

## A. PRONUNCIATION.

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Before making any remarks about the Grammar of the Cape Dutch dialect, it will be necessary to say something about the pronunciation of the language. For the ordinary Englishman this pronunciation has so many difficulties, that he can only learn it through a teacher; the following hints, however, may be of some use.

1. *ă* (short *a*), that is, an *a* in a syllable which is closed by one or more consonants, has no corresponding sound in the English language; the sound stands between that of *a* in English *man*, and that of *au* in Scotch *maun*. It is the German *a* in *das*, and the French *a* in *pas*.

### *Examples.*

rat, dat, vat, lat,  
man, kan, pan, dan,  
zal, mal, pal, bal,  
beval, kamme, banneling.

N.B. In dividing a Dutch word into syllables, the consonants are reckoned to belong, as much as possible to the following vowels; when two similar consonants occur, the first belongs to the preceding, and the second to the following syllable.

*Examples.*

<i>rame</i>	is divided	ra — me
<i>ramme</i>	”	ram — me
<i>kater</i>	”	ka — ter
<i>katte</i>	”	kat — te
<i>pote</i>	”	po — te
<i>potte</i>	”	pot — te
<i>mure</i>	”	mu — re
<i>muise</i>	”	mui — se
<i>mutse</i>	”	mut — se

Syllables ending in a vowel are called *open*; those ending in a consonant *closed*.

Some inseparable combinations of consonants, like *ng* and *ch* are always considered as belonging to the first syllable, e.g. *ring—e*, *lach—e*.

2.  $\bar{a}$  (long a), that is an *a* at the end of a syllable, is pronounced like the *a* in English *pa* and *ma*.

*Examples.*

Jāre, dāke, rāme, kāter,  
wā'e, māne, stāpel,  
kāmer, gāte, bāze, stātie.

*aa*, has the same sound as  $\bar{a}$ , and words ending in a syllable containing  $\bar{aa}$ , are in the plural written with  $\bar{a}$ .

*Examples.*

jaar (year)	plural: jāre
baar (bier)	” bāre
maan (moon)	” māne
raam (window)	” rāme
zaad (seed)	” zāde.

3.  $\check{e}$  (short e), that is an *e* in a syllable closed by one or more consonants, is pronounced like *a* in the English words *pat*, *rat*.

*Examples.*

pet, den, ken, met, zet, bed, bedding.

4. ê (mute e) has the sound of *e* in English *the*, or of the first *a* in *ajar*. It is heard generally at the end of a syllable, and especially in the plural ending.

*Examples.*

dënnê, boekê, békên, bêloof, gêloof,  
gêloop, snuitêr, drijvêr.

5. ē (long e) is pronounced like the *a* in the English word *bale*. It is found in open syllables, except when it happens to be the last letter of a word.

*Examples.*

dēkên, rēkên, lēvên, strēvên, bēkêr.

*ee* is pronounced like long ē.

*Examples.*

meet	(pronounced like English	<i>mate</i> )
peet	( " " "	<i>pate</i> )
beet	( " " "	<i>bait</i> )
reet	( " " "	<i>rate</i> )

6. ö (short o), that is, an ō in closed syllables, is pronounced like the *o* in English *pot*.

*Examples.*

pot, lot, dom, stom, rok, stok, kop.

7. ō (long o) is found in open syllables, and is pronounced like *oa* in English *coat*.

*oo* is pronounced in exactly the same way.

*Examples.*

kōre, dōren, bō'e, lōve,  
koor, stoom, loop, stoot.

8. ũ (short u), found in closed syllables, has nearly the sound of the *u* in English *but*.

*Examples.*

put, dut, dun, luns, bul, muf.

9.  $\bar{u}$  (long u), found in open syllables, has no corresponding sound in English, and can only be learnt by practice. It has the sound of the  $\ddot{u}$ , in German, and of the French *u* in *dur*, or *mur*.

*Examples.*

k $\bar{u}$ re, g $\bar{u}$ re, d $\bar{u}$ re, m $\bar{u}$ re, z $\bar{u}$ re.

*uu* has the same sound as long *u*. Like in the case of *a*, words written in Dutch in singular with *uu*, form their plural with only one  $\bar{u}$ .


*Examples.*

muur (wall)	pl. m $\bar{u}$ re,
kuur (fancy)	pl. k $\bar{u}$ re.

10.  $\check{i}$  (short i) is found in closed syllables, and has the sound of *i* in the English word *pit*.

*Examples.*

pit, lid, vind, kind, lint, zit.

 Long *i* does not exist in Dutch, its place being taken by the diphthong *ie* (see below).

**Diphthongs and Triphthongs.**

11. *ae* is a combination peculiar to Cape Dutch, a few words which are written and pronounced in High Dutch with *aa*, being spelt in the former dialect with *ae*, which is then pronounced nearly like the *ea* in English *bear*.

*Examples.*

vaers, staert, paerd, paersch.

12. *aai* has the sound of the *i* in the English word *bite*.

*Examples.*

baai, paai, raai, lawaai, saai.

13. *auw*, *ou*, and *ouw* are all pronounced alike, having the sound of the *ou* in the English word *loud*.

*Examples.*

rauw, blauw, dauw, gauw, lauw,  
koud, stout, hout, oud, fout,  
rouw, vrouw, berouw, trouw, vouw.

14. *ie* is pronounced like *ea* in English *meat*.

*Examples.*

piet, riet, zien, nie, die, viesch.

15. *ei* and *ij* have exactly the same sound, but this has no English equivalent, and can therefore only be learnt through practice. The nearest equivalent is the sound of *ai* in the broad northern pronunciation of the name *Tait*.

*Examples.*

Meid, eier, bijt, vijl, feil, lei.

N.B. The ending *lijk* is pronounced *lêk*, or very much like the English *lick*.

16. *eeu* and *eeuw* have no corresponding sound in the English language, and can only be learnt by hearing them pronounced by a person who knows Dutch.

*Examples.*

eeuw, meeuw, leeuw.

17. *ui* is one of the most difficult sounds for an Englishman. It is best compared with the pronunciation of the *oei* in the French word *oeil* (eye), but like the sound of *eeuw* should be learnt by practice.

*Examples.*

uil, vuil, kuil, ruit, duim, puin.

## Consonants.

As a general rule it may be said that the consonants have in Dutch the same sound as in English; the following, however, require special notice.

No Dutch word begins with a *c*, except a few proper nouns.

*d* at the end of a word, has the sound of a *t*.

### Examples.

koud, mand, tand, bond, rand, rad.

*g*, or *ch* (the latter seldom occurring at the beginning of a word) is a guttural, houring nearly the sound of the *ch* in Scotch *loch*. Foreigners generally make the mistake of putting too much force in the uttering of this sound, by which it becomes too harsh.

### Examples.

gaan, gaaf, gauw, gé, gegé.

klacht, lach, macht, dag, vlag.

*z* has the sound of the sharp *s* in English *sea*.

### Examples.

zee, zien, zand, zaam, zuip, zuur.

*v* has the sound of the *f* in the English *friend*.

*h* is always sounded at the beginning of a syllable, but not in the middle or end.

*j* has not the sibilant sound of the English *j*, but is pronounced like *y* in *you*, or *young*.

### Examples.

juffer, jong, jaap, jou, jullie, jij.

*q* is not used in Dutch; its place is taken by the *kw*, which is pronounced like *qu* in queen.

### Examples.

kwaad, kwast, kwijl, kwak.

*w* has in Dutch the sound of the soft *v* in the English words *Venice*, *invent*.

*Examples.*

water, wat, waar, waai, wie, wil.

*sch* at the beginning of a word is pronounced like *sch* in the English word *school*; in the middle or end of a word it is pronounced like *s*.

*Examples.*

school, schop, schip, schuim, scheef,  
visch, varsch, asch, frisch, vissche.

*k* and *g* are, unlike in English, pronounced before *n*.

*Examples.*

knie, knaag, knel, knip, knak,  
gnieps,

*w* is also pronounced before *r*.

*Examples.*

wrak, wrik, wring.

## B. SHORT GRAMMATICAL NOTES.

### I.

The language, generally known as **Cape Dutch**, is a dialect of the High Dutch, largely mixed with foreign elements, principally Portuguese and Malay; a small portion of its vocabulary can be traced to French or German origin. Being merely a *spoken* language, and having practically no literature of its own, its spelling is to a large extent subject to variation, according to the education and taste of the person writing it; for the same reason a large number of endings have worn off and the grammar reduced to the simplest form.

In spelling Cape Dutch in this book, the relation between Cape Dutch and High Dutch has been kept in view, as far as possible. At the same time attention has been paid to the phonetic changes, and to the dropping of endings of words, or of consonants in the middle of