel sounds — Pronunciation of <i>é</i> indicated — <i>Poule</i> and <i>pool</i> compared — Diagram including abnormal vowel sounds.	
NASALIZED VOWELS	5
Formation of Nasals — Helpful experiments — Exercise for uvular <i>r</i> serviceable in the study of nasals — Diagram including nasalized vowels.	
CONSONANT SOUNDS	8
Approximately the same as in English — Initials — Finals.	
SYLLABIC PRACTICE	9
Exercise for <i>é</i> — Daily practice necessary — <i>Ien</i> , final — Monosyllables — Final — Not final — Verb and Participle endings — <i>S</i> and <i>ent</i> final in verbs.	
SYLLABLES	13
Dividing words into Syllables — Importance of Syllabication — Mute syllable defined — Peculiarities of phonetic syllabication — Tonic accent.	

HOW TO LEARN TO PRONOUNCE A FRENCH WORD PERFECTLY	15
VOWELS	16
<i>a</i> — <i>e</i> , preceding <i>mm</i> — <i>â</i> — <i>a</i> , preceding <i>s</i> — <i>as</i> , <i>a(tion)</i> , and <i>a(ille)</i> in nouns, final — <i>e</i> , at the end of a syllable — <i>é</i> — <i>ez</i> — <i>er</i> — <i>ai</i> , final in verbs — <i>è</i> — <i>ai</i> — <i>ei</i> — <i>et</i> (final) — <i>e</i> , before a combination of consonants — <i>e</i> , when not the last letter of a syllable — <i>ê</i> — <i>i</i> — <i>î</i> — <i>y</i> , vowel — <i>ou</i> — <i>ô</i> — <i>au</i> — <i>eau</i> — <i>o(s)</i> — <i>o(tion)</i> — <i>os</i> , <i>oi</i> , and <i>o</i> , final — Four sounds which have no English equivalents — Rule for the formation of <i>o</i> — Exercise with English words — Rule for the formation of <i>u</i> — Words showing abnormal resultant of two normal sounds — Exercise for <i>u</i> and <i>ou</i> — Rule for the formation of <i>eu</i> ¹ — Rule for the formation of <i>eu</i> ² — <i>eu</i> in the conjugation of <i>avoir</i> .	
NASALS	20
Nasals defined — <i>an</i> , <i>am</i> , <i>en</i> , <i>em</i> , — <i>in</i> , <i>im</i> , <i>ain</i> , <i>aim</i> , <i>ein</i> , <i>eim</i> , <i>yn</i> , <i>ym</i> — <i>on</i> , <i>om</i> , — <i>un</i> , <i>um</i> — Impure nasals — <i>ien</i> — <i>oin</i> — Impure nasals in <i>viendrai</i> , etc.	
VOWELS MELTING TOGETHER	21
<i>oi</i> — <i>i</i> , <i>u</i> , and <i>ou</i> , before vowels — Exercises for pronunciation of these combinations in one emission of the voice — Syllabication of vowel combinations.	
CONSONANTS	23
List of consonants alike in French and English — <i>c</i> and <i>g</i> , before <i>e</i> and <i>i</i> — <i>h</i> , aspirate and inaspirate — <i>j</i> — <i>q</i> — <i>s</i> , between vowels — <i>w</i> — <i>x</i> — <i>y</i> — Rule for the formation of <i>d</i> , <i>t</i> , <i>l</i> , and <i>n</i> — Voice placing for <i>g</i> , and <i>k</i> — Two French <i>r</i> 's — Lingual <i>r</i> — Uvular <i>r</i> — Modifi- cation of English <i>r</i> — Dissimilarity of similar French and English words.	
CONSONANT COMBINATIONS	27
<i>ch</i> — <i>gn</i> , in foreign derivations — <i>ph</i> — <i>p</i> , initial — <i>gu</i> — <i>qu</i> — <i>ti</i> — <i>th</i> — Combinations which are not separated in syllabication.	
DIACRITICAL MARKS	27
Cases in which accents do not count phonetically — The apostrophe — The cedilla — The diaeresis.	
LIQUIDS	28
<i>ll</i> , final — <i>ill</i> , preceded by <i>a</i> , by <i>eu</i> , by <i>ou</i> — <i>ill</i> , not initial — <i>gn</i> , liquid — <i>y</i> .	

MUTE SYLLABLES	29
When <i>e</i> is <i>not</i> pronounced — When <i>e</i> is pronounced — Sometimes replaced by a pause without breath — Often an involuntary and unavoidable sound both in French and in English — Series of mute syllables in sentences — In words.	
LINKING SOUNDS TOGETHER	32
Syllables and words linked together in elegant French — Liaisons — Definition of a liaison — Consonant sounds which change in liaisons — Tying nasals — Trained ear the guide — Rules for making liaisons — Linkings of sounds, not liaisons — Consonants linked to vowels — Difference between linkings and liaisons — Vowels linked to vowels — Linkings with substantives.	
RHYTHM	38
French and English Rhythm compared — Effect of syllabication on rhythm — Where stress should be placed — Displaced stress.	
STRESS GROUPS	40
Stress Groups defined — Importance of correct placing of tonic stress — Sentences showing where stress falls in stress groups.	
DISPLACED ACCENT	42
SUMMARY OF THE KNOWLES-FAVARD SYSTEM	43
READING LESSON OR DICTATION	44
PROSE FOR PRACTICE	45
Slow reading with stress groups indicated by vertical lines.	

A WORD TO TEACHERS.

To those who have still to be convinced of the utility, not to say the necessity, of this method, and who say, "We prefer imitation; our pupils imitate our pronunciation, and that is better than all these comparisons of English and French sounds," we would answer, "Our whole object is to awaken the imitative sense, to cultivate it, to keep it alive by opening the ears and the understanding of your pupil. In short, we teach him to listen to you, to *understand* you, to *imitate* you. But, admirable as imitation is, the pupil can nevertheless imitate you only when with you, and this little book is to serve as a guide in the many hours when he is studying alone."

**This book should be not only on the teacher's desk
but in the hands of each one of the pupils
no matter how advanced.**

Large type is for first lessons. Small type is for more advanced work.
The whole book is to be used continuously for reference.

PERFECT FRENCH POSSIBLE.

SOME ESSENTIAL AND ADEQUATE HELPS TO FRENCH PRONUNCIATION AND RHYTHM.

The intrinsic difference between the pronunciation of French and English is — **first**, that French is spoken from the front of the mouth, and not on the molars; **second**, that a French word is not spoken as a word, as English words are, but as a succession of syllables; **third**, that, in English, a word is attacked with great energy, the force dying away gradually to the end; while, in French, on the contrary, the initial syllable receives only a slight stress, which increases gradually, culminating in the final syllable, whose consonant-sound is often uttered with explosive force.

If the pupil bears these three things constantly in mind, and observes the rules below, his pronunciation will be perfect and his accent French.

RULES.

- I. Keep the vowel sounds pure.
- II. Join each consonant or consonant combination to the following vowel.
- III. Place the tonic accent on the last sounded syllable, and keep mute syllables mute.

CHART OF FRENCH SOUNDS.

The thirty-six elementary *sounds* of which the French language is composed are:

	PAGE		PAGE
a = Ann	16	ch = shine	27
â = ah	16	b = bed	23
e = up* and sometimes urn	16	d = did , modified	23
é = Abe	16	f = fat	23
è = ebb	17	g = get	23
ê = ebb , prolonged	17	gn = canyon , modified	28
i = eel	17	h = hat (silent in Parisian French)	23
ô = ode	17	j = measure	23
o = awe , modified	18	k = kill	23
u = product of the union of ou and i.	18	l = let , modified	23
eu ¹ = product of the union of o and è.	19	m = met	23
eu ² = product of the union of ô and é.	19	n = not	24
an = ã	20	p = poor	23
in = î	20	r = rat , modified	24
on = õ	20	s = sat	23
un = ũ ¹	20	t = tan , modified.	23
ou = ooze	17	v = vat	23
		y = yearn	23
		z = zone	23

This is a chart of *sounds* only. For *letters* see page 3.

When we use the arithmetical formula "a = **Ann**", "è = **ebb**", we mean that French unaccented a equals, or has the same sound as, the **A** in **Ann**, and that è equals, or has the same sound as, e in **ebb**, and so on.

When (in this book) French sounds are represented by English sounds or words, consider that: a = â. We use the tilde (~) over a vowel to show that that vowel is nasalized. When in examples of any kind exceptions to our rules of pronunciation occur, the correct pronunciation is indicated after the word. English equivalents for French sounds and words are printed in **bold face type**.

* It is identical with the ever recurring obscured vowel in English: *unattainable*, *divisible*, *recollect*, *recent*; and *e* in the German word *bitte*.

We often find that the pronunciation of an English word differs in different localities, but both Webster and the Century Dictionary agree as to the pronunciation of the English words given as models in the above chart. Although we have used the word "modified" for only six of these sounds, it must be understood that they *all* need modification before they can be considered strictly French. We have for convenience used the sign of equality between English and French sounds, but, in reality, until the English sounds have been greatly changed, no such equality exists. The English sound merely gives you a starting point. By hard work you can do the rest, thus making the sign of equality true. This is really a study of voice placing, which will give you musical French and improve your English at the same time. When you have succeeded in pronouncing the sounds (not marked modified or nasal ~) which are indicated in the *English* words we have given — that is, in pronouncing them *staccato* with all drawlings, additions and prolongations cleanly lopped off (for they must be entirely freed from the intermediate sounds which naturally precede and follow them in the English word) you are really pronouncing perfect *French* sounds.

THE FRENCH ALPHABET.

Approximate pronunciation in English :

a	ah	h	ash	o	oh	u	u*
b	bay	i	ee	p	pay	v	vay
c	say	j	zhee	q	ku*	w	doo bl'vay
d	day	k	kah	r	air	x	eeks
e	urn	l	ell	s	ess	y	eegrec
f	eff	m	emm	t	tay	z	zedd
g	zhay	n	enn	* No equivalent English sound. See page 18.			

VOWEL SOUNDS.

The following exercises all tend to bring the voice to the front of the mouth, and to make articulation much more distinct and tones more musical; they are consequently invaluable, not only to singers and stu-

dents of French, but to all persons wishing to improve voice placing and articulation in any language.

Back.	Front.
ou	i
ô	é
o	è
â	a

Phoneticians have discovered that French vowels travel forward in the mouth according to the above curious and interesting diagram. *Ou* at the upper left hand is the farthest back; *i* at the upper right hand is the farthest forward. By practicing from *ou* to *i*, down one side of the V and up the other, you will find that the tongue travels continually forward until at last you feel it pressing against the front teeth; it has also changed its position from concave to convex; by experimenting with your finger you will see that this is true.*

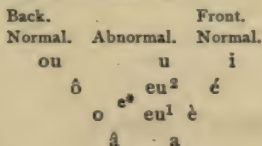
In order to rid yourself of any rasping and nasal sounds which may occur in your ordinary tones, from the unnecessary use of muscles in the throat, study the above diagram according to the following directions:

RULE FOR THE PRODUCTION OF PURE FRENCH VOWELS.

First pronounce *ooze*, then *oo (ou) ode, o (ô) ah (â) Ann, a (a) ebb, e (è) Abe, a (é) eel, ee (i)*. Second, repeat these sounds, watching closely each movement of the lips, a mirror in hand. Third, exaggerate these movements of the lips without any sound. Fourth, after each vowel, stiffen the lips so as to hold for an instant the shape they have assumed. Fifth, repeat audibly. Holding the lips stiff during the production of these vowels will prevent them from lapsing into other vowels. The third sound of the above diagram (see p. 18) is to be omitted for the present. Daily practice on these vowels will make you sure of them, but until you *are* sure never practice them without a mirror, for in order to get the desired result the lips must be absolutely motionless. In the proper noun **Abe**, pronounced slowly, we hear distinctly **a ee b**; but, in order to get out of it a perfect *é*, you must, in practicing the English word, entirely eliminate this extra accidental **ee**. A great deal of practice is necessary to do this. The tendency (an unfortunate one) in English is to diphthongize every

*The movements of the tongue (page 8) must now be taken up.

vowel, as we have shown in (A) of Abe, while in French it is imperative that every vowel be distinct in itself, and neither begin with nor lapse into any other vowel sound. The pure French vowel may be illustrated by a perfectly straight line, and an English one by a curve or a waving line. In the French word "poule" the *ou* remains *oo* until it joins *l*, while in the English word "pool" *oo* changes into *uh*, curving before it strikes the final consonant. Briefly the English vowel is almost always introduced or followed by some other sound and curves continually up or down; to use a homely term, it "wiggles", and that is something which a French vowel must never be allowed to do. This characteristic of English speech becomes a positive defect in the uneducated who unconsciously exaggerate it.



Up to this time we have mentioned only the normal vowels. These exercises should now be repeated with the addition of the above vowels, called abnormal because they are formed by the union of two others. Note that in the diagram the abnormal vowel lies in each case between the two vowels of which it is a product.

Take up the study of the abnormal sounds by learning *o* (page 18), and introducing it into the diagram (page 4). Now in your daily practice of this V, stop after *ɔ*, round the lips as for *o* and try to repeat *ɔ*. Then do the same thing with *ɛ*. Continue this practice until you have learned to understand the diagram on page 5.

NASALS, or more correctly speaking NASALIZED VOWELS.

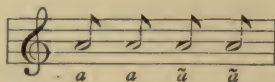
The French nasals are *an*, *in*, *on*, *un* (see page 20), and they differ from the pure vowel sounds, on which they are based, only because, by the lowering of the soft palate, they are made to issue partly from

* We give a place to *e* in this second V, not because it needs any particular practice, it being an involuntary sound which occurs accidentally in many languages, but because it will be interesting to you to see where it falls naturally in this diagram.

the nose, instead of wholly from the mouth; so that the best guides to the formation of the nasals are the French vowels, *o*, *â*, *a* and *eu*¹.

HOW TO STUDY THE NASALS.

Practice *â*, *a*, *o*, *eu*¹, very softly, continually trying to produce the sound farther and farther forward in the mouth until you can really feel it floating between the lips. In doing this keep the mouth wide open and the lips continually relaxed; then, when the vowel sound has become as perfect and as light as possible, sing it, and while singing, lower the soft palate; this partly obstructs the passage of the air through the mouth, and forces it up and forward through the nasal passages and out of the nostrils. A singing tone is best for this practice. Sing *â* for two beats, lower the soft palate,* continuing two beats more; at the beginning of the third beat, the sound becomes nasal. As *an* is the easiest of the nasals, confine your attention to it at the outset.



If in practicing *an*, you at first get English *ng* as in *thing*, it is because you are allowing the base of the tongue to move upward to meet the soft palate. While singing *an*, *in*, *on*, and *un*, press the tongue gently downward with a pencil. If the pencil moves, your tongue is moving. When you have learned to keep the tongue motionless, the *ng* sound will disappear.

When properly produced, the nasals are among the most musical sounds in the French language, and entirely different from the false nasal twang of Yankee and Western American English.

* By practicing the table for consonants, according to the rule for *r* (that is by keeping the tip of the tongue constantly down so as to make the uvula act, see page 25), you will become conscious of the movement of the soft palate, and thus better able to lower it at will.

EXPERIMENT I.

To prove that the lowering of the soft palate changes an ordinary vowel to a nasal.

While singing *â*, give a succession of light, quick blows to Adam's apple with your fingers, leaving an interval of two or three beats between them. Each little blow causes an involuntary swallowing, bringing down the soft palate and thus momentarily changing the sound to a nasal.

EXPERIMENTS II AND III.

To prove that in changing an ordinary vowel to a nasal, part of the air is forced through the nostrils.

While singing *â*, press the side of the nose, just below the bridge, with the tip of the index finger; change the tone to a nasal, and you will feel the vibration in the nasal passage.

While singing *â*, hold a cold mirror quite close to the face; the glass will be blurred by the breath from the mouth. While singing *an* hold the mirror close to the face; the glass will become heavily blurred in two spots corresponding to the two nostrils.

You now have acquired the nasals, and can introduce them into the diagram for vowel practice.

CHART OF FRENCH VOWEL SOUNDS, INCLUDING ABNORMAL AND NASALIZED VOWELS:

Back. Normal.	Abnormal.	Front. Normal.
ou	u	i
ô	eu ²	é
õ		
o	eu ¹	è
â	eu ¹	ã
ã	a	

MOVEMENTS OF THE TONGUE.

With a bright light shining directly into your mirror, watch the tongue recede from *â* to *ou*; then on opening the mouth, its almost flat position; then watch it bulge and push forward steadily from *â* to *i*. In passing round the *V* from *ou* to *i*, at both *é* and *i* you will see and feel the tongue pressing against the front and side teeth, and, if this pressure be exaggerated, protruding between them. By this energetic pushing forward of the tongue you will be perfecting your vowels and placing them in the front of the mouth where French is spoken. In order better to understand these movements of the tongue, keep your finger on its tip while you are pronouncing *ou, ô, o, â, a, è, é, i*.

When you have once really acquired these sounds, guard against the bad habit of keeping your lips stiffened, for, with stiffened lips, it is impossible to produce musical sounds. In your subsequent study of the abnormal vowels in words, be careful to moisten and relax your lips.

CONSONANT SOUNDS.

Consonants* and consonant combinations are approximately the same in the two languages. Consonants are pronounced farther forward in French than in English and are therefore much better articulated. Initial consonants and those carried from one word to another are uttered without stress,† while the finals, on the contrary, are intensely articulated and prolonged into what may well be called a veritable explosion. The muscles of the French tongue and lips do very fine and delicate work. They are better educated than those of the English tongue and lips, which are *lazy* and which from the very first lesson must be made to go to work seriously, and never be allowed to relax in their strenuous effort, until they have become strong and supple enough to pronounce “à la française”, not in the labored way which is almost always the natural and unavoidable result of first efforts, but with the perfect ease and grace which can be obtained only by long practice.

* See page 23.

† But, if a consonant is carried over to a syllable which has either the tonic or the displaced accent, it becomes a part of that syllable and has its due share of the stress.

SYLLABIC PRACTICE.

ba	bâ	be	bé	bè	bê	bi	bô	bou†	boi	bo	bu	beu ¹	beu ²	bia	biâ
ca	câ	ce	cé	cè	cê	ci	cô	cou	coi	co	cu	ceu	ceu	cia	ciâ
da	dâ	de	dé*	dè	dê	di	dô	dou	doi	do	du	deu	deu	dia	diâ
fa	fâ	fe	fé	fè	fê	fi	fô	fou	foi	fo	fu	feu	feu	fia	fiâ
ga	gâ	ge	gé	gè	gê	gi	gô	gou	goi	go	gu	geu	geu	gia	giâ
gna	gnâ	gne	gné	gnè	gnê	gni	gnô	gnou		gno	gnu	gneu	gneu		
ha	hâ	he	hé	hè	hê	hi	hô	hou	hoi	ho	hu	heu	heu	hia	hiâ
ja	jâ	je	je	jè	jê	ji	jô	jou	joi	jo	ju	jeu	jeu	jia	jiâ
ka	kâ	ke	ké	kè	kê	ki	kô	kou	koi	ko	ku	keu	keu	kia	kiâ
la	lâ	le	lé	lè	lê	li	lô	lou	loi	lo	lu	leu	leu	lia	liâ
ma	mâ	me	mé	mè	mê	mi	mô	mou	moi	mo	mu	meu	meu	mia	miâ
na	nâ	ne	né	nè	nê	ni	nô	nou	noi	no	nu	neu	neu	nia	niâ
pa	pâ	pe	pé	pè	pê	pi	pô	pou	poi	po	pu	peu	peu	pia	piâ
ra	râ	re	ré	rè	rê	ri	rô	rou	roi	ro	ru	reu	reu	ria	riâ
sa	sâ	se	sé	sè	sê	si	sô	sou	soi	so	su	seu	seu	sia	siâ
ta	tâ	te	té	tè	tê	ti	tô	tou	toi	to	tu	teu	teu	tia	tiâ
va	vâ	ve	vé	vè	vê	vi	vô	vou	voi	vo	vu	veu	veu	via	viâ
ÿa	yâ	ye	yé	yè	yê	yi	yô	you		yo	yu	yeu	yeu		
za	zâ	ze	zé	zè	zê	zi	zô	zou	zoi	zo	zu	zeu	zeu	zia	ziâ

Practice these exercises daily according to rules given on pages 3-8. Every other time, pronounce *ab ac ad*, and so on, instead of *ba ca da*, remembering to bring out the final consonant with explosive force, using the lips and tongue much more than in English. For practice of these columns with the tongue down, see page 25.

* To prove to yourself that the first intrinsic difference between French and English is that French is spoken in the front of the mouth, pronounce the English word "day" naturally, and notice its position in the back of the mouth. Now bring it forward to the lips and you will have the French word *dé*. Having pronounced the English word "see" as you usually do, bring it forward to the lips and you will have the French word *si*. Try this with "low" (*l'eau*) and with the pronoun "we" (*oui*), and you will be convinced that voice placing makes the first great difference between English and French, and that practice in changing the English vowels to French ones must be your first step in acquiring the purity and delicacy requisite to true French sounds.

† See footnote, page 21.

‡ This line is very valuable for practice, as *y* gives the sound of liquid *l*. See page 28.

bié	biè	bio	biò	bieu ²	bua	bué	buè	bui	boua	boué	bouè	boui
cié	ciè	cio	ciò	cieu	cua	cué	cuè	cui	coua	coué	couè	coui
dié	diè	dio	diò	dieu	dua	dué	duè	dui	doua	doué	douè	doui
fié	fiè	fio	fiò	fieu	fua	fué	fuè	fui	foua	foué	fouè	foui
gié	giè	gio	giò	gieu	gua	gué	guè	gui	goua	goué	gouè	goui
hié	hiè	hio	hiò	hieu	hua	hué	huè	hui	houa	houé	houè	houi
jié	jiè	jio	jiò	jieu	jua	jué	juè	jui	joua	joué	jouè	joui
kié	kiè	kio	kiò	kieu	kua	kué	kuè	kui	koua	koué	kouè	koui
lié	liè	lio	liò	lieu	lua	lué	luè	lui	loua	loué	louè	loui
mié	miè	mio	miò	mieu	mua	mué	muè	mui	moua	moué	mouè	moui
nié	niè	nio	niò	nieu	nua	nué	nuè	nui	noua	noué	nouè	noui
pié	piè	pio	piò	pieu	pua	pué	puè	puì	poua	poué	pouè	poui
rié	riè	rio	riò	rieu	rua	rué	ruè	rui	roua	roué	rouè	roui
sié	siè	sio	siò	sieu	sua	sué	suè	sui	soua	soué	souè	soui
tié	tiè	tio	tiò	tieu	tua	tué	tuè	tui	toua	toué	touè	toui
vié	viè	vio	viò	vieu	vua	vué	vuè	vui	voua	voué	vouè	voui
zié	ziè	zio	ziò	zieu	zua	zué	zuè	zui	zoua	zoué	zouè	zoui

bla	blâ	ble	blé	blè	blè	bli	blo	blò	blu	blou	bleu ²	bloi
bra	brâ	bre	bré	brè	brè	bri	bro	brò	bru	brou	breu	broi
cha	châ	che	ché	chè	chê	chi	cho	chò	chu	chou	cheu	choi
cla	clâ	cle	clé	clè	clê	cli	clo	clò	clu	clou	cleu	cloi
cra	crâ	cre	cré	crè	crê	cri	cro	crò	cru	crou	creu	croi
dra	drâ	dre	dré	drè	drê	dri	dro	drò	dru	drou	dreu	droi
fla	flâ	fle	flé	flè	flê	fli	flo	flò	flu	flou	fleu	floi
fra	frâ	fre	fré	frè	frê	fri	fro	frò	fru	frou	freu	froi
gla	glâ	gle	glé	glè	glê	gli	glo	glò	glu	glou	gleu	gloi
gna	gnâ	gne	gné	gnè	gnê	gni	gno	gnò	gnu	gnou	gneu	gnoi
gra	grâ	gre	gré	grè	grê	gri	gro	grò	gru	grou	greu	groi
pla	plâ	ple	plé	plè	plê	pli	plo	plò	plu	plou	pleu	ploi
pra	prâ	pre	pré	prè	prê	pri	pro	prò	pru	prou	preu	proi
sca	scâ	sce	scé	scè	scê	sci	sco	scò	scu	scou	sceu	scoi
sla	slâ	sle	slé	slè	slê	sli	slo	slò	slu	slou	sleu	sloi
spa	spâ	spe	spé	spè	spê	spi	spo	spò	spu	spou	speu	spoi
sta	stâ	ste	sté	stè	stê	sti	sto	stò	stu	stou	steu	stoi
tra	trâ	tre	tré	trè	trê	tri	tro	trò	tru	trou	treu	troi
vra	vrâ	vre	vré	vrè	vrê	vri	vro	vrò	vru	vrou	vreu	vroi

Practice these exercises daily according to rules given on pages 3—8, using the lips *much* more than in English.

ban	bin	bon	bun	bian	bien*	bion	boin	bouan	buan
can	cin	con	cun	cian	cien	cion	coin	couan	cuan
dan	din	don	dun	dian	dien	dion	doin	douan	duan
fan	fin	fon	fun	fian	fien	fion	foin	fouan	fuan
gan	gin	gon	gun	gian	gien	gion	goin	gouan	guan
han	hin	hon	hun	hian	hien	hion	hein	houan	huan
jan	jin	jon	jun	jian	jien	jion	join	jouan	juan
kan	kin	kon	kun	kian	kien	kion	koin	kouan	kuan
lan	lin	lon	lun	lian	lien	lion	loin	louan	luan
man	min	mon	mun	mian	mien	mion	moin	mouan	muan
nan	nin	non	nun	nian	nien	nion	noin	nouan	nuan
pan	pin	pon	pun	pian	pien	pion	poin	pouan	puan
ran	rin	ron	run	rian	rien	rion	roin	rouan	ruan
san	sin	son	sun	sian	sien	sion	soin	souan	suau
tan	tin	ton	tun	tian	tien	tion	toin	touan	tuan
van	vin	von	vun	vian	vien	vion	voin	vouan	vuan
yan	yin	yon	yun	ian	yen	ion	oin	ouan	uan
zan	zin	zon	zun	zian	zien	zion	zoin	zouan	zuan

Monosyllables.

beau va coin pas mil sien dé la sou ban sol ça chou
 mer le quoi nu mon bas fin me feu sel né se bu
 ton loin ta rien su ne jour lui fou gueux bon nom
 ma un crin près seul ni blé glu eau nain peu veuf
 vu chien du bol mal moi tas seau loi ri jet mi lé
 chef nœud tien veau non mas sec bai roc cas ha je
 lit mai mot toi mien tu clou de lien bain bleu du
 dos thé fleurs deuil lac foi lu mis peur jus ail que

Final Syllables.

cun fan ze dou nou tun reau pon lez bot in gna lon
 aim ceau vec reux do gneau min tion gue fum lai ros
 teur chin plon rai tron çai ter fon blic nin sse no
 pez leil ille rrain lo vail tez ci iller xe nir tif gle
 lac plet quis bit ru ment let tail rant sai xer dant

Practice these exercises daily, according to rules given on pages 3—8, using the lips *much* more than in English.

Do not consider syllables on this page as verb endings — these are found on page 12.

**Ien* is almost always final, and is in this case equal to *i + in*. See page 20.

Syllables (Not Final).

fo ba dè vè mer ké lou lam pa zou bâ vô fu vio
 no deu dô nim veu fa fai ti nô châ sui fleu stra
 ca bé plu po neu trè fê bi jo fâ tè nè pè leu ré sen
 bè man bo min au fé di gâ scou san vou brâ sè
 vé tam chu vi fan sé frô mè da li nei ra fe dan
 pe lo hu leu ren syn tau reu tâ che heu jau pré

Verbs and Participle Endings.

ce	nir	ris	tas	sses	part	chus	sons	stré	geant	nions	rromps
tu	pré	but	sez	nner	bous	gnit	vres	nont	llant	teint	strais
dé	çai	mme	mas	yant	mens	blié	mets	clut	teins	ssait	ssions
mi	vez	chu	res	çons	sors	bent	faut	yons	scrit	mouds	quiers
ru	tai	lus	per	giez	pant	ront	vris	dois	ssois	scris	voient
ne	lla	dis	vra	llât	tons	blez	crus	voie	mment	voies	raient
yé	sse	ras*	tta	cras	faut	rent	vert	geai	cours	rions	ttrons
ci	rez	ter	cle	rait	bout	doit	çois	vins	ssons	nnait	drians
te	mis	dré	bes	crit	pars	vint	liez	phré	drais	ssiez	illant
nu	llé	nut	pre	quis	tent	tins	ille	crut	illes	drait	ssieds
be	ait	met	tré	riez	vêts	clus	çoit	boit	ssant	illas	daient
çu	bus	lir	rai	illi	tint	meus	pait	sons	ffrir	ssoit	quiert
ra	mit	çus	dre	rons	bois	nant	meut	rait	ssied	blies	rrompt
ça	vre	nît	pez	mmes	ghis	çais	chut	blai	nnait	chons	laient
eu	clu	llu	ner	rais	fait	soit	tons	lont	illit	flant	ffrent

In dividing a word into syllables (phonetically), join consonants to the following vowels. Even double consonants and consonants that combine are taken over to the following vowel. (See page 13).

In spoken French *ent*, as the plural ending of verbs, is always silent. These exercises are practiced as for singing, the otherwise mute *e* being pronounced and only the *nt* remaining silent.

* S final and the circumflex (^) do not count phonetically in verb endings.

SYLLABLES.

I. A French word has as many syllables as it has vowel sounds :

u-ne, mer, mè-re, ve-nir, ta-bleau, pro-to-co-lai-re.

II. In dividing a word into syllables, join the consonants to the following vowels, for it is a basic principle of French pronunciation that syllables should end with vowel sounds.* Even double consonants and consonants that combine are taken over to the following vowel : †

mé-de-cin, ai-ma-ble, fi-xer, a-tta-cher, au-tre.

Syllabication is very important; it radically affects the pronunciation of words; take the word *i-nu-ti-le*, for instance: a pupil not understanding this basic principle is always tempted to pronounce this word *in-u-ti-le*. Syllabication often changes the pronunciation of a syllable in a word to which other syllables may be added in forming a derivative:

jardin	jar-din
jardinier	jar-di-nier
jardinière	jar-di-niè-re

When two French words are put together to make a new one, the sound of one of them may be entirely changed; for instance, *vin* and *aigre* joined make *vi-nai-gre*.

III. Syllables ending in *e* are said to be mute, as in most cases only the consonants in them are pronounced.

* In spite of this basic principle, we are sometimes obliged to leave a consonant at the end of a syllable, when it will not combine with the consonant that follows it: *ob-te-nir*. *r* will not combine with any consonant following it, so in syllabication we often have to leave it at the end of a syllable: *por-te*.

† It is to be understood that this syllabication is for pronunciation only, and must not interfere with the proper syllabication of words in written French.

(In singing, *e* is almost always pronounced. In speaking, it is almost always silent.)

peluche, *temples,** *Mademoiselle.*

(The subject of mute syllables is exhaustively treated on page 29).

IV. The last syllable of every French word receives the tonic accent, except when the word ends in *e*, in which case the syllable before the last receives the tonic accent:

jar-din, *li-vre,* *do-mai-ne.*

(Do not accent, but gently caress the last sounded syllable. See page 38).

Any vowel sound preceding a mute syllable at the end of a word is longer than it would be if final.

<i>tout</i>	<i>tousse</i>	<i>délai</i>	<i>laine</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>lame</i>
<i>bout</i>	<i>boucle</i>	<i>zéro</i>	<i>rôle</i>	<i>lu</i>	<i>lutte</i>
<i>bas</i>	<i>basse</i>	<i>lundi</i>	<i>dîtes</i>	<i>lit</i>	<i>livre</i>

EASY CONVERSATIONAL DRILL

For this, see *Grammaire de la Conversation* (D. C. Heath & Co.). Lessons 1-20, easy vowel sounds; Lessons 21-29, abnormal vowel sounds; Lessons 30-40, nasals.

All lessons are arranged for practice in linkings and in liaisons, as well as for the application of the rules of rhythm, which include the principles of the mute *e*, of the tonic accent, and of stress groups.

* *es* = *e*, when *s* is a mark of the plural or the personal ending of verbs: *pommes* = *pomme*, *parles* = *parle*.

HOW TO LEARN TO PRONOUNCE ANY FRENCH WORD PERFECTLY.

In order to learn how to pronounce a French word perfectly, begin by taking out its vowels and practicing each one separately, according to the rules contained in this book, until you can utter them all perfectly. Then add consonants to the following vowels, articulating distinctly each one of the syllables thus formed. Finally make the mute syllables mute and place the tonic accent on the last sounded syllable. The result will be a perfectly pronounced French word. *Indeed no French word, new to the learner, ought ever to be pronounced without this preparatory analysis and drill.*

orange	crayon	travailleuse
o-an- e	ai-on	a-a -eu-e
o-ran-ge	crai-yon	tra-va-illeu-se
o-ran-ge ^e	crai-yon	tra-va -illeu-s ^e
inutile	compagnon	évidemment
i-u-i-e	om-a -on	é-i-a -en
i-nu-ti-le	com-pa-gnon	é-vi-da-mment
i-nu-ti-l ^e	com-pa-gnon	é-vi-da-mment

VOWELS (see page 14).

a.

a e , when it pre- cedes <i>mm</i>	}	=Ann	{	<i>la, ma, sa, baba, tabac, banane, Atala,</i> <i>attache, attaque.</i> <i>femme, impudemment.*</i>
--	---	------	---	---

â a(s)† a(tion) a(ille) in nouns	}	}final	}	=ah	{	<i>âme, hâte, pâte, tâche, gâte, tâte.</i> <i>basé, phrase, raser.</i> <i>pas, tas, cas, bas, las, ras.</i> <i>nation, station, ration, invitation.</i> <i>paille, taille, bataille, Versailles.</i>
--	---	--------	---	-----	---	--

REM. 1. **a** before *s* with another consonant = **Ann**: *aspic, astre*.

REM. 2. **a** (*ss*) sometimes = **ah**: *classe, casser, tasse, etc.*

e.

e, † at the end of a syllable	}	=	{	up <i>le, me, ce, de, te, che, cre.</i> urn (when stress is needed) <i>le, me, ce, de, te, che, cre.</i>
--	---	---	---	---

é ez (final) er (almost always when final) ai (final, in verbs only)	}	=Abe	{	<i>lé, clé, pré, été, café, pâté, tâté, natté.</i> <i>chez, avez, levez, cherchez, trouvez.</i> <i>fâcher, faner, étaler, braver, amener.</i> <i>j'ai, ferai, battrai, parlerai, serai.</i>
---	---	------	---	--

* And all similar adverbs.

† *s* and (^) do not affect the sound of *a* in verb endings: *tu as, nous allâmes*.

‡ *e* is however in most cases inaudible. (See page 29.)

è	} =ebb	{	chère, grève, scène, stère, achète, lève. lait, fait, caisse, Claire, délai, parlais. peine, neige, seize, Seine, reine, haleine. jet, filet, cadet, loquet, sujet, Monet.
ai			
ei			
et (final)			
e, even when it is the last letter of a syllable, if followed by a doubled consonant, or by two consonants of which <i>s</i> is the first.			
e, † when it is not the last letter of a syllable.			verre, espèce, testament, reste, terre. renne, essence, erratique, ellipse, elle, dette, nécessaire.
			avec, tel, spectre, sel, sec, bec, fer, chef, nectar, lecture, es, les, des, mes, est.

è = ebb, prolonged : même, tête, fête, rêve, bête, trêve.

i.

i } î }	} =eel :	{	ici, habit, fini, samedi, ennemi, Racine, île. syllabe, rythme.
y (vowel)			

ou.

ou = ooze : fou, tout, bout, chou, genou, coucou, coulé, ourlé.

o.

ô	} =ode	{	diplôme, côté, tôle, dôme, ôter, chômer, trône. autre, saute, badaud, rivaux, finaud, chaud. veau, gâteau, peau, seau, beau, rideau. chose, rose, prose, dose, posé, générosité, positif. notion, potion, lotion, émotion. clos, propos, enclos, gros, dos, repos, dispos. mot, pot, sabot, Got, gigot, jabot, tricot, paquebot. véto, zéro, écho, numéro, bravo, Figaro, siroco.
au			
eau			
o(s)*			
o(tion)			
os			
ot } final o }			

* Not *ss*, or any combination of *s* with another consonant : brosse, poste, hospitalité.

† See page 14, footnote.

VOWEL SOUNDS WHICH HAVE NO ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS.

There are four of these sounds: *o*, *u*, *eu*,¹ *eu*² (see page 14).

RULE FOR THE FORMATION OF *o*.*

With tongue position indicated in the triangle (p. 4), and the lips rounded and stiffened a little less than for *ô*, try to pronounce the English word *awe*, staccato and as far forward as possible. The result will be French *o*.

Pronounce the words given below with rounded and stiffened lips. The corresponding French words will result:

caught	dawn	fraught	Maud	naught	sought
cotte	donne	frotte	mode	note	sotte

to note, mode, joli, loterie, sotte, bonne, tonne, nonne, botte.

RULE FOR THE FORMATION OF *u*.

Round the lips as for *ou* (*ooze*), and while holding them stiff and motionless, try to say *i* (*eel*). The result will be *u*. (See page 5.)

loue ‡	fou	noue	roue	sou	voue
lit	fié	nid	riz	si	vie
lu	fut	nu	rue	su	vu

u } *lu*, *bu*, *nu*, *su*, *tu*, *pu*, *rue*, *cru*, *bru*, *dru*, *étude*, *élu*, *lune*.

û } *prude*, *brune*, *éluclidé*, *punition*, *tulle*, *lugubre*, *brûler*, *flûte*.

As the lips have exactly the same position for *ou* and *u*, the change of sound in passing from one to the other is made by the tongue's moving from its most backward position to its most forward position.

* No matter how advanced you are, practice this exercise, and all the others requiring stiffened lips, for a few minutes daily and until your teacher is entirely satisfied with the result. Never practice without a mirror in hand; without this means of *seeing* the lips, there would be some slight motion, of which you might be entirely unconscious, which would prevent your producing the sound desired.

† **au**(r) { at the beginning } sometimes = o { *j'aurai*, *Laure*.
au(t), { of a word } { *auto*, *autorité*.

‡ With the lips rounded as for the vowel sound of the first word, *try* to say the

To gain ease in doing this, round and stiffen the lips and move the tongue backward and forward.

1. Do this silently. — 2. Repeat while whispering *ou u*. — 3. Repeat No. 2 aloud. — 4. Read the following words, slowly at first, then more and more rapidly.

cousu	du tout	moulu	du goût	tu doutes	tu boudes
coutume	du bout	pourvu	voulu	tout fume	tu noues.

RULE FOR THE FORMATION OF *eu*.¹

Round the lips as for French *o*, and while holding them stiff and motionless *try* to say *è* (ebb). The result will be *eu*, before a pronounced consonant.† (See page 5.)

bord p. 18 †	cor	hors	Laure	porc	sort
Berr	Caire	hère	l'air	paire	serre
beurre	cœur	heure	leur	peur	sœur

*eu ¹	} <i>veuf, leur, fleur, neuve, jeune.</i>
oeu	
oe	

RULE FOR THE FORMATION OF *eu*.²

Round the lips as for *ô* (ode), and while holding them stiff and motionless *try* to say *é* (Abe). The result will be *eu*, final, or before a silent consonant. (See page 5.)

eau †	nos	dos	faux	Got
et	nez	dé	fée	gai (é)
eux	nœud	deux	feu	gueux

†eu ²	} <i>jeu, feu, peux, pleut, hideux, creux, émeut, frileux, gueux.</i>
œu	

second word in each of the triplets given above. The result will be the third word. (See page 5.) This is because the vowel sound of the first requires the same position of the lips as that of the third, and that of the second the same position of the tongue as that of the third. Given the first two, with lips as for the first and tongue as for the second, you can always get the third.

* *ue* in *cueillir, orgueil, cercueil*, etc., and their compounds = *eu*.

† In *eu had*, and in fact whenever this combination occurs in the conjugation of the verb *avoir*, the *e* is silent, the sound being simply *u*.

‡ Before *se* (final) however, *eu* = *eu*²: *heureuse, joyeuse*. In adverbs derived from the above adjectives and others like them, *eu* = *eu*²: *heureusement, joyusement*.

NASALS (see page 14).

A vowel, followed by a single *n* or *m* in the same syllable, becomes a nasal (no English equivalents, see page 5).

REMARK: A vowel followed by *mm*, *nn*, or *mn* does not; *somme*, *année*, *gymnase*.

I.

~ ā	{	an :	<i>dans</i> , <i>pan</i> , <i>an</i> , <i>rang</i> , <i>ancre</i> , <i>plante</i> , <i>manche</i> , <i>sanglant</i> .
		am :	<i>lampe</i> , <i>ambre</i> , <i>chambre</i> , <i>ample</i> , <i>crampe</i> , <i>rampe</i> , <i>flamber</i> .
		en :	<i>mens</i> , <i>jument</i> , <i>lent</i> , <i>tente</i> , <i>tendre</i> , <i>vraiment</i> , <i>mentionné</i> .
		em :	<i>exemple</i> , <i>embaumer</i> , <i>embarquer</i> , <i>embûche</i> , <i>embellir</i> .

II.

~ ā	{	in :	<i>lin</i> , <i>vin</i> , <i>fin</i> , <i>mutin</i> , <i>butin</i> , <i>bulletin</i> , <i>tocsin</i> , <i>Berlin</i> , <i>pin</i> .
		im :	<i>simple</i> , <i>timbre</i> , <i>imbiber</i> , <i>impoli</i> , <i>limpide</i> , <i>nimbe</i> , <i>impôt</i> .
		ain :	<i>gain</i> , <i>pain</i> , <i>bain</i> , <i>étain</i> , <i>saint</i> , <i>parrain</i> , <i>grain</i> , <i>main</i> , <i>nain</i> .
		aim :	<i>faim</i> , <i>daim</i> , <i>essaim</i> .
		ein :	<i>plein</i> , <i>teint</i> , <i>ceinture</i> , <i>sein</i> , <i>peindre</i> .
		eim :	<i>Reims</i> , (<i>rāss</i>).
	{	yn :	<i>syntaxe</i> , <i>syndicat</i> , <i>syncope</i> , <i>synthèse</i> .
		ym :	<i>symptôme</i> , <i>symbole</i> , <i>tympan</i> , <i>thym</i> .

III.

~ ō	{	on :	<i>son</i> , <i>ton</i> , <i>don</i> , <i>bon</i> , <i>allons</i> , <i>oncle</i> , <i>rond</i> , <i>mouton</i> , <i>aiglon</i> .
		om :	<i>nom</i> , <i>pompe</i> , <i>bombe</i> , <i>nombre</i> , <i>comble</i> , <i>ombrelle</i> , <i>pénombre</i> .

IV.

~ ēu ¹	{	un :	<i>Melun</i> , <i>lundi</i> , <i>un</i> , <i>brun</i> , <i>chacun</i> , <i>alun</i> .
		um :	<i>humble</i> , <i>parfum</i> .

Impure Nasals.

ien yen	= i + in*	{	<i>mien</i> , <i>bien</i> , <i>tien</i> , <i>sien</i> , <i>rien</i> , <i>chrétien</i> ,
			<i>comédien</i> , <i>mécanicien</i> , <i>chien</i> , <i>musicien</i> ,
			<i>citoyen</i> , <i>moyen</i> .
oin = ou + in		—	<i>moins</i> , <i>poing</i> , <i>loin</i> , <i>soin</i> , <i>joindre</i> , <i>foin</i> , <i>point</i> .

* In the conjugation of *venir*, *tenir*, and their compounds, this combination even when not final = *iin*: *viendrai*, *tient*.

FOR PRACTICE IN DIFFICULT SOUNDS.

Cet été j'ai été désolé. Je n'ai pas pu étudier; je n'ai fait que végéter en villégiature au bord de la Méditerranée. J'ai passé mes journées et mes soirées à contempler les beautés de la nature.

Encore, ma bonne Laure, que j'adore, tu as tort si tu sors avec Flore comme ce coq sur le roc.

Ma bru, as-tu vu Lustucru dans la rue?

Pour une prune brune tu as voulu faire la culbute au bout de la route. Tu ne nous as pas plu. Il a plu, et ça ne t'a pas plu, ni à nous, non plus, du tout, du tout!

Puisque je puis puiser au puits épuisé, sans nuire à celui qui me suit, je l'y conduirai — à ce puits.

Quel malheur, sœur, que leurs fleurs meurent!

Malheureux Hébreu qui ne peut pas avoir le peu de feu qu'il veut!
Il vaut mieux dire adieu à ce curieux vieux monsieur.

VOWELS MELTING TOGETHER.

oi* = waft — *moi, loi, foi, fois, bois*, (drink).

I and *u*, and the vowel combination *ou*, † keep their true sound before a vowel, but melt into it, linking the two sounds into one emission of the voice. It is interesting to note that the second of these sounds is often two or three times as long as the first. Much practice is required to unite these two sounds into one emission of the voice. Give two or three times as much length to the second as to the first, counting 1 2 3 4 or 1 2 3 as in music, being careful to allow no hiatus between beats. Practice very slowly at first, then faster and faster, until the two sounds melt into one. ‡

* oi, sometimes, = wan: *mois, trois, cloître, bois* (wood). For the difference between the vowel sounds of *waft* and *wan* see Webster.

† In doing preparatory exercises for words containing *ou*, round and stiffen the lips for this sound, in order to bring it out distinctly.

‡ Difficulties sometimes arise in regard to the syllabication of these words and

The following diagrams will be helpful in this practice:

1 2 3 4
u i i i — puis;

1 2 3 4
i eu eu eu — mieux;

1 2 3
i on on — chantions;

1 2 3
i an an — riant.

In *il*, *ul*, and *oué*, count 1 2, 1 2, 1 2. (*é*)* is a very short sound. The natural tendency of English speaking people is always to lengthen it too much, and, in order to correct this tendency, it is best, in cases like the following, to make the two beats equal.

édifié = fi é;

situé = tu é;

1 2

1 2

loué = lou é;

cahier = hi er;

papier = pi er.

1 2

1 2

1 2

<i>liasse</i>	<i>assiette</i>	<i>société</i>	<i>violet</i>	<i>mieux</i>	<i>oui</i>
<i>fiacre</i>	<i>pièce</i>	<i>acier</i>	<i>dictionnaire</i>	<i>lieux</i>	<i>Louis</i>
<i>mariage</i>	<i>douzième</i>	<i>pied</i>	<i>fiolle</i>	<i>cieux</i>	<i>jour</i>
<i>nuage</i>	<i>tuer</i>	<i>duel</i>	<i>puis</i> †	<i>pouah</i>	<i>fouet</i>
<i>persuade</i>	<i>suer</i>	<i>cruel</i>	<i>lui</i>	<i>louage</i>	<i>souhait</i>
<i>remua</i>	<i>situé</i>	<i>suède</i>	<i>cuisine</i>	<i>ouate</i>	<i>ouest</i>
<i>riant</i>	<i>bien</i>	<i>passion</i>	<i>Rouen</i>	<i>buanderie</i>	
<i>étudiant</i>	<i>rien</i>	<i>occasion</i>	<i>Chouan</i>	<i>chat-huant</i>	
<i>viande</i>	<i>chien</i>	<i>ration</i>	<i>nouant</i>	<i>tuant</i>	

others like them, especially in the scansion of poetry, as certain words are monosyllabic or dissyllabic according to the exigencies of the metre. This is so fine a distinction, however, that the beginner need try only to perfect the linking and leave the syllabication of these sounds until he is more advanced, when he might do well to consult Littré on the subject.

* See footnote — page 9.

† With lips nearly closed and extended as far as possible, practice the following exercise: *iiiu iiiu iii*, at first silently, then whispering, then aloud, then singing. Each rounding of the lips will of course bring *u*. After much practice you will be able to do this rapidly and be singing *ui* on the very edge of the lips. Now reverse the order of the vowels, and practice the following exercise in the four different ways indicated above: *iiiii iiiiii iiiii*: *luit, cuit, nuit, buis, fuis, suis, tuile, huile*.

CONSONANTS.

The following consonants are approximately the same as in English: *b, f, k, m, n, p, s, v, z*. The final consonant of a word is ordinarily silent; *ent*, as a verb ending, and *s*, as a mark of the plural, are always silent, but *c, f, l, r*, and the combination *ct*, are often sounded, as in *roc, ciel, vif, fer, exact*.

c, before *e* or *i*, and *ç* = seen, *celle, ceci, leçon*. (See page 27.)

c, in all other cases = kite, *clé, cor, cale*.

*g,** before *e* or *i* = pleasure, *juge, giboulée*.

g, in all other cases = good, *garde, gorge*.

h, † = hat, but is silent in Parisian French, — *être* and *hêtre* being pronounced exactly alike. The only difference between aspirate and inaspirate *h* is that elision of the preceding vowel takes place before inaspirate *h*, as in *l'héroïne*, and not before aspirate *h*, as in *le héros, la honte*. Consult a dictionary to find out whether or not *h* is aspirate.

j = measure, *juge*.

q = kin, *cing, cog*. (See page 27.)

s between vowels has the sound of *z*, *maison, rose, brise, phrase*.

w is not recognized as a letter of the French alphabet. In words of foreign origin it = $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ooze, tramway.} \\ \text{vat, wagon.} \end{array} \right.$

x = *ks* or *gz*; *x* usually occurs in words alike in English and French and the English pronunciation of this letter can usually be followed: *axe, bore, vexer, taxe, excepter, excès, expirer, exact, exalter*.

y, consonant, = yearn: *Yersin*; *y*, vowel, = eel, syllable; *y*, between vowels = *i* + yearn. (See page 28.)

Pronounce *g*, and *k*, in the back of the mouth, but not so far back as in English.

d, t, l, and *n*, are consonants whose formation differs greatly from the English. In saying English *d, t, l*, and *n*, the tip of the tongue is rolled upward and brought into contact with the upper teeth and gums.

* In derivations, to preserve the sound of *g* in the original word, *e* is placed between it and the following vowel: *manger, mangeons*.

† *h* is pronounced in interjections like *Ah Ha!* and *Oh Ho!*

To pronounce French *d*, *t*, *l*, and *n*, with the tip of the tongue against the lower teeth press its upper surface against the upper teeth and gums.

dada, *dame*, *dé*, *décider*, *dedans*, *d'indon*, *tirade*, *lourde*.

tapis, *taille*, *tante*, *tête*, *tenu*, *titre*, *faite*, *toute*.

la, *lac*, *lâche*, *légal*, *lequel*, *lilas*, *sel*, *poule*, *toile*, *drôle*.

non, *ni*, *neuf*, *Nil*, *Néron*, *reine*, *Seine*, *donne*.

There are two French *r*'s.

THE LINGUAL *r*.

The lingual *r* is the one produced by a vibration between the tip of the tongue and the front upper gums. This is the *r* of the greatest number of French people,—it is the *r* of the provinces and, in its exaggerated form, is one of the principal characteristics of the very strong accent of the south of France. It is easy to produce this vibration, but extremely difficult to do it delicately enough to satisfy the French ear. This sound, so disagreeable in the accent of the south of France, becomes still more objectionable in the imitation of it by foreigners. Anyone able to appreciate the delicate music of French as spoken by the educated classes can imagine what the effect of an Irish or Scotch burr would be, introduced into the place of the ever recurring French *r*.

THE UVULAR *r*.

The uvular *r* is the *r* of Paris and other large cities, consequently the one that most learners would like to imitate if it were possible. The uvular *r* is formed, as its name indicates, by a vibration of the uvula not very easily imitated. In very rare cases an agreeable uvular *r* has been acquired. The rarity of these cases should not, however, deter you from practicing the exercise indicated on page 25, for, even if you do not succeed in making an *r* with few enough vibrations and, entirely freed from disagreeable, throaty sounds, you will not have lost your time, as this exercise is necessary for *d*, *t*, and especially for *l*, and very helpful in forming the nasals, as it makes you conscious of the movements of the soft palate. It is also invaluable for voice placing in general.

EXERCISE FOR THE FORMATION OF UVULAR *r*.

With the upper surface of the end of the tongue touching the back of the lower teeth, repeat the columns (see page 9), *ba, ca, da, fa, ga, gna, ha, ja, ka, la, ma, na, pa, ra*. When you come to *ra*, the uvula will vibrate of its own accord (perhaps not the first time), thus producing a uvular *r*, for the position of the tongue makes a lingual *r* impossible. Practice this exercise for two or three minutes at a time, several times a day, and never when you are tired or if your throat is not perfectly well. In two or three days you will be able to keep the tongue down, without any conscious contact with the teeth. Then, of course, the sounds you are making will become more natural and musical. When you have continued this practice for some time, a teacher skilled in the method will be able to decide as to the advisability of introducing the uvular *r* (which you may have learned) into the French which you are acquiring. If in your case, uvular *r* has too many vibrations to be used uniformly wherever *r* recurs in the printed word, there may perhaps be no objection to your bringing it in at the end of stress groups, especially in such words as *alors, dire, faire*.

As experience has proved that it is almost always impossible to imitate acceptably either of the French *r*'s, the lingual or the uvular, you will probably do well to introduce into your French, your own English *r* very much softened. This softening process will not be very difficult (see rule p. 26), if your *r* happens to be the one common to most people in the United States, the one formed by raising the tip of the tongue to meet the hard palate.* If, however, your *r* is exaggerated, as in the accent of the middle West — if naturally you roll the tongue up and backwards, so that it touches the hard palate, perhaps very far back, thus filling up your mouth and making musical tones impossible, it will be much harder for you to follow this rule, but you can do it by patient and continued practice. The sound produced may become almost inaudible — a mere suggestion of *r* which will not be disagreeable to French ears. This is in the majority of cases the most that can be hoped for. In much of the prettiest native French

* In your study of *r* determine the position of your tongue by using your finger or a mirror.

r is very little heard. An exceedingly delicate *r*, even though pronounced à l'anglaise, need not mar otherwise perfect French.

RULE FOR SOFTENING ENGLISH *r*
(as usually pronounced in the United States)

With the tongue pointed toward the hard palate, pronounce *r* very much more delicately than in English, and very much farther forward in the mouth.

Remember that in the pronunciation of *r* the thing most particularly to be avoided is the sound *er*, as in worker. Say *dire*, not **dee-er**, or **dee-uh**, or **dee-ah**.

FRENCH	ENGLISH
lire — li r	leer — lee er
pour — pou r	poor — poo er
dire — di r	dear — dee er
rire — ri r	rear — ree er

Notice the dissimilarity between these French words and the English words which are so nearly their homonyms. This comes mainly from the difference in the production of the French *r* and the English *r*. In both English and French the tongue is far back in the mouth and concave for the sound *ou, oo*, but in the English *r* (of the United States) necessary to complete the word "poor," for instance, the tongue has to go up to meet the hard palate. This movement of the tongue unavoidably brings out an *e* more or less marked in different persons and localities. This *e* joined to *r* makes the syllable *er* as in the English word, *worker*. This same syllable *er* is produced involuntarily with more or less emphasis and is actually unavoidable in such English words as those noted above, and will be also in the French homonyms unless you succeed in modifying your English *r* very materially before introducing it into your French, or, as suggested above, acquire a uvular *r* good enough to be acceptable in these cases:

rat,	rond,	remarqué,	car,	fer,
heure,	pour,	très,	verre,	alors.

CONSONANT COMBINATIONS.

ch = shine: *chaise, chapeau*.

ch, in words of Greek origin = **kin**: *écho, chœur, choral, chiromancie*.

gn, liquid, see page 28.

gn, in words of foreign derivation = **Ag nes**: *gnome*.

ph = form: *phonétique*. (Initial **p**, in other combinations, is always sounded: *phneu, pneumonie, psychologie*).

gu, before a vowel = good: *dogue, longue*.

qu = kill, before a vowel: *question, manque, trinquer, publique*.

ti,* not initial, before a vowel, usually = **see**: *patience, partial, nation*.

th = tin: *thé, thème, thèse, théorie*.

In syllabifying for ordinary speech, do not separate the letters which form the following combinations:

ai	cr	gn	ien	ou	phr	sn	tr
au	dr	gr	ieu	oua	pl	sp	ua
bl	cau	gu	ill	ouan	pr	spl	uan
br	ei	ia	io	oué	qu	spr	ué
ch	eu	iâ	iô	ouè	sc	squ	uè
chl	fl	ian	ion	oui	scr	st	ui
chr	fr	ié	oi	ph	sl	str	uin
cl	gl	iè	oin	phl	sm	th	vr

DIACRITICAL MARKS.

(`) and (^) are often used to show a difference of meaning in words otherwise alike, in which case they do not in any way influence the pronunciation.

a (has), **à** (at or to); **la** (the), **là** (there); **ou** (or), **où** (where); **du** (of the), **dû** (owed); **sur** (on or sour), **sûr** (sure).

An apostrophe does not affect pronunciation; *l'eau = leau, d'humanité = dumanité*.

A cedilla under a **c** makes it = **s**; *garçon, commençons*.†

A diaeresis is placed over the second of two consecutive vowels to show that they are pronounced separately each keeping its own sound; *égoïste, ciguë, aiguë*.

* When *ti = sh* in English words, in corresponding French words it usually equals **see**, initial, notion, station, but when *tion* follows *s* the *t* retains its proper sound as in *question, digestion*.

† The cedilla is used here to preserve the sound of **c** in the infinitive *commencer*, and in all similar cases.

LIQUIDS.

1. *il*, final, preceded by a vowel = **yearn**.

<i>ail</i>	<i>attirail</i>	<i>éventail</i>	<i>travail</i>	<i>portail</i>
<i>conseil</i>	<i>éveil</i>	<i>sommeil</i>	<i>soleil</i>	<i>vieil</i>
<i>deuil</i>	<i>écureuil</i>	<i>seuil</i>	<i>orgueil</i>	<i>œil</i>

2. *ill*, preceded by *a*, *eu*, *ou* = **yearn**.

<i>ailleurs</i>	<i>bataille</i>	<i>muraille</i>	<i>tailleur</i>	<i>travailler</i>
<i>Neuilly</i>	<i>feuille</i>	<i>feuilleton</i>	<i>feuillage</i>	<i>veuillez</i>
<i>brouillard</i>	<i>bouillir</i>	<i>dépouiller</i>	<i>embrouiller</i>	<i>mouiller</i>

3. *ill*, preceded by *e*, *u* or any consonant = ***i* + yearn**.

sillon = si-illon; *conseiller* = consei-iller; *juliet* = jui-illet.

<i>fille</i>	<i>famille</i>	<i>chenille</i>	<i>gentille</i>
<i>papillon</i>	<i>briller</i>	<i>billet</i>	<i>habiller</i>
<i>émerveillé</i>	<i>merveille</i>	<i>meilleur</i>	<i>vieillard</i>

gn.

gn equals **ny** (modified) in **canyon**.

The modification consists in this — the **n** and the **y** in **canyon** are two distinct sounds, while the *ny* regarded as the equivalent of French *gn* is only one sound made by the simultaneous production of *n* and *y* in the upper front part of the mouth. Thus we have the difference between the second syllables of the two words: *pa-nier*, *ré-gner*. *Panier* = **canyon**. *Ré-gner* = **canyon** (modified). In the first of these words, *panier*, the *n* is formed by pressing the upper surface of the tongue against the front teeth, and the tongue has to move back from the teeth to form *y* against the hard palate, thus making two sounds. In the second, *régnier*, the *n* is formed by a pressure of the tongue against the back part of the palate and is simultaneous with *y* produced in nearly the same place as the *n*. No motion of the tongue being necessary in passing from *n* to *y*, one sound only is produced.

<i>agneau</i>	<i>campagne</i>	<i>compagnon</i>	<i>cygne</i>	<i>enseigner</i>
<i>joignent</i>	<i>magnifique</i>	<i>répugnance</i>	<i>vignette</i>	

y.

y, between vowels = ***i* + yearn**; the *i* going with the preceding vowel, the *y* with the following: *crayon* = **crai-yon**, *envoyer* = **envoi-yer**.

balayons *citoyen* *écuyer* *foyer* *loyer* *frayeur* *joyeux* *voyage*

MUTE SYLLABLES.

A mute syllable is a syllable ending in unaccented *e*.
The following rules are for spoken French.

RULE I.

The *e* of a mute syllable is *not* pronounced:

a. When it ends a word of more than one syllable:

pâ ^e	elle ^e	une ^e	tax ^e	rud ^e
porch ^e	planèt ^e	édific ^e	Catherin ^e	

b. When that syllable follows a vowel sound:*

If you always bear this rule in mind, you can make hardly any mistake in regard to the mute syllable, as it is the most comprehensive, although the simplest rule, that has ever been formulated.

e INAUDIBLE. *e* AUDIBLE.

souvenir	subvenir
acheter	archevêque
soutenir	obtenir
recevoir	apercevoir
paletot	parlement
à jeter	surjeter
peu de fois	quelqu ^e fois

e INAUDIBLE.

e AUDIBLE.

un demi-frère	une demi-sœur
la mesure	toute mesure
un pot de lait	une tasse de lait
bois de l'eau	avec de l'eau
la leçon	la bonne leçon
les repas	chaque repas
plus de soupe	encore de la soupe

In accordance with this general law, series of mute syllables in a sentence naturally fall into couplets, each couplet having one sounded vowel, the first: †

Je ne le re verrai pas.

Je te le re dis.

* Even after a consonant sound or at the beginning of a stress group, *e* is sometimes unpronounced if between two consonants easily combined:

papeterie	ce côté-ci	ce matin
cette peluche	ce qui est beau	ferai-je mon devoir?

† Briefly stated, when a succession of mute syllables occurs at the beginning of a sentence, 1, 3, and 5, are pronounced, and 2 and 4 are muted; thus, *je ne te le redirai plus*; but when a succession of mute syllables follows a vowel sound, the rhythm changes absolutely, 1, 3, and 5, being muted and 2 and 4 pronounced, as it is the initial vowel sound that decides the dominating pulse, thus; *il ne veut pas me le redevoir*.

Such couplets always occur when a mute syllable follows *any* vowel sound:

Ache tez le chapeau. Vous ne rece vez pas le paquet.
Tu ne bois le cidre que le soir. Tu ne me le rede mandes pas.

RULE II.

The *e* of a mute syllable *is* pronounced:

a. In cases where the sense requires that the mute syllable should be emphasized:

Je dis, je r*e*dis, que *e* est presque toujours muet.
 Prenez-le. Prononcez le mot *ce*.

b. Between two consonants alike or nearly alike:

Donnez-moi le lait,* pas *de* dessert, ne tombe pas.

c. When followed by an aspirate *h*:

une honte, cette hache, le haricot, *ce* hibou, le haut.

d. When followed by a syllable ending in *iez, ier, ions*:

e INAUDIBLE.

atteler
 vous semez
 vous pelez
 nous tenons
 nous chanterons
 vous aimerez

e AUDIBLE.

atelier
 vous semiez
 vous peliez
 nous tenions
 nous chanterions
 vous aimeriez

hence in the conditional of all regular verbs of the first conjugation, first person plural, and second person plural.

* In these cases *e* is sometimes replaced by a pause without breath, as shown in the following exercise:

Say without stopping: *né pàj né pàj né pà.* Repeat this several times, always finishing without the *j*. You will find that you have been saying, "Je n'ai pas," as a Frenchman does in speaking rapidly.

Then in the same way repeat: *l*e*j l*e*j l*e*.* You will find that you have been saying "Je l'ai" or "gelée." Similar examples may be found ad infinitum.

e. If preceded by two consonant sounds in the same syllable: *

entretenir	entrepreneur	agréablement
souffleter	le grédin	autrefois
le grénat	mes bretelles	vous comprenez
la cretonne	vos crevettes	les grenouilles

The rules that we have given you for mute syllables are those observed consciously or unconsciously in conversation and on the stage. They are sometimes seemingly contradicted in the deliberate utterance of French professors and lecturers, who, in order to make themselves better understood, especially by American and English audiences, pronounce all their syllables distinctly, making the mute ones as prominent as the others.

In inflecting words, avoid having two consecutive mute syllables by placing a grave (`) accent over the first or by doubling the consonant of the second:

cher, chère	cruel, cruelle	premier, première
appeler, appelle	cadet, cadette	parquet, parquetterie
acheter, achète	jeter, jette	boulangier, boulanger

* This is true even at the end of a word followed by another word beginning with a consonant:

e INAUDIBLE.		e AUDIBLE.
table	table ouverte	table verte
boucle	boucle ordinaire	boucle soyeuse
pantoufle	pantoufle élégante	pantoufle de soie
ensemble	ensemble alors	ensemble toujours
horrible	horrible aventure	horrible crime
rhumatisme	rhumatisme articulaire	rhumatisme musculaire

This *e* is sometimes heard not only in French but in English, even when it does not exist in the printed word. Try to say "The cab passed the door" and you will hear *e* between cab and passed, as also between the examples given below.

fat Thomas	fat Thomas	tic tac	tick tick
cap doublé	cap doubled	boum boum	boom boom

In the examples given above, note that *e* is an involuntary and unavoidable sound which you do not have to learn to pronounce; when we say unavoidable we mean unavoidable in gentle speech. In certain examples of English in the Middle West of the United States, this graceful vowel bridge *e* between consonants is avoided, but the intense articulation necessary to make full stops between consonants causes ever recurring shocks and jerks, and ought not to be copied.

LINKING SOUNDS TOGETHER.

In English, elegance of diction often consists in keeping sounds separate; but in elegant French the exact opposite obtains, and sounds are joined together just as much as possible:

Mes amis en ont aussi = mè za mi zã nõ tau ci.

Il y en a tant ici = i li ã na tã ti ci.

LIAISONS.

A liaison is the carrying over of the final consonant of a word to the initial vowel of the next word, when that consonant is silent in the word to which it belongs:*

Nous sommes arrivés tout entier ils finissent à temps

Vous avez entendu aimer et mourir achètent-ils?

In liaisons the sounds of *d*, *f*, *g*, *s* and *x*, are changed:

d = *t*, as in quand il parle.

f = *v* in neuf ans and neuf heures only.

g = *k*, as in sang et eau.

$\left. \begin{matrix} s \\ x \end{matrix} \right\} = z$, as in pas encore, je peux entrer.

* The consonant thus carried over is very delicately though perfectly articulated, and offers a marked contrast with the intensely articulated final consonant.

† This liaison with the infinitive of the first conjugation is used only in the so-called high style of classical tragedy; never in conversation or even in comedy.

‡ (1) The otherwise silent *t* of the *ent* final of the plural of verbs is always tied to the following vowel.

(2) In the interrogative form of the third person singular of verbs, the characteristic *t* is always heard. Indeed, when it does not exist in the printed word, it is often inserted for euphony:

part-il

va-t-il

rend-il

a-t-il

In tying a nasalized vowel to the following word the nasal is pronounced in all its purity and an additional *n* prefixed to the next vowel:

un abricot	un nabricot	bien établi	bien nétabli
en Afrique	en nafrique	son habitude	son nabitude
il y en a	il y en na	j'en ai	j'en nai
en a-t-il	en na-t-il	rien à dire	rien nà dire
mon encre	mon nencre	bien à vous	bien nà vous
ton ami	ton nami	on écoute	on nécoute*

As liaisons are used only to make sentences musical, very few rules can be devised for them. A liaison is only a question of taste, and what would be musical in one combination of sounds would not be so in another. For instance “Il va aux_eaux” and “Nous_allons_au bois”, are perfectly musical, but “Nous_allons_aux_eaux” would be very unmusical, and it is only the trained ear which leads us to avoid the repetition of the *z* sound and makes us say correctly, “Nous_allons aux_eaux”. The following rules, however, offer no exceptions:

A liaison always occurs:

I. Between a verb and its pronoun subject:

ils_orment	vous_habitez	ils_auraient
nous_abritons	vous_êtes	nous_alimentons

* Notice the fine distinction between the affirmative, in which the liaison occurs and the negative in which it does not occur:

on écoute on nécoute: on n'écoute pas on — nécoute pas.

The difference is indicated by a pause, which brings out the *n* of the negative *ne*: such pauses are often necessary in English also:

two little eggs:

two little — legs.

its pronoun object:

nous en_avons	il en_avait
ils les_ont	vous les_auriez

its attribute or its adjective complement:

ils sont_Espagnols	vous êtes_aimable
c'est_elle	il paraît_abattu
ce sont_eux	nous sommes_heureux
il est_avocat	il est_intelligent

Between an auxiliary and its participle:

il y est_allé	vous êtes_admiré	tu as_approuvé
tu es_arrivé	nous avons_obéi	ils sont_arrivés
il aurait_été	ils se sont_aimés	nous sommes_honorés

II. With adverbs:

bien_entendu	trop_épais	souvent_ennuyeux
tout_à vous	assez_exact	pauvrement_habillé
pas_encore	point_en règle	profondément_endormi

With the articles *un* and *les* and the contractions *aux* and *des*:

un_ami	des_îles
les_oreilles	aux_aboies

III. With adjectives preceding nouns:

gros_homme	vos_idées	ces_oranges	nos_impressions
petit_enfant	mauvais_exemple	son_émeraude	aucun_exemple

IV. With prepositions:

après_elle	en_Italie	sans_hésitation
chez_eux	dans_une minute	sous_aucun prétexte

V. With *s* or *x* of the plural :

choux_{et} panais des bas_élastiques portes_ouvertes
 personnes_aussi aimables que belles
 rivières_encore couvertes de glace

VI. And almost always with monosyllables (not substantive) ending in *n* : *

son_élément un_homme bien_aimable
 on_en_a en_Autriche rien_à proposer

A liaison never occurs :

I. Between words separated by a pause of any kind :

Lisez et vous verrez. "Mangez", insista-t-il.
 Attends, et il viendra. Je te dis, écoute bien.

II. With *t* of *et* (é) : et ensuite.III. With *n* of *on* when it is the subject of an interrogative verb :

Y a-t-on été? Peut-on attendre?
 L'a-t-on admiré? Veut-on y aller?
 Sait-on où le trouver?

IV. With an aspirate *h* : en haut, not en naut.

LINKINGS.

There are other linkings of sounds which being more subtle, require even more study and attention than those designated as liaisons. The basic principle of carrying consonants over to the following vowel is applied both to syllables and to words.

* As *combien*, *selon*, *environ*, *enfin*, *quelqu'un*, *chacun*, etc., are not monosyllables, they do not come under this rule ; linkings with them must be made without the additional *n* which we have in a liaison.

Linkings.
 Combien_avez-vous de pommes?
 Selon_elle.
 Environ_eune heure.

Liaisons.
 En_avez-vous?
 On_eest libre.
 On_eunit les conjoints

CONSONANTS LINKED TO VOWELS.

SYLLABLES.		WORDS.	
ami	a mi	il a	i la
agneau	a gneau	cet honneur	cè tonneur
lunettes	lu nettes	bel astre	bè lastre
comme	co mme	roc éternel	ro kéternel
		finir à midi	fini rà midi
		par Eugénie	pa reugénie
		leur idole	leu ridole
		recevoir avec moi	recevoi ravec moi

Whole syllables are often carried over to the next word :

votre ami	boucle élégante	l'oncle Emile
aimable enfant	vendre au rabais	tendre et(é) bon
rendre aussitôt	peuple admirable	pourpre éclatante
quatre heures	aveugle admirateur	pantoufle et bas

In the last six examples you can hear the English words, plaid, glad, clay, dray, pray, flay.

The following examples show the difference between linkings and liaisons:

LINKINGS.	LIAISONS.
grande amie	grand ami
Qu'il réponde à mes questions	Il répond à mes questions
harangue ennuyeuse	sang et(é) eau

In words ending in *rd*, *rs*, *rt*, the last letter is silent and it is the *r* which is tied to the following vowel:

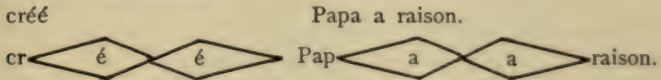
vers elle	bord usé
le mors aux dents	vert et rose
univers entier	part égal
à travers eau et(é) flamme	il part avec moi.*

* See footnote page 32, part 2.

VOWELS LINKED TO VOWELS.

SYLLABLES.		WORDS.
idé <u>al</u>	idé <u>al</u>	Qui a <u>osé</u> y <u>aller</u> ?
ob <u>éir</u>	ob <u>éir</u>	Lui a <u>aussi</u> y <u>a</u> a <u>assisté</u> .
agr <u>é</u> ez	agr <u>é</u> ez	Il y <u>a</u> eu une heure d'attente.
po <u>è</u> me	po <u>è</u> me	J'ai <u>étudié</u> .
a <u>é</u> ré	a <u>é</u> ré	trou* <u>ouvert</u>
bleu <u>et</u>	bleu <u>et</u>	Atala <u>a</u> <u>é</u> couté.
agr <u>é</u> able	agr <u>é</u> able	Lili j <u>imite</u> sa s <u>œur</u> .
a <u>é</u> roplane	a <u>é</u> roplane	Il a bu <u>une</u> tasse de thé.
		Jeannot <u>au</u> dés <u>espoir</u> .

In the linking of two similar vowels, it is not one long sound that is heard, but two complete sounds, each with its crescendo and diminuendo, linked together without any break. The following diagrams show that there is no break between the two vowels, but only a gradual swelling and diminishing:



This is as true of English vowels as of French ones: *go over, three eels*.

LINKINGS WITH SUBSTANTIVES.

A linking is made with the last *sounded* consonant or vowel sound of a substantive, in the singular.

jupe <u>ample</u>	Jean <u>est</u> ici	Ella <u>est</u> un nom
ami <u>intime</u>	Emile <u>a</u> raison	Maxime <u>ôte</u> le couvert
écolier <u>affairé</u>	Georges <u>a</u> tort	Charles <u>ouvre</u> la séance

* In cases where a sound is represented by more than one letter the tie has been made from the *middle* of the combination in the first word to the *first* letter of the combination in the second word.

acteur_ému	Hélène_ose tout	Henri_invite Pierre
écolière_instruite	Constant_embrasse	Edouard_agite la main
l'acier_aussi	Gaston_honteux	automobile_électrique
le fer_aussi	Emma_admire	un_bas_élastique
garçon*_actif	Claire_aime	la_ficelle_est forte
chauffeur_habile	Berthe_aide	l'un_et l'autre
raison_admirable	Roger_approche	de_loin_en loin
lame_émoussée	Eustache_a le trac	mettre_fin_à tout cela

RHYTHM.

Rhythm is much more strongly marked in French than in English. Indeed we might safely say that French prose scans, so rhythmical are its successive beats. The reason for this is obvious. Words in English are accented now on the first, second, or on the third, fourth or fifth syllable as the case may be, whereas in French the pulse is perfectly regular, as it is only the last sounded syllable of a word or of a stress-group, that receives the tonic accent, which accent, be it parenthetically remarked, is not an accent in the English sense of the word, not a *blow*, but a *caress* felt in its lingering rather than in its stress.

The rhythm of a French sentence thus depends upon the alternating (more or less regular) of the accented† syllable (*syllabe forte*) and the unaccented syllable (*syllabe faible*). Other syllables may be considered intermediate and serve phonetically only to “fill in” between beats, and it is especially in this filling-in process that we must remember to give to each vowel its true sound without prefixing or adding another sound, and to give to it its whole length. In the expression “au fur et à

* Notice the difference between a liaison and a linking; in the linking there is no additional *n*.

garçon actif

on active le feu.

† We have usually avoided the word *accent*, meaning stress, in order that the pupil might not confound it with the English signification of the word or with the accent aigu (´).

measure" *fur* and *su* are much longer and stronger than *au*, *et* and *à*, but that is no reason why these three syllables should, according to the English tendency, be shortened or slighted in any way, nor must we linger over the entirely mute *e* of *me*.

1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
au	fur		et	à	m	su	r

Notice what an important rôle the mute *e* plays in rhythm. In Marseilles we hear four pronounced syllables in "à mesure." In Paris we hear only two.*

It must be remembered that French is a language in which the *syllable* is the unit, whereas in English, it is the *word* which constitutes entity. We cannot too often repeat that a French word, unless isolated, is never pronounced as a word, with a regular beginning and an end, but as a succession of syllables, which melt into the rest of the sentence, and a French sentence is not a succession of strongly and individually accented words, but a succession of syllables with a regularly recurring beat.

For instance, the sentence — *Votre oncle est ici* — is not pronounced as four words, but as five syllables — Vo trō clè ti ci. No wonder that so many people, who read French with ease, cannot understand it when it is spoken. They do not recognize in what sounds exactly like "Sam Fred lap Penn," and "lash me nay", the French words they know so well by sight, "Ça me ferait de la peine" and "la cheminée."

The tendency of Americans is to accent the first part of a French word, and we hear people who speak the language very fluently say, in a manner quite shocking to French ears, *la fi-gu-re*, *le cor-ri-dor*, *le ca-lo-ri-fè-re*, when the simple expedient of placing the slight stress in its proper place, *la fi-gu-re*, *le cor-ri-dor*, *le ca-lo-ri-fè-re*, would give to these words their true French rhythm. Indeed nothing helps so much to correct the American or English accent as removing the stress from a syllable where there should be no stress, changing it to a slight caress and putting it on the last sounded syllable, if one remembers at the same time to give to *all* the preceding syllables their true length, no more or less.

* "As to vowels it is Paris that gives the law." — Ernest Legouvé. *L'art de la Lecture*, page 51.

The following diagrams in which the counting is even, show how much more equally the length of a French word is divided among its different syllables than is that of our English word.

1	2	3	4	5	6
ka	lé	i	do	scope	
1	2	3	4	5	6
ka	lei		do	scope	

The question of displaced accent is quite another thing; that comes into play for emphasis only, but it occurs continually, seemingly contradicting the general law of rhythm. Paul Passy, the famous French phonetician, tells us that in English, and in many of the continental languages, we emphasize by giving added strength to the already accented syllable, as in "butcher", which, when emphatic, becomes "*butcher*," while in French we emphasize by displacing the accent, "*boucher*," becoming "*boucher*." This displaced stress, being so strong, is very noticeable; and foreigners, struck by it, naturally think that it is the normal tonic accent, and endeavor to imitate it, with the result we know. It is as if, on hearing an orator, who, entirely disregarding the normal English accent, should say, in order to bring out a point, "We must *respect*, not *suspect* the Senate," a Frenchman should go away pronouncing the words *respect* and *suspect* with the accent on the first syllable, convinced that he is doing it correctly, because he is saying the word exactly as he heard an English orator say it! Normal French, reiterates Mr. Passy, requires that the last sounded syllable should receive the tonic accent. Avoid using the misplaced accent when not under the guidance of your teacher. In studying alone, confine yourself strictly to the normal accent, until you are sufficiently advanced to use the other in a manner inoffensive to French ears.

STRESS GROUPS.

A stress group is generally composed of two or three words closely connected by the sense they convey; but a word standing alone often constitutes a stress group. In reading sentences in any language, we find that words naturally fall into stress groups and it is well to remem-

ber that in French the last pronounced syllable of a stress group is longer and stronger than any other in the group.

In the sentence "Vous comprenez" the last syllable *nez* receives the tonic accent, while in the question "Comprenez-vous?" the word *vous* receives the tonic accent, as it is the last syllable of the stress group. If the learner will consider the words of every stress group, not separate and distinct words, but component parts of a polysyllable, and place the tonic stress upon the last sounded syllable of this polysyllable, he will get a good idea of the phrasing of the sentence he is reading, and of its true French rhythm.

When this method of learning French has been generally adopted, students will no longer surprise French people by asking for "Oon demmy doozane dor anges" instead of "Une demi-douzaine d'oranges".

Sentences showing that it is always the last sounded syllable of a group which gets the stress.

Neige-t-il?	Vous êtes là?	J'aime chanter.
Il neige.	Quelle heure est-il?	Qu'allez-vous faire?
Y a-t-il des fautes?*	Avez-vous l'heure?	Je vais faire cela.
Oui, il y en a.	Comment allez-vous?	Voilà le chat.
Y en a-t-il?	Vous allez bien?	Le voilà.
Il n'y en a pas.	Bien, merci; et vous?	Il m'aime.
Y êtes-vous?	Comprenez-vous?	Il m'aime bien.
Vous y êtes?	Vous comprenez?	Te lèves-tu?
Madame, y est-elle?	Finis.	Tu te lèves?
Elle n'y est pas.	Finis-le.	Ne te lèves-tu pas?
Copiez-le.	Finis donc.	Es-tu là?
Copiez-le donc.	Finissez.	Tu y es?
Le copiez-vous?	Finissez-le.	En ont-ils?
Téléphonez.	Le finissez-vous?	Ils en ont.
Téléphonez-moi.	Je chante.	A qui est-ce?
Entendez-vous?	Je chantais.	C'est à moi.
Entendez-vous le télé- phone?	Je chanterai.	Où en sommes-nous?
C'est vous?	Je chanterais.	Nous en sommes là.
	J'ai chanté.	

* You will see that on this page, as on all others, we adhere to our plan of italicizing the thing in question; here it is the last sounded syllable. When the last sounded consonant does not occur in the last sounded syllable, we have not italicized it, because you already know that it must be pronounced with extra force.

THE DISPLACED ACCENT.

When under the guidance of your teacher you begin the study of the displaced accent, the following rule will be very helpful.

RULE.

In general, when you wish to use the displaced accent for any word, put it on the first syllable beginning with a consonant.*

insupportable, † *abominable*, *superbe*, *délicieux*.

The following examples show that in each case, it is the meaning of the sentence which decides whether, or not, a displaced accent shall be added to the normal accent. †

Est-ce votre fils? (fiss)	{ Non, ce n'est <i>plus</i> mon fils. † Oui, c'est lui.
Est-ce une fille?	{ Non, ce n'est <i>pas</i> une fille. Oui, c'est une fille.
Est-ce <i>sa</i> crème?	{ Non, elle est à l' <i>autre</i> dame. Non, c'est sa soupe.
Pourquoi ne dites-vous pas que c'est vrai?	{ Parce que ce n'est <i>pas</i> vrai. Parce que c'est faux.

* A free translation of rule given by Paul Passy "Sons du Français", page 51.

† Remember that, even where the displaced accent is used, the normal accent remains more or less strongly marked.

SUMMARY OF THE KNOWLES-FAVARD SYSTEM.

The Knowles-Favard System of Pronunciation may be briefly summarized as follows:

- I. **Speak from the front of the mouth** (as we have shown you how to do in the exercises on pages 9-12).
- II. **Keep your vowels pure** (following the directions we have given you on pages 3-6).
- III. **Place consonants and consonant combinations with the vowels that follow them.**
- IV. **Remember that a French sentence is not a succession of words, but a succession of syllables that fall into stress groups.**
- V. **That the mute syllable must be muted** (as we have shown you on pages 29-31), and
- VI. **That the last sounded syllable of a stress group must receive the tonic accent** (pages 38-41).

DICTÉE.

Vous avez bien préparé les leçons de phonétique précédentes.

Vos voyelles sont pures. Pour former *l*, *d*, *t*, et *n*, vous appliquez la face supérieure de la langue contre les dents. Vos consonnes sont toutes clairement articulées.

Vos consonnes initiales sont distinctement, mais très délicatement prononcées.

Vos consonnes finales sont de véritables explosions.

En décomposant les mots en syllabes, vous joignez une consonne placée entre deux voyelles à la seconde de ces deux voyelles.

Vous prononcez rarement *ε*.

Vous effacez beaucoup la consonne finale que vous joignez à la voyelle initiale du mot suivant.

Vous caressez plus que vous n'accentuez la dernière syllabe sonore de votre groupe de force.

Donc, vous commencez à bien prononcer et vous n'ignorez pas les lois du rythme de la langue française. Vous êtes, à présent, prêt à attaquer les leçons de conversation, de grammaire, et de littérature, source inépuisable de récréation et des plus purs plaisirs intellectuels.

Ne discontinuez pas vos exercices de phonétique que vous allez appliquer aux pages de prose suivantes et aussi à toutes vos autres études en français.

Toutes les fois que vous serez dans le doute pour la prononciation d'un nouveau mot, consultez ce petit manuel.

PROSE FOR PRACTICE.

Slow Reading in Which Stress Groups are Indicated.

Chaque bouton ne* | fleurit | qu'une fois | et chaque fleur |
n'a que sa minute | de parfaite | beauté; † de même, dans le
jardin de | l'âme, chaque sentiment | a comme sa minute |
florale, c'est-à-dire, son moment unique | de grâce épanouie |
et de | rayonnante | royauté. Chaque astre | ne passe qu'une
fois | par nuit | au méridien | sur nos têtes | et n'y brille |
qu'un instant; ainsi | dans le ciel | de l'intelligence, il n'est, si
j'ose dire, pour chaque pensée | qu'un instant zénithal, où elle
culmine | dans tout son éclat | et dans sa souveraine grandeur.
Artiste, poète ou penseur, saisis tes idées | et tes sentiments |
à ce point précis | et fugitif, pour les fixer | ou les éterniser,
car | c'est leur point suprême. Avant cet instant, tu n'as que
leurs ébauches confuses | ou leurs pressentiments obscurs;
après lui, tu n'auras | que des réminiscences affaiblies | ou |
des repentirs impuissants; cet instant | est celui de | l'idéal.

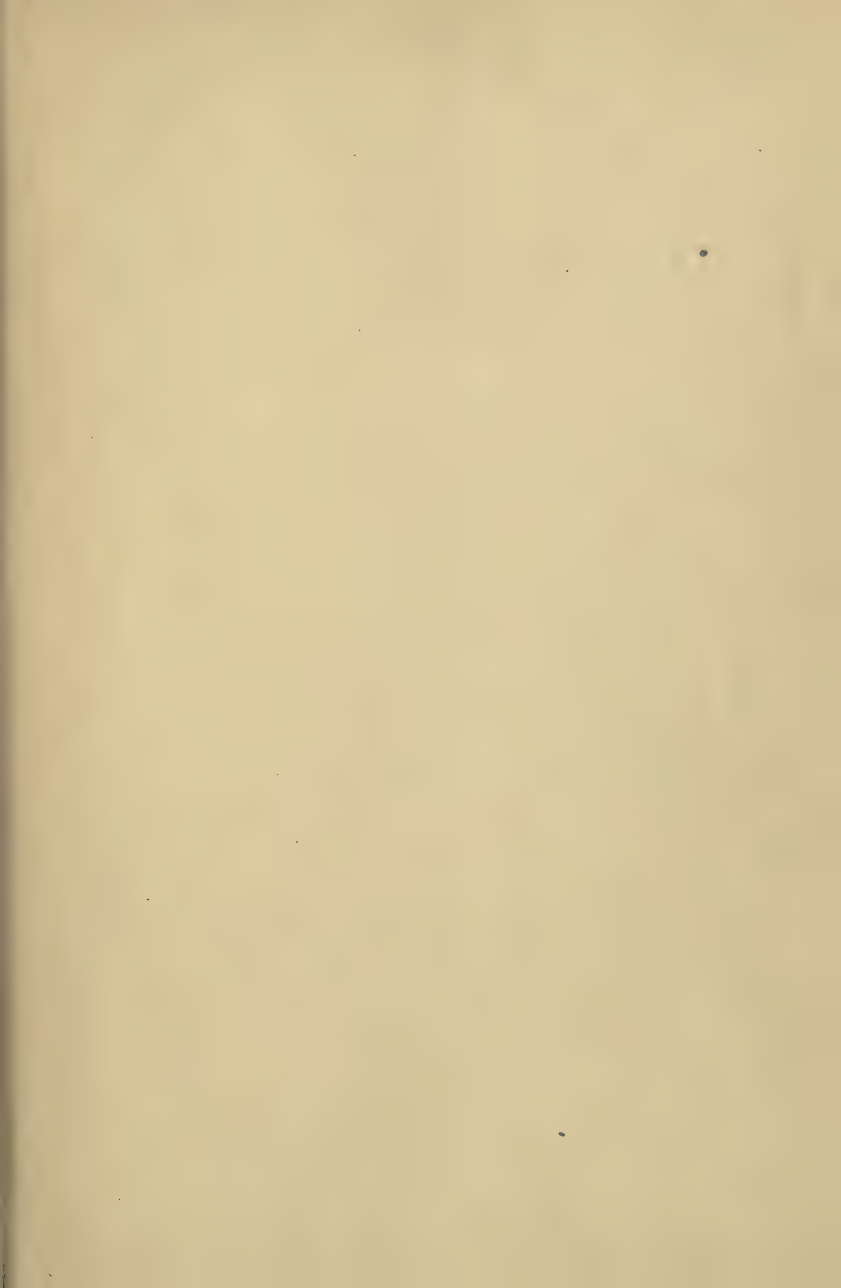
— *Amiel.*

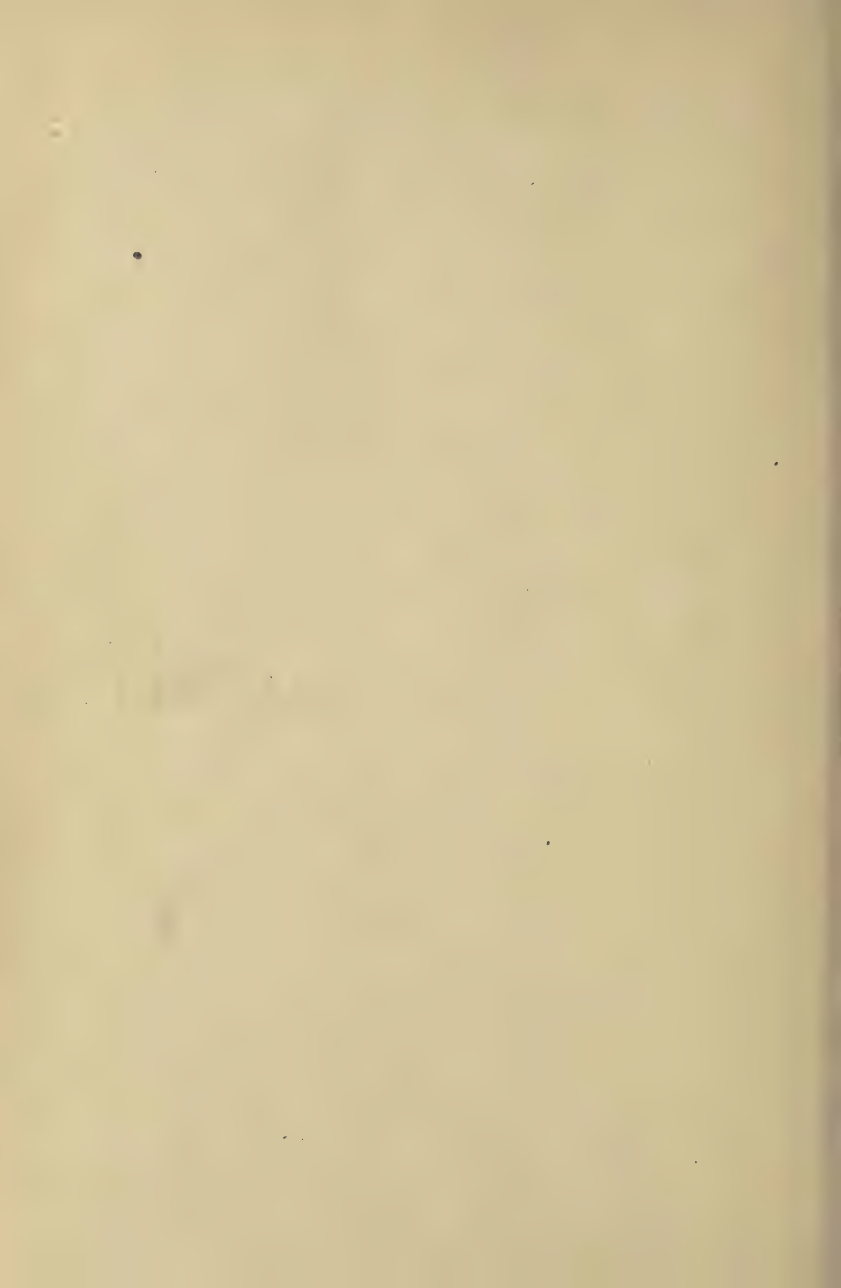
Le travail | certainement | est une loi sacrée, puisqu'il suffit
d'en faire | la plus légère application | pour éprouver | je ne
sais quelle sérénité. L'homme | cependant | n'aime point le
travail: il n'en peut méconnaître | les infaillibles bienfaits; il
les goûte chaque jour, s'en applaudit, et chaque lendemain |
il se remet au travail | avec la même répugnance. Il me
semble | qu'il y a là | une contradiction | singulière et
mystérieuse, comme si nous sentions | à la fois | dans le
travail | le châtement et le caractère | divin et paternel | du
juge.

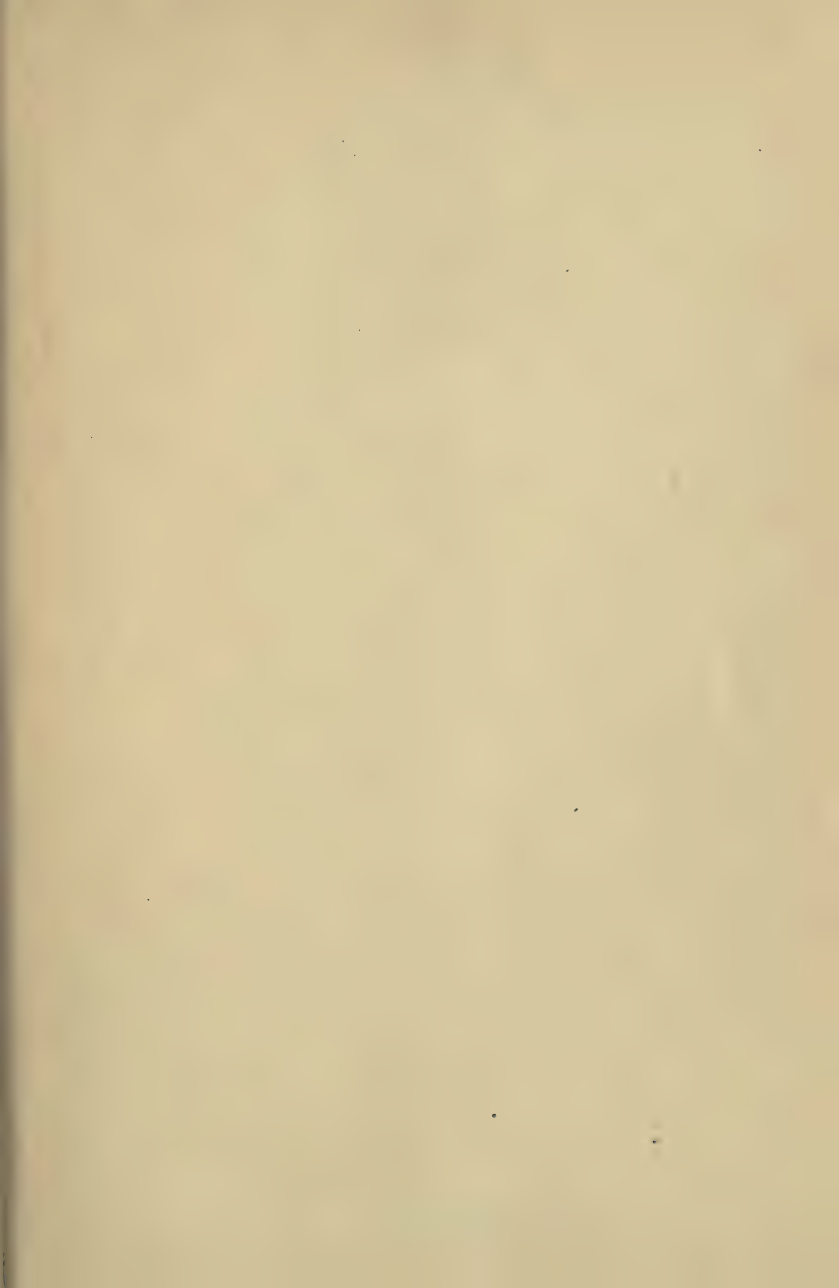
— *Octave Feuillet.*

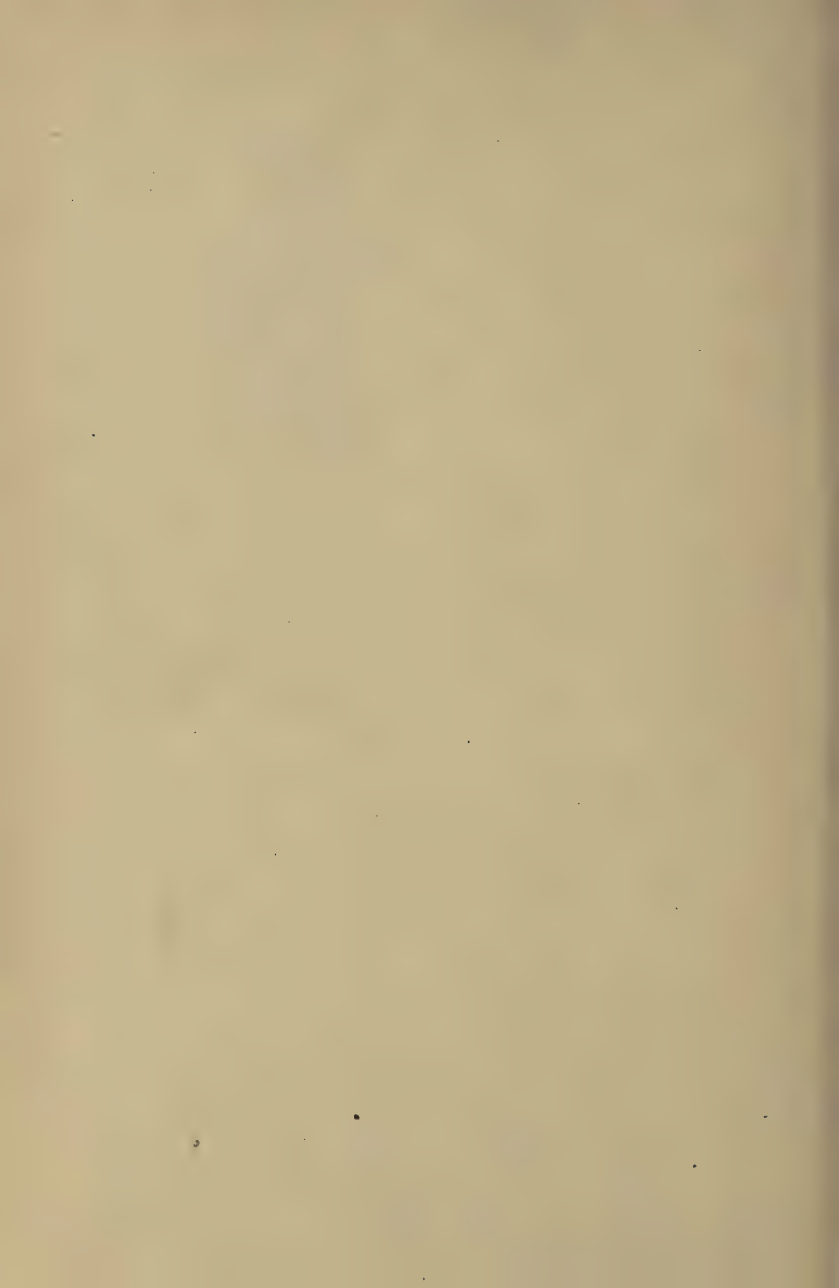
* The adverb *ne* is separated from the verb *fleurit* which it modifies, because, by the muting of its *e*, *n* is left to become a part of the preceding syllable *ton*, thus: *tôn*. The muting of the *e* in monosyllables often causes such separations.

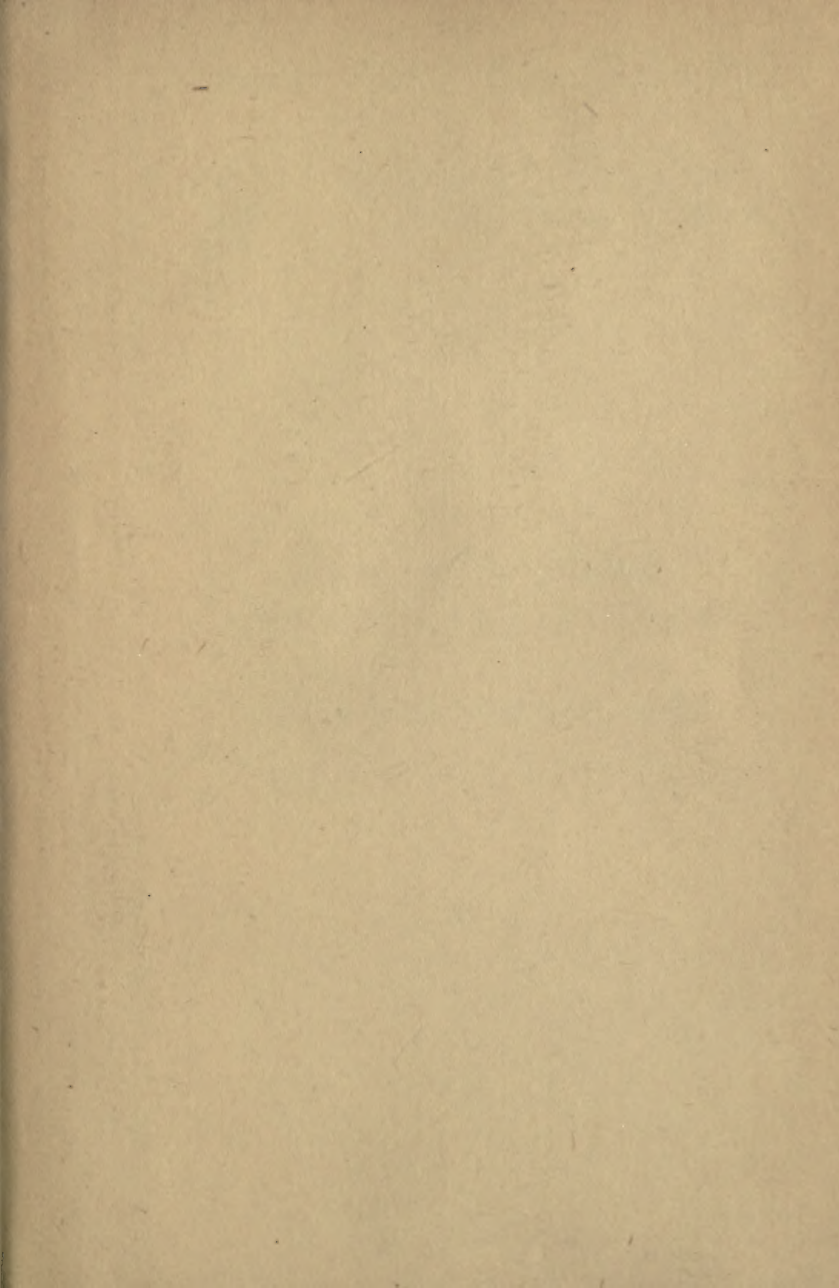
† As marks of punctuation usually coincide with the end of stress groups, vertical lines have been omitted in these places.











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