

from India, we passed through Vienna.¹ As a rule, however, the modern alphabets as well as the ancient oriental alphabets offer tolerably accurate distinctions of sound. The differences between sound and spelling we find sometimes to be caused by the non-consideration of such modifications as are, in themselves, the physiological consequence of the combination of certain letters. In other cases we find that in words transferred from a foreign language the pronunciation has lost in correctness, whilst in spelling the original detailed distinctions have been retained.

In modern European languages (Italian excepted) the spelling not unfrequently shows a connection with the etymology, sometimes to a degree which makes the unexpected pronunciation an object of material difficulty to the foreigner in learning the respective languages. The historical development from parts originally widely differing, as in English, often exercises a great influence on increasing the difference between writing and reading; though not without following certain laws in connection with the origin of the different parts of the language.

In the ancient European languages, particularly at the period when writing was subordinate to speech, there was a far greater accordance between sound and spelling. The Greek transcription is remarkably well defined in many modifications. The rule that media is combined with media, tenuis with tenuis,² aspirata with aspirata, and that the succeeding consonant changes the quality of the preceding one, is quite in accordance with what we really observe, if we use the phonetic tube and listen to the modifications as actually spoken, provided no arbitrary irregularities are produced, as is easily the case, if the succession of the consonants is interrupted by a kind of diæresis.

¹ As general works on this subject I mention for reference: KEMPELEN, *Mechanismus der menschlichen Sprache*, Wien, 1791; LISKOVIVS, *Theorie der Stimme*, Leipzig, 1814; HUPFELD, *Ueber Sprachlaute* in JAHN'S *Phil. Jahrb.* IX., 1829; STRODTMANN, *Anat. Vorhalle zur Phys. der Stimme und der Sprachlaute*, Altona, 1837; BINDSEIL, *Abh. zur allg. vergl. Sprachlehre, I. Physiologie der Stimm- und Sprachlaute*, Hamb. 1838; JOH. MÜLLER, *Handbook of Physiology*, 1840. German edition, Vol. II., p. 180, &c.

² Also in German we say "er lepte" though we write "er lebte" (he lived), &c.