A PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY OF MODERN GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

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A Pronouncing Vocabulary of Modern Geographical Names by Geo. G. Chisholm

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PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY

OF

MODERN GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

NEARLY TEN THOUSAND IN NUMBER;

WITH

NOTES ON SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION,
AND EXPLANATORY LISTS OF FOREIGN WORDS WHICH FORM
PARTS OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE following list has been compiled as a guide to the correct pronunciation of geographical names—a matter of generally recognized importance, and one which must daily force itself upon the notice of every one in the habit of reading.

It contains nearly 10,000 names, the proper pronunciation of each being shown by re-spelling the word as it should be sounded, and by marking the accent. The system of indicating the sounds is very simple, and any one who carefully reads the introductory notes will find little or no difficulty in correctly pronouncing any of the names.

The explanatory list of foreign words which frequently enter into the composition of place-names, with examples of their use, will be of interest to many readers, as enabling them often to find out what meaning is to be attached to such names.

CONTENTS.

PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY

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MODERN GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES.

NOTES ON THE SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION OF FOREIGN NAMES.

FOREIGN geographical names are spelled in English books either in the same manner as they are spelled in the language of the country to which they belong, or phonetically in accordance with the prevailing sounds of the letters of the English alphabet. The first method can, of course, be adopted only for names belonging to countries in which the Roman alphabet is used with or without diacritic marks. In the following notes on the pronunciation of foreign names the sounds indicated as those corresponding to the letters of foreign alphabets are explained, where necessary, by the key at the foot of the page.

In that key it will be seen that six signs are used to represent un-English sounds. These must be learned by the ear from those who are able to render them accurately, but it may be mentioned that the French sound heard long in *rûe* and short in *bût* is like the sound of *u* in the Scotch word *abûne;* that that heard long in *blêh* and short in *nĕûf* has some resemblance to the sound of *e* in *her;* that the sound represented by ñ (as in the French *on*) is produced by emitting voice through the mouth and nose at the same time, and is accordingly not a pure nasal (like the English *ng* in *sing*) but a semi-nasal; and that the *ch* in the German *nacht* is a strongly aspirated guttural like *ch* in the Scotch word *loch*. Strictly speaking two sounds are represented in German by *ch*, or by *g*, which is sometimes its equivalent. After the vowels *a*, *o*, *u* it is a guttural as in the Scotch *loch*, but after the other vowels and after consonants it is produced by the emission of breath between the point of the tongue and the fore-part of the palate.

Even with these signs for un-English sounds it must be remembered that the sound indicated for the letters of foreign alphabets is very often only an approximation to the true pronunciation, as foreign languages have a great many shades of sound which can be acquired only by those who have familiarized themselves with these.

Fāte, fär, fat, fall; mē, met, hĕr, golden; pīne, pin; nōte, not, mōve; tub, bull; oil, pound; ch, chain; g, go; j, job; y, yes; TH, then; th, thin; zh, azure. French, vûe, bût; bleh, nĕûf; ñ, on. German, ch, nacht.