

INTRODUCTORY LESSON

PRONUNCIATION

I. The Latin alphabet is the same as the English, except that the Latin has no *w*.

a. The letter *j* was not introduced until long after the time of the great Roman writers. Its sound was represented by *i*, which was used both as a vowel and as a consonant. But since *j* was used in the spelling of Latin words during the period in which the greater number of the English derivatives from Latin were brought into the English language, and since its use is helpful to beginners in learning the pronunciation of new words, it is retained in this book. The sounds of *u* and *v* were also represented originally by one letter.

VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

II. The vowels, as in English, are *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and *y*.¹ The other letters are consonants.

THE ROMAN METHOD OF PRONUNCIATION

SOUNDS OF THE LETTERS

III. The vowels in Latin are either long or short. In this book long vowels are indicated by a mark placed above them. A vowel which is unmarked is short. The vowel sounds are indicated in the following table:

\bar{a} = <i>a</i> in <i>father</i>	a^2 = first <i>a</i> in <i>ahá</i>
\bar{e} = <i>e</i> in <i>fade</i>	<i>e</i> = <i>e</i> in <i>net</i>
\bar{i} = <i>i</i> in <i>machine</i>	<i>i</i> = <i>i</i> in <i>this</i>
\bar{o} = <i>o</i> in <i>holy</i>	<i>o</i> = <i>o</i> in <i>domain</i>
\bar{u} = <i>u</i> in <i>rude</i>	<i>u</i> = <i>u</i> in <i>full</i>

¹ *y* is seldom used. Its sound is the same as that of *u* in the French language or *ü* in German.

² Like \bar{a} , but pronounced more quickly.

IV. The consonants have in general the same sounds as in English. The following exceptions are to be noted:

c and **ch** have the sound of *k*.

g has only one sound, that heard in *go*.

j is equivalent to *y* in *yes*.

s has only the sound heard in *say*.

t always has the sound heard in *top*. It does not combine with *i* to give the sound of *sh* as in *nation*.

v has the sound of *w*.

x has only the sound of *ks*, as in *exercise*.

bs and **bt** are equivalent to *ps* and *pt*.

ph and **th** are nearly equivalent to *p* and *t*.

DIPHTHONGS

V. A diphthong is a combination of two vowels in one syllable. The diphthongs are **ae**, **au**, **ei**, **eu**, **oe**, and **ui**. Their sounds are as follows:

ae = *ai* in *aisle*

eu = *eu* in *feud*

au = *ou* in *out*

oe = *oi* in *boil*

ei = *ei* in *vein*

ui = almost¹ *ui* in *ruin*

SYLLABLES

VI. A syllable is either a group of letters the sounds of which are taken together in pronunciation, or a vowel or diphthong which is taken by itself in pronunciation. The following words are divided into syllables by hyphens: *ac-ci-dent*, *re-li-a-ble*. A syllable must always have a vowel or a diphthong. The rules for the division of Latin words into syllables are as follows:

(1) A consonant between two vowels is taken with the vowel which follows it: **pō-nō**, **ha-be-ō**.

(2) Two consonants between two vowels are divided, one going with the vowel which precedes and one with the vowel which follows. But if the second of two consonants is *l* or *r*,

¹ The *u* is shorter than in the English word, and the vowels are more closely blended.

and if the combination can be pronounced at the beginning of a word, as **bl**, **br**, etc., the two are taken with the vowel which follows, like a single consonant¹: **man-dā-re**, **car-dō**; but **fe-bris**, **ā-cris**.

LENGTH OF SYLLABLES

VII. (1) A syllable is long if it contains a long vowel or a diphthong: **dō-num**, **cau-tus**.

(2) A syllable is regularly long if its vowel is followed by two consonants: **con-dō**, **mit-tō**.

a. But if the two consonants consist of a mute² followed by **l** or **r** the syllable is short, unless it has a long vowel or a diphthong: **pā-tris**.

(3) All other syllables are short: **me-mor**, **a-grī**.

a. **x** and **z** have the value of two consonants because they represent a combination of sounds. A syllable is long if its vowel is followed by either of these double consonants.

ACCENT

VIII. In pronouncing a word of two or more syllables we make one of the syllables more prominent than any other. Thus in the word *mem-o-ry* we make the first syllable prominent. This prominence in pronunciation given to a syllable is called *accent*. In the word *memory* the accent is said to fall on the first syllable. The accent of Latin words is determined by the following rules:

IX. (1) In a word of two syllables the accent falls on the first syllable: **lū'men**.

(2) In a word of more than two syllables the accent falls on the syllable before the last, if it is long, otherwise on the second syllable from the last: **au-dī're**, **con-ten'tus**, **me'mi-nī**.

a. The syllable before the last is called the *penult*; the second from the last is called the *antepenult*.

¹ In the division of a compound verb into syllables in writing or printing, the prepositional element is separated from the simple verb: **ad-it**.

² The mutes are **b**, **p**, **c**, **k**, **q**, **g**, **d**, **t**, **ph**, **th**, **ch**.