

**A MANUAL OF
PRONUNCIATION FOR
PRACTICAL USE IN
SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES**

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A Manual of Pronunciation for Practical Use in Schools and Families by Otis Ashmore

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©

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MANUAL OF PRONUNCIATION

*FOR PRACTICAL USE IN SCHOOLS
AND FAMILIES*

CONTAINING A CAREFUL SELECTION OF WORDS IN THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE MOST COMMONLY MISPRONOUNCED, TOGETHER
WITH THEIR PRONUNCIATION AS GIVEN BY THE BEST
AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA

BY

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PREFACE

Nothing so quickly or so certainly reveals the character of our culture and early associations as our speech. The persistence of habits formed in youth, especially bad habits of pronunciation, is well known, and the correction of such faults in adult life is a matter of considerable care and effort.

This manual has been prepared for practical use in the school-room and for the use of families and individuals who value a correct pronunciation of the English language.

Several important features of this manual have justified its preparation. First, the number of words presented has been limited to those most frequently mispronounced, thus reducing the book to a practical working field at small cost. Many of the words in most books on orthoepy are very rarely mispronounced, and they serve only to cumber the work. Those who desire an exhaustive reference book should consult the dictionaries. Second, the plan of exhibiting the weight of authorities where authorities differ is of great practical value. In these cases the typography and the arrangement are such as to prevent confusion. It is certainly desirable to know the weight of authority that prefers one of two or more authorized pronunciations. A glance at the page will show at once what company we keep. Third, the drill columns of unmarked words in the back of the book will be appreciated by every teacher. The attempt to teach orthoepy without much drill and practice is of little use. It is not enough to tell pupils how words are pronounced; they must be drilled by abundant practice in order to fix the correct pronunciation in the memory. Under the head of "How to Use the Book" this use of the drill columns is fully illustrated. Fourth, in case of those words about whose

pronunciation there is no difference of opinion among the authorities the fact is indicated by a star opposite these words. It is a source of much satisfaction to know that many words, as *albumen*, *address*, *coadjutor*, *divan*, *horizon*, *harass*, *idea*, *incisive*, *inquiry*, *leisure*, *opponent*, etc., have only one authorized pronunciation, and that all other pronunciations are without any authority whatever.

There is another class of words concerning whose pronunciation there is some slight difference of opinion but the weight of authority is overwhelmingly in favor of some one particular form. The plan of this book enables the student to see at once the strength or weakness of his position in regard to the pronunciation of such words, and to choose the form supported by the best authority. This may be illustrated by such words as *abdomen*, *acclimate*, *appendicitis*, *candelabrum*, *data*, *finance*, *ignoramus*, *gratis*, etc.

There are many words in our language about whose pronunciation the best orthoepists and lexicographers differ greatly. In some cases it is very difficult to determine what form should be preferred. It is well that we should know these words and the differences of opinion concerning their pronunciation in order that we may give due credit to those who may use a different form of pronunciation from that adopted by ourselves.

"The ultimate standard of pronunciation for the English language is the usage that prevails among the best-educated portion of the people to whom the language is vernacular; or, at least, the usage that will be most generally approved by them."

Campbell's law of the good usage of a word applies with much force to its pronunciation. This law requires this usage to be, first, *reputable*, or the practice of intelligent and educated persons; second, *national*, as opposed to provincial or foreign; third, *present*, or the usage of the generation in which we live.

As representing the best usage in pronunciation, ten of the best dictionaries of the English language published in this country and in England have been selected for reference. The scholarship, labor, and care displayed in these works entitle them to our highest

respect. Many other authorities have been freely consulted, but the resultant of the opinions of those named is rarely changed by the consideration of any others. Many important and obvious considerations justify us in assigning different values to the authorities quoted. In determining the preferred form of pronunciation in the following pages due weight has been given to all these considerations, with the feeling, however, that in the case of a few words a different form from that indicated might with equal propriety be preferred and used by others.

In cases where there is a marked difference in the English and the American usage, and yet nearly an average balance, the preference has been given to the latter.

The compiler has not presumed to give any weight of authority whatever to his own views in determining the pronunciation of words, but he has sought rather to present the views of others who are justly entitled to our highest respect.

OTIS ASHMORE.

MARCH, 1904.



HOW TO USE THE BOOK

Success in teaching this book depends very largely upon frequent short drills. Daily lessons are far better than one or two lessons a week. The plan should be to advance slowly and review rapidly. Every pupil should have a book.

The teacher should first assign a lesson of from ten to twenty words daily, and go over the lesson with the pupils, pronouncing each word distinctly and giving such other instruction as may be needed.

In preparing the lesson the pupil should learn and adopt the preferred pronunciation only, using the other forms for reference and general information.

In the back of the book will be found a list of all the words given in this manual arranged in order corresponding to the pages and numbered accordingly for convenient reference, but the words are without diacritical marks. This list is intended for use in recitation and drill.

In conducting the recitation, have the pupils in turn pronounce from this drill list the words assigned for the lesson. While the pupil who is reciting is thus engaged, the other members of the class should follow closely with their eyes the words that are diacritically marked in the body of the book, in order that the eye memory as well as the ear memory may be utilized in fixing the desired impressions upon the mind. Corrections may be made in the usual way. Every recitation should include a rapid review of from one hundred to two hundred of the words previously learned. This review is essential.