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OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS,
FIRST SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA.
Philadelphia, May 28th, 1863.

At a meeting of the Controllers of Public Schools, First District of Pennsylvania, held at the Controllers' Chamber, on Friday, January 24, 1863, the following Resolution was adopted:—

Resolved, That THE SCHOLAR'S COMPANION shall be the only Text-Book on the subject of Etymology to be used in the Schools of the District; and that the study of Definitions, and the Questions to be asked at the High School Examinations, shall be confined to words derived from roots, to be found in said work, and that all technical terms shall be excluded.

From the Minutes.
JAMES D. CAMPBELL,
Secretary.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,
Baltimore, Md., July 22d, 1865.

At a meeting of the State Board of Education, held this day, "THE SCHOLAR'S COMPANION" was adopted as a Text-Book to be used in the Public Schools throughout the State.

W. HORACE SOPER,
Clerk.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1841, by HENRY PERKINS, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

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CAXTON PRESS OF
SHERMAN & CO., PHILADELPHIA.



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BIBLIOTECA

ACERVO DE LITERATURA



INTRODUCTION.

THE "SCHOLAR'S COMPANION" has been too long before the public, and too widely endorsed, to require a labored defence as a text-book for schools. The sale of half a million of copies in more than a hundred editions, with an increasing demand, is sufficient indication of the estimate in which it is held. In revising it for a new edition, it has not been thought best to attempt any alteration in the plan or arrangement of the text. This, besides the doubtful utility, would render the new edition unfit to be used with those already in extensive use in the schools. Some more marked distinctions in the old arrangement, with a copious index for easy reference, with an improved typography and style of mechanical execution, is all the Publishers deem necessary to meet the wishes of its numerous patrons. These improvements have been effected at considerable expense, and it is hoped they will be acceptable.

Part I. embraces a large and judicious selection of cognate words, requiring the particular attention of the learner to their orthography and orthoepy; also a list of equivocal words, or words spelled and pronounced alike, but used in different significations, and a corrected list of others that are improperly spelled and used. These selections are not unnecessarily multiplied, and yet they are fully sufficient for all practical purposes.

Part II. treats of the composition and the derivation of words. The learner who makes himself familiar with the prefixes and suffixes, as here presented in a few pages, will hardly need more for all practical purposes to enable him to recognise readily their proper force and effect.

The etymology of words derived from the Latin and the Greek is of leading importance, because such words are the most numerous.

Language, in its principles and its structure, is necessarily, and everywhere, the same. The Latin and Greek scholar has the advantage of the mere English scholar in this only, a facility in tracing the ety-

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mology of a large class of our words which have been derived from those languages. Yet by a careful study of the etymology of the words whose derivation is traced in the following pages, the English scholar will find his only compensation for the lack of that classical learning which can be obtained only by a long course of study. To the classical scholar, these exercises will be doubly useful and interesting.

Part III. embraces the important study of synonyms. The importance of this branch of the study of words can be duly appreciated only by those who have pursued it critically. It is indispensable to a correct use of language, and has contributed essentially to place the few who have attained the highest eminence in scholarship above the others of high position. Augustine said of Cicero, "*Ille verborum vigilantissimus appensor ac mensor*"—*a skilful mint-master, a subtle watcher and weigher of words*. Of all masters of the English language, none perhaps deserves so nearly a comparison with Cicero as Daniel Webster. All who have ever aided him in placing his thoughts upon paper—and he was often obliged to employ amanuenses—can testify how critically he watched and weighed his words, how accurately he discriminated, how he would discourse on the nice shades of distinction when he required the change of a word, how he was capable of showing clearly, etymologically, historically, eloquently, and convincingly, a difference where ordinary scholars had discerned only a simple synonym. This made his definitions and opinions of authority, and will for ever place his written discussions in every department among the most cherished classics of English literature.

The subject is fairly opened in these pages, and enough is here collated for a class-book; enough, too, to awaken an interest which may lead the inquiring mind to pursue the subject in more elaborate treatises. These may be found at hand in "*Roget's Thesaurus of English words*," revised and edited by Dr. Sears, a work of sterling merit and priceless value to the scholar who would attain to accuracy in writing or speaking his mother-tongue. "*Trench on the Study of Words*" may also be recommended as a book which unites the interest of a novel with a most critical and discriminating philological discussion.

"How often," says Trench, "do the great masters of style in every tongue,—perhaps none so often as Cicero, the greatest of all,—pause to discriminate between the words they are using; how much care and labor, how much subtlety of thought they have counted well bestowed on the operation; how much importance do they avowedly attach to it! Not to say that his works, even where he does not intend it, will be a continual lesson in this respect, a great writer, merely in the accuracy with which he employs words, will always be exercising us in synonymous discrimination.

"Nor is this habit of discrimination valuable only as a part of our intellectual training; but what a positive increase is it of mental wealth when we have learned to discern between things which really differ, but have been hitherto confused in our minds; and have made these distinctions permanently our own in the only way by which they can be secure, that is, by assigning to each its appropriate word and peculiar sign.

"What a help, moreover, will it prove to the writing of a good English style, if instead of having many words before us, and choosing almost at random and hap-hazard from among them, we at once know which, and which only, we ought in the case before us to employ, which will be the exact vesture of our thoughts. It is the first characteristic of a well-dressed man that his clothes fit him; that they are not too small and shrunken here, too large and loose there. Now it is precisely such a prime characteristic of a good style that the words fit close to the thoughts: they will not be too big here, hanging like a giant's robe on the limbs of a dwarf; nor too small there, as a boy's garment into which the man has with difficulty and ridiculously thrust himself. We do not feel in one place that the writer means more than he has succeeded in saying; in another, that he has said more than he means; in a third, something beside what his intention was—and all this from a want of dexterity in employing the instrument of language, of precision in knowing what words would be the exactest correspondents and fittest exponents of his thought."

Words are to be considered principally in two relations, viz.: in their definite meaning, and in their grammatical construction. In their latter aspect, we learn the structure of language, the different classes of words with their philosophical uses and relative importance—in the former, the force and distinct signification of each separate word. This requires an accurate knowledge of their origin and authorized use.

In tracing the etymology of words, we go first to the original words in the language where they have been first employed, or to their first formation, if original, in our own language. Thence we trace their related meanings, the modified uses to which they have been applied, and the new significations which, in process of time, have been assigned to them. Sometimes a word is entirely changed from its original meaning, and is used not only in varied but in opposite senses. Words are constantly manufactured too for the times, for the new things that are made the subject of thought, or for the new modes of thought that are entertained. They are also formed by the combination of different words; by affixes and suffixes. They are thus, at different periods, changed or modified in meaning, and new words are invented.

Language, the first necessity of the mind, is not only the instrument

but the nutriment of thought, "essential to the activity of our speculative powers, modifying, by its changes, the growth and complexion of the faculties it feeds."

The importance of language, then, is readily perceived in its necessity, its controlling influence, and its uses. It is necessary to the development of mind and to civilization. The language of a nation or of an individual tests the character as accurately as the thermometer tests the elevation of the temperature, or as the consols of England indicate the value of money in the market.

Thought is the capital deposit of the mind; Language the medium of exchange and intercommunication. The consols of the race man consist of the united stock of all these separate deposits, where the value of each is set forth and certified in language, the instrument of thought. Books written become the indentures of a common partnership. Here, the treasures "unhedged, lie open in one common field, and bid all welcome to the vital feast."

The study of language as a mental discipline, is, perhaps, of greater influence than any other study: not generally so considered, only, perhaps, because like everything common, its true position and true influence are lost in the subtle involution of its power with any study that is new, startling, or difficult. We must analyze the mind's operations in the solution of problems in science, or labored results in philosophy, before we can detect the nice distinctions required, and sought out, and discovered in the words and forms of speech which we use to define our propositions and elucidate our arguments. Here is a field for philosophy, for logic, for mental enterprise, for keen analysis, and nice discrimination. Here, in the clear exhibition of results to others—requiring the logic, the philosophy, the illumination of language—a mental activity is exercised more important to a healthful discipline than in most, perhaps than in any, other profound investigations prosecuted in thought.

The study of words is the study of philosophy, of history, of morals. We may read a nation's history in a nation's words. Mind is there stereotyped in form and feature like the reality of life. There is often more of true history to be learned in a Dictionary, which cannot lie, than in written annals, which may be framed by prejudice, pride, affectation, misconception, or intended falsehood. Tradition is shadowy; memories may be partial; history, even, is often poetic, mixed with fiction. But a nation's language is itself, the record of the day and the hour, and the honest reality of its acting, thinking, speaking. Words are things. In everything, therefore, which they fairly indicate, they are reliable.

The study of words, then, becomes something more than a detail of vocables, a tissue of sounds: "'Tis food, 'tis strength, 'tis life."

The study of words has never yet had its proper place in the educational course. If pursued at all, it has been a study of definitions merely, disconnected with etymology. We here trace the stream to its sources, explore its fruitful branches and its delta, where, by a hundred mouths, it brings down accumulated treasures to a common reservoir of human thought, whence, as from the ocean, is exhaled a healthful influence that refreshes the whole face of the earth.

"Word warriors" have caused more bloodshed and misery than all the executioners of martyrs to truth and principle. Books have been written, treasures squandered, controversies exasperated, eternal hatred engendered, armies brought into deadly conflict, and nations revolutionized or destroyed, for a word: more than this,—for a word *misunderstood*, for an illusion.

"One word interposed
Makes enemies of nations that had else,
Like kindred drops, been mingled into one."

Theological controversies, political asperities, judicial litigations, personal animosities, have their origin and vitality most often in the misunderstanding of words. This, unperceived by the contending parties, is often obvious to the disinterested observer—sometimes apparent to the combatants themselves after all the mischief has been done, past remedy.

That which is so often fatal to truth and to right in social life, is also injurious to the individual mind in all its own inquiries and activities. We think in words. Hence these words must truly represent their antitypes, else the mind deceives itself, and is at war with its own opinions. Thus the mind becomes its own tormentor, biting and devouring itself; or urged on to conflict without an object, it builds a man of straw, applies the faggot, and is consumed by the fire it has wantonly kindled; or like the viper bites itself to death, a suicide without a cause.

Thus it is not without a philosophical reason the Saviour said to the Pharisees: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." The connection between the words we utter and the moral emotions, is palpable to every man who has studied the mental processes of his own consciousness. Physiologically, the connection between the vocal organs and the brain is known to be delicately sensitive and powerfully reciprocal. The same may be true, metaphysically, between the verbal definitions in our mental activities and the permanent impressions of principles on the mental and moral emotions. In the spiritual state, these verbal mental processes place in permanent forms what words, uttered or written, stereotype in vocables.

They are then ours, adopted, attach to the mind as a part of itself, and become permanently operative. A man's thoughts, which are words uttered in himself, are the record by which he may read himself as truly as the opinion, written or spoken and defended, reveals him to others. Habits of thinking are as important, often more important, on permanent forms of character than habits of speaking. Hence the wisdom of that caution, "Be careful of thy words, whether in thought or utterance."

Definitely, the *study of words* is the object of this treatise, intended to initiate the young learner early into the habit of a critical definition of the language he uses. Beyond mere orthography and correct pronunciation, it is designed to introduce the young mind into the inner life of words, and thus into the inner life of the soul. It is a spelling-book, but that is not all. It teaches correct pronunciation, but that is not all. It is a defining Dictionary,—but still more, it discriminates the nicest shades of difference in words, in thought, and contributes eminently to form the mind to truth, and the character to uprightness, and the soul for its immortal destiny.

If we may have contributed to awaken the minds of Teachers and educationists to the true dignity, importance, and influence of the *study of words*, we have installed our subject in its proper place, and accomplished the object of this brief Introduction to the SCHOLAR'S COMPANION.

R. W. BAILEY.

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