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I have tried to make a synthesis of English regional dialects, based on a large number of published sources, and to give a comprehensive account of the pronunciation of English speakers with a speaker register.

I have of course exploited my own familiarity with the various accents because it is easier to do so in accordance with the varying experience in areas which life has happened to mark me. These biases will be doubtless apparent. But I have also endeavoured to make appropriate use of all kinds of scholarly treatises on pronunciation in great variety of speech, wherever they have been available to assist in whatever teaching they believe (phonological, dialectological, structuralist, 'open' generalist, sociolinguistic, variationist). My aim has been to bring together their several findings within a unified and integrative framework.

I have drawn on descriptive standards, as will be seen, less within the University College London phonetic tradition or David Jones, A. C. Gimson, and J. D. O'Connor. I am fortunate to have been their pupil. This standard could be said to arrive at an eclectic amalgam of what seems valuable from both older and more theoretical approaches.

Where surveys based on substantial fieldwork exist, I have made use of their findings. Where they do not, I have had to rely partly on my own impressions. The reader must bear in mind that some of the statements I make are for this reason necessarily tentative.

Inevitably I may be leaving myself open to the charge of being an ethnocentric voice that is heard. Many readers will know something of the socially sensitive pronunciation variables of their own speech than I can hope to. The Rotherham notes will help here, as will a description of the features which distinguish the speech from that of Sheffield a few miles away — features obvious to the native but opaque to the outsider (vol. 1, § 5.2). There is a great deal of descriptive work remaining to be done.

I see the original conception of these volumes as lying pri-