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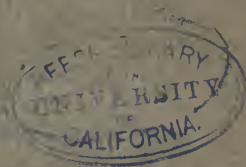
Cambridge Philological Society.

PRONUNCIATION

OF

LATIN

IN THE AUGUSTAN PERIOD.



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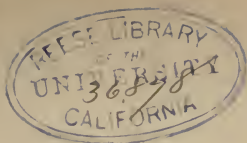
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PRONUNCIATION
OF LATIN IN THE AUGUSTAN PERIOD.

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Cambridge Philological Society.

It having been felt by some teachers at Cambridge that the time had come to make a further attempt to correct the errors of the ordinary English pronunciation of Latin, a letter of enquiry was sent out to ascertain the amount of support which such an attempt would receive. This called forth very encouraging answers from lecturers in almost every college in Cambridge and not a few schoolmasters. The following statement was therefore drawn up by a small committee: it has been fully discussed at two meetings of the Society, and it is now put forth by the Society as an approximate statement of the pronunciation of Latin by the educated classes in the Augustan period.

SUMMARY OF THE PRONUNCIATION OF LATIN
IN THE AUGUSTAN PERIOD.

VOWELS.

<i>Letters.</i>	<i>Pronunciation.</i>
<p>Latin A long in <i>ālās, cōnstāns</i> short as in <i>āmāt, Dā-</i> <i>nāē</i></p>	<p>as Eng. <i>a</i> in psalm, salve, halve. the same sound shortened. Both <i>ā</i> and <i>a</i> are found in <i>āhā</i>!</p> <p>N.B. <i>ā</i> in Latin was never pro- nounced as in mate, nor <i>ā</i> as in man, mat.</p>
<p>E long as in <i>tēlā, tēnsūs,</i> <i>dīē</i></p> <p>short as in <i>tēnēt, fērūs,</i> <i>implēās</i></p>	<p>as Fr. <i>é</i>, a close 'e'¹. It is the first part of the Eng. diph- thong in skein, grey, ray, rain.</p> <p>an open¹ <i>e</i>. Eng. <i>e</i> in sped.</p> <p>N.B. Lat. <i>ē</i> was never pro- nounced as Eng. <i>ee</i> in <i>see</i>.</p>
<p>I long in <i>trītus, infēnsus,</i> <i>īs</i> (verb), <i>prāuī</i></p> <p>short as <i>sītīs, fēcīt, nīsī</i> in certain cases where the spelling varies between <i>i</i> and <i>u</i> as in <i>maximus, maxumus</i>,</p>	<p>as <i>i</i> in machine, quinine, <i>ee</i> in feel, feet.</p> <p>N.B. The Latin <i>ī</i> was never the <i>i</i> in fine.</p> <p>as <i>i</i> in fit, skim².</p> <p>as Ger. <i>ü</i>³.</p>

¹ The difference between *close* and *open* vowels (otherwise called 'narrow' and 'wide') is caused by drawing up the part of the tongue with which the sound is produced and thus making it more convex than it is in its natural relaxed position (open). This causes a 'narrowing' of the passage of the sound, whence the name.

² Lat. final *ī* seems to have had an intermediate sound between *ē* and *i* as in *herī*, yesterday, written in Quintilian's time *herē*. Q. says, *Inst.* i. 4, 8, in here neque *e* plane neque *i* auditur; compare i. 7, 22, 24. This is supported by the various spellings on inscriptions *sibi, sibe, sibeī*; quasi, quase, quasei, so with *tibi, ubi*. The sound was probably that of Eng. final *y* as in lady.

³ Modified *u* (*ü*) has two sounds in (North) German: (a) when *long*, it is *close* as in *grün, güte*; so in Fr. *lune, aigu*: (b) when *short*, it is *open* as in *hütte, schützen*. These sounds may be produced approximately by pronouncing *ɪ* as in machine and *ɨ* as in fit respectively, with rounded lips.

<p>O longas in <i>rōrīs, Cōnsūs,</i> <i>cōntō</i></p> <p>short as in <i>ōuēs, bōum,</i> <i>mōdō</i></p> <p>U longas in <i>ūmōr, tūnsūs,</i> <i>gēnū</i></p> <p>short as in <i>ūlī, tūūs</i></p> <p>Y as in <i>gȳrūs, scȳphūs,</i> <i>cȳmbā, Hȳādēs</i> a Greek sound.</p>	<p>close <i>o</i> as Fr. <i>au</i> in <i>chaud, faux</i>. The first part of the English diphthong in <i>grow, loan</i>.</p> <p>open <i>o</i>, nearest representative Eng. <i>o</i> in <i>not, rock</i>⁴.</p> <p>as <i>u</i> in <i>ruin, intrude</i>; = <i>oo</i> in <i>poop</i>. N.B. Lat. <i>ū</i> was never pro- nounced like <i>u</i> in <i>acute, mule</i>, which is <i>yoo</i>.</p> <p>as <i>u</i> in <i>full, oo</i> in <i>foot</i>. N.B. Lat. <i>ŭ</i> never as the ordi- nary Eng. <i>ū</i> in <i>but, cut, luck</i>. as Ger. <i>ü</i>, see note.</p>
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The great difference between the English and Latin pronunciations of the same vowel-symbols is due to the fact that the pronunciation of English has changed, while the spelling has not changed with it. The symbols *a, i, o, e, u* no longer have their original values. *ā, ī, ō* have become diphthongs, *a* in *māte* being sounded as *ei* (*ey*) in *vein* or *grey*, *ī* as *eye*, *ō* as *ow* in *grow*. The English *ē* in *see* and *ū* in *rue* have a slight consonantal ending which is *y* in the one case and *w* in the other. English *ū* is generally *yoo*.

DIPHTHONGS.

AE in *taedae*, AU in *laus, laudo*, OE in *foedus*, EI in *Pompēi* (voc.), EU in *seu, neuter*, UI in *cui, huic*.

The pronunciation of these diphthongs, of which the last three are extremely rare, is best learnt by first sounding each vowel separately and then running them together, *ae* as *ah-eh*, *au* as *ah-oo*, *oe* as *o-eh*, *ei* as *eh-ee*, *eu* as *eh-oo*, and *ui* as *oo-ee*⁵.

N.B. The English pronunciation which rhymes *haedus, foedus* with 'feed us' is quite incorrect.

⁴ The pronunciation of the Latin *o* seems to have fluctuated. *ō* (which is generally, although not always close) was sometimes nearer to the Eng. *aw* in *law* but more often to the Fr. *au* (with a higher position of the tongue) while the short open *o* is sometimes nearer to the Eng. *o* in *not* but more often to the N. Ger. *o* in *stöck*. Generally speaking Latin *ē* and *ō* are Italian *close e* and *o*, while Latin *ĕ* and *ĕ* are Italian *open o* and *e*.

⁵ AE was not far from the Ger. *ü* and had a tendency to become open *e* (as in *men, sped*): but it was not till the 6th cent. A.D. that *ae* and *e* became quite confused. AU is the German *au* in *haus*. The nearest sound in Eng. is *ou*

CONSONANTS.

C in <i>cāno, cēcīni, cygnus, ceu, scit, hāscē, condīcio</i>	always as Eng. <i>k</i> , never as <i>s</i> or as <i>c</i> before <i>e, i</i> . Thus <i>kekinee, küknus, skit</i> etc., <i>condikio</i> (never <i>condishio</i>).
Qu in <i>inquit</i>	as Eng. <i>qu</i> in <i>quick</i> .
G in <i>gaudeo, genus, gingīuā, āgē</i>	always as Eng. <i>g</i> in <i>got, get</i> , <i>begin</i> , never as <i>j</i> or <i>g</i> in <i>gibe</i> or <i>generous</i> .
N before c (<i>k, qu</i>), <i>g</i> , as <i>incipit, inquam, congero</i> ⁶	as <i>ng</i> in <i>sing</i> , (<i>n</i> in <i>sink</i>), thus <i>ingkipit, ingquam, conggero</i> .
T, D, N, L as in <i>ādīt, nātus, lūna, clientem, ēdītio, cōn-stāns</i>	nearly as in Eng. ⁷
S as in <i>sūs, accūso, tristēs</i>	N.B. <i>editio</i> etc. never as <i>edishio</i> . always voiceless ⁸ as in <i>hiss, hist</i> ; never voiced as in <i>has</i> (<i>haz</i>).
P, B, M (except final M) ⁹ as in <i>plumbo</i>	as in Eng.

in *house*, which should be pronounced 'broadly' *haouse*. EI is the Eng diphthong in *grey* (*rain, mate* etc.). EU as in It. *neutro*. UI as in It. *colui*. The old Latin diphthongs AI, pronounced as Greek *ai* (as in Eng. *Isaiah*, broadly pronounced), and OI, as *oi* in *loin*, had disappeared before the Augustan period.

⁶ Lat. *gn* after a vowel has been supposed to have the sound of *ng-n* *rēgnum* being pronounced *rēng-num*, *cōgnōmen* as *cōng-nomen*. Mr Roby (*Lat. Gr.* i. Pref. p. 79 sqq.) and Seelmann (*Aussprache des Lateins* pp. 274, 278) doubt this.

⁷ But the tongue should touch the teeth instead of the forepart of the palate.

⁸ 'Voiced' sounds are produced with, 'voiceless' without vibrations of the vocal chords; *b, d, g, z* (in *zest*) are voiced, *p, t, k, s* are voiceless. The 'voiced' *s* (*z*) has been sometimes assumed for classical Latin in certain words when the *s* stands between two vowels, e.g. *rosa*; but without sufficient authority. It was, however, probably heard in borrowed Greek words like *Smyrna, smaragdus* (often written *Zmyrna zmaragdus*). The voiced *s* of Old Latin had become *r*; as in *laborem*, Old Latin *labosem*.—S, like T, D, N, L is a pure dental produced by putting the tongue near the teeth at a point more forward than in the Eng. *s*.—For pronunciation of *ns* preceded by a vowel see note ⁹ inf.

⁹ The pronunciation of final *m* is not free from doubt. It is clear that it was more weakly sounded than at the beginning or in the middle of a word. (1) When a consonant followed it, the *m* must have remained consonantal as the vowel which preceded was lengthened in position. Thus *tum tenet, tum canet* were scanned ——. (2) Before a vowel, however, or before *h* followed by a vowel, both the *m* and the preceding vowel were disregarded in scansion, *montem habet* being scanned — just like *mons habet* or *monte habet*. In (1) the *m* was probably assimilated to the following consonant becoming *ng* before 'gutturals', *mensam grauem* being pronounced *mensangrauem*



I consonant as in *iūgum, iācio* as Eng. *y*: *yugum, yakio*¹⁰.
 U consonant as in *uānus, uīs, seruo* probably as Eng. *w*¹¹: *wāhnus, wees, serwo* etc.

N.B. There is no ancient authority for spelling *i* consonant as *j* or *u* consonant as *v*. The Romans used one symbol for both vowel and consonant.

R in *ringi, rārus, datōr* trilled *r* as in French (or Scotch): more strongly trilled than in Eng. *opera, herring*¹².

N.B. The final *r* should be fully sounded¹².

R is the 'dog's letter' *r-r-r* 'irritata canis quam homo quam planiu' dicit' Lucil. RH is found in borrowed words as *Pyrrhus, rheuma*. It is the corresponding voiceless sound as in Fr. *théâtre* = Gk. *ρ*. The trilled *r* is represented by *rr* in the exx. given below.

(cf. *quamquam* or *quanquam* pronounced *quanguam*), *n* before *t, d, n, s, i* consonant, *mensam tenet* being pronounced *mensantenet* (and *quom iam quoniam*). Before *r, l* it was completely assimilated, *mensam leuem* being *mensalleuem, mensam rudem mensarrudem*. In (2) the final *m* was probably absorbed into the preceding vowel which was nasalized. Thus, adopting the customary mark for a nasal vowel, *-am* became *ā, -em ā* etc. The nasalized vowel thus formed was slurred on to the following vowel like any non-nasalized vowel. Thus *fluctum accipit* was pronounced *fluctūaccipit*, *quanquam incipit* as *quanquāincipit* etc. [Nasal vowels are produced by sending the voice in part through the nose. The French vowels in *en, on, un, vin* etc. are familiar examples of nasal vowels.]

Mr A. J. Ellis however believes that the *m* was always omitted in speaking and the following consonant pronounced as if it were doubled: *quorum pars* he would pronounce *quoruppars, spargam flores* as *spargafflores, animamque* as *animacque*. Final *im* followed by *i* consonant he pronounces as *ī, -um* followed by *u* consonant as *ū*: e.g. *clauim iacit* as *clauī iacit*. Final *m* at the end of a sentence he thinks was not heard at all. Where a vowel followed as in (2) he believes that the *m* was never sounded and that *fluctum* was treated exactly like *fluctu, mensam* like *mensa*, the final vowel before *m* being simply slurred on to the following one.

It is also possible that a vowel was nasalized when it was immediately followed by *ns*. This would explain the frequent omission of the *n* in such cases, *cesor* appearing on inscriptions by *cesor, cosol* by *consul* etc. In this case *īsanus* (see below) would be pronounced *ēcāsānus, frūns* (for *frōns, frondis*), also written *frūs* (Ennius), *frōōss*.

¹⁰ In a number of cases the *i* was pronounced twice though only written once. So in *obicio*, pronounced *obyikio*.

¹¹ It may however have been pronounced as Fr. *ou* in *oui*.

¹² The proper rolling of the *r* is most important, especially at the end of words, the English tendency being to slur all unaccented finals. Thus we pro-

CH in <i>Bacchus</i> . TH in <i>Cethegus</i> ,	as <i>k, t, p</i> followed by <i>h</i> ¹³ .
PH as in <i>Phoebus</i>	
F in <i>ferueo, uäfer</i>	as in Eng.
H in <i>hora, incho</i>	as in Eng.

COMPOUND AND DOUBLED CONSONANTS.

X as in <i>saxum, pax, exulto</i>	as Eng. <i>ks(x); eksulto</i> , not <i>eggsulto</i>
BS as in <i>absorbeo, urbs</i>	„ „ <i>ps</i> ; <i>urbs</i> as <i>öörps</i> .
Z as in <i>gaza, Zephyrus</i> , a Greek sound	pronunciation doubtful; but perhaps as <i>dz</i> in <i>adze</i> , not as <i>z</i> .

Care should be taken with *doubled* consonants. (*a*) Where we find in classical times the two symbols *regularly* written, we may infer that two sounds were intended to be represented. This is true of explosives, as in *vac-ca, cip-pus, ag-ger*—in sounding which a distinct pause ought to be made (as in Italian) between the two sounds; it is also true of fricatives, as in *Metel-lus, pen-na, fer-rum, pos-sum, dif-ficilis*. (*b*) But where the spelling varies as in *caussa (causa), Pollio (Polio)*, we may infer that the sound was but one somewhat prolonged fricative, the double symbol (*Pollio, cau-ssa*), being used to mark this fact. Before the “doubled” sounds of (*a*) the accent was commonly stronger and the vowel short.

“ELISION” OF VOWELS.

Final vowels (or diphthongs) when followed by vowels (or diphthongs) or *h* were not ‘cut off’ but were lightly pronounced and run on to the following vowel as in Italian¹⁴. Thus we should pronounce *ego eo* as *äg°eō*, not *eg°eo*, *ill° ibit*, not *ill°ibit*. Where the two vowels were the same, as in *Marcella amat*, the effect was that of a single vowel. Similarly where a vowel was followed by

nounce *er, ir, ur* without any distinction with the same single vowel, and assimilate them all to the final short *a*, and consequently make no difference in sound between *mater, (a)matur* and *(a)mata*. So *leuir* is pronounced ‘lever.’ In reading verse this destroys the metre by producing hiatus: *flatur erit* is pronounced as if it were *flata erit*. So also in other cases: *uēr, cūr* and *uīr* are all pronounced alike with the same vowel sound and no *rr*; they should be sounded *wērr, koorr, and wīrr*. The mis-pronunciation is not confined to finals; *arbor* is pronounced ‘ahbor’ (or even ‘ahba’) in place of *ährbör*; *uertit* ought to be pronounced *wērrtit*.

¹³ These sounds are heard in Ireland. They may be obtained by pronouncing *ink-horn, pot-house, tap-house* so that the mute comes into the second syllable, *in-khorn, po-thouse, ta-phouse*. It is quite incorrect to pronounce *th* as in *thin*, and *ph* as *f*.

¹⁴ This is what Cicero means by *coniungere uocales*, *Orator* § 150.

a diphthong beginning with the same vowel, as in *contra audentior*, which had the effect of *contraudentior*.

For the pronunciation of a vowel and final *m* before a following vowel or *h* see note 9.

QUANTITY.

The proper observance of the quantity is of vital importance for the proper appreciation of metre in Latin poetry and rhythm in prose. The short and long vowels in Latin differed in duration as the first and second in *aha!* or *quinine*. This difference should be carefully observed. The practice of lengthening the *accented* vowels is entirely alien to the classical pronunciation of Latin. Pronounce *cibus kī-bus* not *sigh-bu*; pronounce *ā-mō* not *ey-mo*, *sacro sāh-crō* not *sake-row*. Especial care is required where a vowel follows in the next syllable. Hence we should pronounce *sūis sōō-ees*, *sūis sōō-is* and not both like *sue-is*, *sciunt* as *skēē-unt* (not *sigh-unt*). The shortening and slurring of the *unaccented* vowel is equally faulty. *uictoriā* (*ōh-rēē-āh*) is to be carefully distinguished from *uictoriā* (*ōh-rēē-āh*), *ratīs* a ship from *rātīs* dat. pl. of *rātūs* (*rāh-teess*). A special form of this fault is pronouncing words like *dēā*, *rēā* as if the two vowels formed a diphthong and so making them monosyllables (*dear*, *rear*) instead of disyllables.

Every vowel has a quantity of its own; and the English practice of pronouncing all vowels in position before two or more consonants as if they were naturally short, is erroneous. The Romans said *sēcta* but *rēctus*, *tēctus*: *Indoctus* but *īnsula*, *īnfensus*¹⁵.

ACCENT.

The nature of the Latin accent has been much discussed. It was certainly different from the English accent, which consists in pronouncing the accented syllable with much greater emphasis or stress than the adjacent syllables. It seems clear that the Latin

¹⁵ The natural length of a vowel must be distinguished from the conventional 'lengthening' which it is said to undergo before two consonants. In *indoctus* the *i* is itself short, but the fact that *nd* follow allows the syllable to be treated in verse as if it were naturally long as in *ī-bat*. In *īsanus* the vowel itself is long, *ēē*. What vowels were naturally long and short, cannot be completely determined. But we learn from ancient authorities that vowels were long before the combinations *ns*, *nf*, thus: *cōnstāns*, *īnfēnsus*: so also before *gn*: *rēgnum*, *signum* and at least sometimes before *nc*, *ng*: *quīnque*, *Quīn(c)us*, *sānctus*. Where a *g* became *c* before *t*, *s* etc., the preceding vowel became long as in *lēctus* from *lēgo*, while from *sēco* we have *sēctus*. The vowel is frequently long before *r* and a consonant: *Mārcus* (*Maarcus*) *Mārs*, *ōrdo*, *ōrno*. The natural quantity of the vowel was retained when two consonants followed, as in *scrīptus* from *scrībo*. See Seelmann *Aussprache des Lateins* pp. 69 sqq., Marx *Hilfsbüchlein für die Aussprache der Lat. Vokale in positionslangen Silben*.

accent was partly a *pitch*- and partly a *stress*-accent; or, in other words, that the accented syllable was pronounced in a *higher key* and also with *greater force* than the unaccented syllables. The difference in pitch is vouched for, *inter alia*, by the well-known statement of Cicero in the *Orator* § 58. The Latin *acuta* (vox) denoted that the voice rose on the accented syllable: such an accent has been called a 'rising-tone' (Sweet). The Latin *gravis* would naturally be the *lower* tone of unaccented syllables. In the *circumflexa* (or *inflexa* as Cicero calls it), the voice would first rise and then fall on the *same syllable* (plûma). The exact amount of difference in pitch between the accented and unaccented syllables cannot now be ascertained.

As regards the difference in stress it is to be remarked first that it manifests itself in a number of ways: in the tendency to draw away the accent as far as may be from the last syllable, to alter both the quantity and the character of the vowels in unaccented syllables and to affect the final consonants of a word: secondly that the difference of force or vigour with which accented and unaccented syllables were respectively pronounced was considerably less than in English. Accordingly the accented vowels should be pronounced much more gently and the unaccented ones much more distinctly than is at present the custom. Special attention should be paid to this.

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