American Dictionaries

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American Dictionaries.

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Chap. I.

English Lexicography to the Nineteenth Century.

A comparison of a modern dictionary with earlier and intermediate dictionaries will show that the science of lexicography has been ~~not~~ of slow growth. One will be amazed at the complexity and the vast amount of information contained in the modern dictionary as compared with the simplicity and meagreness of early works. Not until the third decade of the eighteenth century was any attempt made to include all of the words of the English language. Bailey's Dictionary, first printed in 1721, was the earliest attempt at such an inclusion. This, however, fell short of its aim; for "The alphabetical vocabulary cannot be at all depended on as complete, even as to familiar language."(1) William Curtis Stiles says that even "fifteen years ago no general dictionary existed that had more than one third of the words desirable for use in writing and speaking the English language."(2) Though this insufficiency has been removed and the vocabularies of modern dictionaries are for all practical purposes complete, we may still say that Bailey is not the only lexicographer to fall short of his aim.

(1) Living Age. Dec 1873 Vol 119 p645

(2) Success Magazine. Sept 1903. p.409.

The functions of a modern dictionary are in the main five: to give for each word the correct orthography, syllabification, pronunciation, derivation, and definition. Usually the definitions are clarified either by illustrative extracts from standard writers or by pictorial representation of the object defined, and sometimes by both. These, however, were by no means the functions of the early dictionaries, but are distinctly modern contributions produced by slow evolution. Even as late as the beginning of the eighteenth century there seems to have been in existence no book which had for its design the definition in English of the English words in general use.③

It is my purpose to treat historically and critically American dictionaries, endeavoring to show to what extent and with what success they have fulfilled the fundamental requirements of a good lexicon of a living language, and to point out any defects which may have occurred in such an undertaking. In order to understand just what foundation America had upon which to build, we may devote a few pages to a brief survey of what had been accomplished in lexicography in England before the appearance of the first American dictionary.

3) ~~The Growth of~~ Our Dictionaries - New York Henry Holt & Co. 1890 - p. 8.

In the following brief treatment of English lexicography, no attempt is made to discuss all works. Such an exhaustive treatment is not only unnecessary but for our purposes useless. I shall therefore limit myself to those dictionaries which have in some way contributed to the development of lexicography, or which possess some particular interest in themselves apart from such contribution. For convenience of treatment the following divisions may be made: (1) the beginnings down to the fifteenth century; (2) The Latin-English labors to facilitate the study of Latin; (3) works to facilitate the study of modern languages; (4) the ~~early~~ purely English dictionary of the seventeenth century; (5) later dictionaries aiming at completeness of vocabulary.

The origin of lexicography in England was similar to its beginnings on the continent. The first works were in substance glosses, in form manuscripts, and in language Latin. In order to assist his own memory, and to aid those who followed him, the owner of a Latin manuscript wrote the meaning of a difficult word above the original, either in a more familiar Latin word, or in one of his own language. Such an explanatory word is known as a gloss. "In process of time it occurred to some industrious reader that it would be a useful exercise of his ~~own~~ industry to collect out of all the manuscripts

to which he had access, all the glosses that they contained, and combine them in a list..... A collection of glosses, thus copied out and thrown into a single list, constituted a Glossarium or Glossary" (1)

The preparation and collection of these glosses, chiefly for the assistance of the pupil or the teacher constitute "one of the fountain-heads of English lexicography; the other is to be found in the fact that in those distant days, as in our own, the learning of Latin was the acquisition of a foreign tongue which involved the learning of a grammar and of a vocabulary". (2) This latter was probably learned by the pupils from the teacher rather than from a text; and was acquired by memorizing classified lists of words and meanings assigned by the master. "Such lists of vocables, with their meaning in the vulgar tongue, were also at times committed to paper or parchment leaves, and a collection of these constituted a Vocabularium or vocabulary." (2)

Since the function of the Glossary and the vocabulary was the same, an enlargement of the one was naturally and easily effected by copying words and meanings from the other. In the process of copying it occurred to some one that the value and usefulness of these Vocabularies would be increased by an alphabetical arrangement of the words and phrases.

(1) Evolution of English Lexicography Oxford 1900 pp 8-9.
(2) " " " " " p 9.

However slowly this alphabetization may have proceeded, it had its beginning in the oldest English glossaries that have come down to us. In the Leiden Glossary no alphabetical arrangement is attempted; to determine the occurrence of any particular word in this glossary, one must examine the manuscript from beginning to end. The first stage of alphabetization is seen in the Epinal Glossary*; here all the words beginning with the same letter are grouped together. Though as a gloss the Epinal is an advance on the Leiden, in point of time it is considered older. The second stage of is seen in the Corpus Glossary, in which the alphabetization has proceeded as far as the second letter of each word.

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*"the famous Epinal Glossary .... is especially interesting as being the very oldest document known to be now in existence in which the English language is employed .... The 84 octavo columns contain about 3200 entries, of which perhaps a thousand can be called English, though barely a score of these would be now understood by persons familiar only with the language as now spoken".—Old Common Speech - New York 1895-pp97-98.

"Not pure Kentish, but Kentish containing at least an admixture of Mercian forms, is the Epinal Glossary of the beginning of the eighth century, together with the nearly related Corpus and Erfurt Glossaries, which are the chief sources of our knowledge of the oldest English. The Epinal Glossary was edited by Henry Sweet, London, 1884, with a photolithographic facsimile of the whole manuscript; all three glossaries are in Sweet's Oldest English Texts 1 ff., and the Corpus Glossary in Wright-Wülcker 1. 1ff"
Cook's Edition of Sievers' Grammar of Old English - New York 1903 - p 4

These beginnings of English lexicography date back to the seventh and eighth centuries." Many more vocabularies were compiled between these early dates and the eleventh century; and it is noteworthy that those ancient vocabularies not only became fuller and more orderly as time advanced, but they also became more English. For, as I have already mentioned, the primary purpose of the glosses was to explain difficult Latin words; this was done at first, whenever possible, by easier Latin words; apparently only when none such were known, was the explanation given in the vernacular, in Old English ..... In the glossaries that follow, the Latin explanations are more and more eliminated and replaced by English ones, until the vocabularies of the tenth and eleventh centuries, whether arranged alphabetically or under classified headings, are truly Latin-English: Every Latin word is explained by an English one; and we see clearly that a new aim had gradually evolved itself; the object was no longer to explain difficult Latin words, but to give the English equivalents of as many words as possible, and thus practically to provide a Latin Dictionary for the use of Englishmen" (1)

Thus begins the second stage of English lexicography; viz., the production of books designed to assist readers in the understanding of the Latin language. About the middle of the fifteenth century was compiled the Medulla

Grammaticae, the first Latin-English dictionary. This work formed the basis of the Ortus vocabulorum, the first printed Latin-English dictionary." But all the glossaries and vocabularies as yet mentioned were Latin-English; their primary object was not English, but the elucidation of Latin. A momentous advance was made about 1440, when Brother Galfridus Grammaticus — Geoffrey the Grammarian — a Dominican friar of Lynn Episcopi in Norfolk, produced the English-Latin vocabulary, to which he gave the name of Promptuarium or Promptorium Parvulorum, the Children's Store-room or Repository"①

This Promptorium* contains about ten thousand words with their Latin equivalents. It is printed in double columns, the English coming before the Latin. The nouns are given first under each letter of the alphabet; the verbs, adverbs, and other parts of speech follow. The following are cited as examples of the definitions: 'Bacun flesche', Petasco, baco; 'Crye of shypmen, that ye clepyd Rave Rowe', Celeuma; 'Drawe forth owte of the ovyne,' Effurno; 'Joye, and gladnesse yn chere', Leticia, jocunditas, exultacio.

(1) Evolution of English Lexicography. Oxford 1900. p16.

*. This work, first printed in 1499 by Richard Pynson, has recently been edited by Mr. Albertus Way, and reprinted by the Camden Society, London, in 1893.

This brings us down to the sixteenth century, a period which saw the compilation and publication of many important Latin-English and English-Latin vocabularies and dictionaries. "Among these special mention must be made of the Dictionary of Sir Thomas Elyot, Knight, the first work, so far as I know, which took to itself in English what was destined to be the famous name of Dictionary"[1]. It was first published in 1538; Three other editions appeared before the author's death, one in 1541, a second in 1542, and a third in 1545. The following extracts are taken from the Dedication:

"To the moste excellent prince and our moste redoubted soverayne lorde Kinge Henry the VIII., Supreme head in erthe immediately under Christe, of the Churche of Englande. ..... About a yere passed, I beganne a Dictionarie, declaring latine by englishe..... And under your gracious governance, your highnesse being myn onely maister, having fynished for this tyme this symple Dictionarie, wherin, I dare affirm, may be found a thousand more latine wordes than were together in any one Dictionarie publyshed in this royalme at the tyme when I fyrste began to write this commentarie, which is almost two yeres passed."

"This is a work", says Dr. Dibdin of considerable ability, and deservedly held in high estimation, as one of the earliest and best attempts in the promotion of lexicographical literature."[2]

(1) Evolution of English Lexicography. Oxford 1900. p17.

(2) Quoted in an article on "History of English Lexicography" - Worcester's Dictionary

The next work of importance is "a short dictionarie for yonng beginners" by J. Withals, published in 1554. Though Elyot's dictionary was in alphabetical order, that of J. Withals is not so arranged, but reverts to the older method of grouping words under subject-classes, such as Names of things in the Aether or skie, the VII Planets, Tymes, Seasons, Other tymes in the yere, the daies of the weeke, the IIII partes of the worlde, Byrdes, Bees, Flies, and other, the Water, the Sea, fishes, a Shippe with other water vessels, the earth, Mettales, Serpents, woorms and creeping beastes, foure-footed beastes, beastes that labour, etc.

The following extract[1] from the preface to an early edition shows the aims and ideals of a lexicographer of Edward VI's day:

"I have resorted to the most famous and ancient authours, out of which, as out of clear fountains, I have drawn as diligently as I could the proper names of things contayned under one kynde, and dispersed them in such order, that a very childe being able to reade, may with little labor perfitely imprinte them in his memory: whiche shall not be onely profitable for them nowe in their tender age, but hereafter when they shall be of more judgement and yeres, it shall be unto them a singular treasure: for the lacke whereof they shall be compelled, as I have heard many profound clerks both in disputacion as also in familiar communication to use in steede of the proper and naturall worde, a paraphrase or circumlocution."

[1] Quoted from British Quarterly Review April 1854 Vol 79 p 338

Of the other English-Latin dictionaries of this century, only two require mention: the Abecedarium of Richard Huloet, published in 1552; and the Alvearie of John Baret, published in 1573. "Richard Huloet was the first to produce an English Dictionary. This work ... was the first in which the meanings of English words were explained in English, but in addition thereto Latin synonyms and definitions in French were included"(1). Here are two examples of his definitions: 'Pickers or thieves that go by into chambers, making as though they sought something. Diaetarii. - Ulpian. Larrons qui montent jusques aux chambres, faisant semblet de chercher quelque chose'; 'Cockatryce, whycke is a serpent, called the Kynge of serpentes, whose nature is to kyll with hys synge onelye. Basiliscus regulus'.

A similar work to the Abecedarium was the Alvearie, or Triple Dictionary in English, Latin and French, which some one has styled "one of the most quaint and charming of all the early Dictionaries'. An extract from the "Prefatory address to the Reader", giving an account of the genesis of the work and an explanation of its unusual name, Alvearie, may be found either in Dr. Murray's pamphlet(2) or in an article on English lexicography in the prefatory matter of Worcester's Unabridged Dictionary. To a later edition of this work Greek synonyms or definitions were added,

(1) "The Development of the Dictionary." Newage Nov 1909. p 385
(2) The Evolution of English Lexicography. Oxford 1900. p 22.

and it was described as 'newlie enriched with varietie of wordes, Phrases, Proverbs, and diuers lightsome obser-vations on Grammar'." (1) Due to lack of "leasure" on the part of his printer "to provide the same", Baret was unable to "ioyne it [Greek] with every Latin word, for lacke of fit Greeke letters".

"Of all the works which we have yet considered, Latin was an essential element: whether the object was, as in the glossaries and vocabularies before the fifteenth century, to explain the Latin words themselves, or as in the Promptorium and Catholicon, the Abecedarium and the Alvearie, and other works of the sixteenth century, to render English words into Latin. But a new stage of development was marked by the appearance of dictionaries of English with another modern language" (2)

Of these works to facilitate the study of modern languages the following may be mentioned: Palgrave's "~~Les~~-"Eclaircissement de la Langue Francaise" (1530), Florio's Italian and English Dictionary (1598)*, Catgrave's "A Bundle of words" (1611) and Minsheu's polyglot dictionary (1617). John

(1) The Development of the Dictionary. Newage Nov 1909. p 386

(2) The Evolution of English Lexicography Oxford 1900 p 23.

* The date of this work is given as either 1598 or 1599. Mr. Frank H. Vizetelly gives it as 1598 (newage Nov 1909 p 386); Dr. Murray, 1599 (Evolution of English Lexicography p 25); Worcester in his "Catalogue of English Dictionaries" assigns it to 1598; the writer of "Among the Dictionaries" (Eclectic Magazine Aug 1881 Vol 34 p 240) gives it as 1598.

Palgrave was the tutor to Mary Tudor, who in 1514 was married to Louis XII of France, and it was primarily for his pupil's use that he prepared his English-French dictionary. "The Esclarcissement is a famous book, at once grammar and vocabulary, and may be considered as the earliest dictionary of a modern language, in French as well as in English."(1) In 1598 or 1599 John Florio issued "A worlde of Wordes; a most copious Dictionarie of the Italian and English Tongues". A second and enlarged edition, known as "Queen Anna's new Worlde of words", so called in honor of Anna of Denmark, the wife of James I of England, appeared in 1611. In this same year Randle Cotgrave published a French and English Dictionary, termed by him "a Bundle of Words". "He improved upon the work of his predecessors by giving completer definitions and by illustrating them with current sayings and proverbs, and in the preface declared 'I (who am no God or angel) have caused such overslips as have yet occurred to mine eye or understanding to be placed neere the forehead of this Verball creature'."(2) In 1617 John Minsheu issued a polyglot dictionary of eleven languages with the title: "Guide into the Tongues: English, British or Welsh, Low Dutch, High Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew." A second edition in nine languages but with an increased

(1) "The Evolution of English Lexicography", Oxford 1900. p 24.
(2) "The Development of the Dictionary" - New Age Nov 1909. p 386.

number of radical words was published in 1627. It was the first book ever published in England that appended a list of subscribers; and in matters appertaining solely to dictionary-growth, it was the first that tried to fix the derivations of words; that aimed at regulating their sounds by putting accents; that gave some chapters of connected familiar conversations, or scenes, saying them to be 'profitable to the learned and not unpleasant to any other reader'"(1)

"But though in these works there is necessarily contained much of the material of an English dictionary, so that we can from them recover most of the current vocabulary, no one appears before the end of the sixteenth century to have felt that Englishmen could want a dictionary to help them to the knowledge and correct use of their own language ..... But by the end of the sixteenth century.... there was a moving of the waters..... A work exhibiting the spelling, and explaining the meaning, of these new-fangle 'hard words' [introduced from foreign languages during the Renaissance] was the felt want of the day; and the first attempt to supply it marks, on the whole, the most important point in the evolution of the modern English Dictionary"(2)

(1) "Among the Dictionaries." Eclectic Magazine Aug 1881 Vol 34 p 241
(2) The Evolution of English Lexicography. Oxford 1900 pp 26-27.

Of the nine* dictionaries of the first era of purely English lexicography, we need examine only five. The first of all, a small octavo with a lengthy title, was issued by Robert Cawdrey in 1604. This work, known as "The Table alphabetical of hard words", is the "first dictionary of the English language in which only English was used"[1]. In the preface Cawdrey gives the following instructions to his readers:

"If thou be desirous (~~gentle reader~~) rightly and readily to understand and profit by this Table, and such like, then thou must learn the alphabet, to wit, the order of the letters as they stand, perfectly without book, and where every letter standeth; as (b) neere the beginning, (n) about the middest, and (t) toward the end".

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* In addition to the five to be discussed we have four others which require mention only. In 1677 appeared Coles's "English Dictionary", the new feature of which was the introduction of a list of homonyms. In 1704 Edward Cocker issued an "English Dictionary", an unimportant work, though several times reprinted. In 1707 appeared the anonymous "Glossographia Anglicana Nova", the chief feature of which was the use of woodcuts to illustrate the definitions of heraldic terms. These were the first pictorial illustrations in an English dictionary. The last of this period is John Kersey's "General English Dictionary", published in 1708.

(1) The Development of the Dictionary. newEng Nov 1909. p 386.

In 1616 Dr. John Bullokar issued his "English Expositour, or Compleat Dictionary; teaching the Interpretation of the Hardest Words and most useful Terms of Art used in our Language," a little volume containing 5080 words. This passed through several editions. The definitions are quaint. "A crocodile," he says," will weepe over a man's head when he hath devoured the body, and then will eate up the head too." The most characteristic feature of Bullokar's book, and one hardly to be commended, is an index 'wherein the vulgar words are prefixed in an alphabetical order before the others as a ready direction for the finding them out' ..... The work has also a sort of brief cyclopaedia, 'containing a summary of the most memorable things and famous persons'"①

Seven years after Bullokar's "Expositor", in 1623, appeared "An English Dictionarie, or an Interpreter of Hard Words" by H[enry] C[ockeram], Gent. This is the first work to assume the title of "English Dictionarie". Of the three divisions of the work, Part I contains the explanation in ordinary language of 'hard words'; Part II adopts the reverse method and explains ordinary words by more difficult ones; Part III is the dumping ground for natural history, mythology, and biography. " This writer is best remembered for his exhortation to the 'gentle reader' to 'have a care to search every word according to the true orthography thereof; as for Physiognomie in the letter P, not in F, for cynicall in Cy, not Ci.

① Our Common Speech Newton 1895 p 102

His horror of what he calls 'vulgar words' is also a distinguishing feature. Thus he condemns the adjective rude and tells us to say 'agresticall'; also the verb to weede, for which he would substitute the pleasing terms to 'sarculate', to 'diruncinate', or to 'averruncate'."(1) As good examples of the oddity of his definitions, take these: 'pole' is defined as "the end of the axle-tree whereon the heavens do move"; a 'lynx' is a "spotted beast that hath a most perfect sight, insomuch as it is said that it can see thorow a wall". Cockeram's article on "crocodile" is even more amusing and ingenious than Bullokar's:—

"Crocodile, a beast hatched of an egge, yet some of them grow to a great bignesse, as 10, 20, or 30, foot in length: it hath cruell teeth and scaly back, with very sharpe clawes on his feete: if it see a man afraid of him, it will eagerly pursue him, but on the contrary, if he be assaulted he wil shun him. Having eaten the body of a man, it wil weepe over the head, but in fine eate the head also: thence came the Proverb, he shed Crocodile teares, viz., fayned teares."

In 1656 Thomas Blount issued his "Glossographia, or a Dictionary interpreting all such hard words of whatsoever language now used in our refined English tongue, with etymologies, definitions and observations on the same; also the Terms of Divinity, Law, Physick, mathematicks, and other Arts and Sciences explicated; very useful for all such as desire to understand what they read." Though

(1) Our Common Speech New York 1895 p 103

comprised largely of foreign and technical words, it includes historical and geographical names, as well as many words now familiar. This Dictionary was larger than any which preceded it; a still larger one, however, appeared two years later.

In 1658 Edward Phillips, nephew of John Milton, published his "New World of Words, or a General Dictionary", which was in considerable measure plagiarized from Blount. This is full of blunders and errors, some copied from Blount and some original contributions. Phillips's work contained many words, such as technical, geographical, and proper names, which would now more properly find a place in an encyclopedia rather than in a dictionary. Sir John Hawkins says of this work: "'The New World of Words', which, as it is much more copious than that of Blount, and contains a great quantity of matter, must be looked on as the basis of English lexicography". Though Phillips did contribute to the progress of English lexicography, his work hardly deserves the high praise accorded it by Hawkins.

These works constitute what has been termed the "incunabula" of English lexicography. "Cawdrey, first on the list of these authors, turned up absolutely virgin soil, and each of the eight who came after him is distinguished by a good deal of originality. Their books are not only, in most cases, incomparably smaller than our modern dictionaries, but they have a very different style - they are conversational, almost chatty, and yet there are wide

differences in tone, so to speak, among them."[1]

"The notion that an English dictionary ought to contain all English words had apparently as yet occurred to no one; at least no one had proposed to carry the idea into practice. But this further step in the evolution of the modern dictionary was now about to be made, and the man who made it was one of the most deserving in the annals of English lexicography"[2]

The first dictionary that professed to include all English words was the "Universal Etymological English Dictionary, Comprehending the Derivations of the Generality of Words in the English Tongue, either Ancient or Modern", published in 1721, by Nathan Bailey. Of the many editions through which it went, the most noted is that of 1730, a folio volume containing nearly 900 pages. Bailey's work is remarkable for a number of things. "It was the first English dictionary which was both general in its plan and tolerably comprehensive in its execution"[3] Bailey was the first to give any aid for the proper syllabification and correct pronunciation of words. In his introduction to the second volume, he remarks, "I have placed an accent over that syllable in which a particular stress or force of sound is to be laid by the voice in pronouncing". This stress-accent

(1) Our Common Speech New York 1895 p 108.
(2) The Evolution of English Lexicography. Oxford 1900. p 34

was first marked in the edition of 1731. Though his etymologies are scarcely trustworthy outside of the simplest words, Bailey made etymology for the first time an element of the popular dictionary[1]. In his Preface he says: "as for the etymological part, or those words from foreign languages, whence the English words were derived, I think I am the first who has attempted it in English, except what Mr. Blount has done in his 'Glossographia', which is but a very small part, and those of a Latin derivation chiefly, besides a small extract of Dr. Skinner's 'Etymologicon'." But perhaps the most original feature of Bailey's work is the introduction in the 1730 edition of current proverbs and proverbial sayings, the explanations of which are detailed, quaint, ingenious, and amusing[2]. Here is a specimen[3]:

He sets the Fox to Keep his Geese.

This Proverb reflects upon the ill Conduct of Men in the Management of their Affairs, by intrusting either Sharpers with their Money, Blabs with their Secrets, or Enemies or Informers with their Lives; for no Obligation can bind against Nature: a Fox will love a Goose still, though his Skin be shift over his Ears for it; and a Common Cheat will always follow his old Trade of tricking his Friend, in spite of all Promises and Principles of Honour, Honesty, and good Faith.

① "English Dictionaries." Quarterly Rev Dec 1873. Vol 114 p 645

② "English Dictionaries." Edinburgh Review July 1808. Vol 128 p 25

③ Quoted from Our Dictionaries New York 1890 p 22

We now come to one of the most important English dictionaries ever produced, that of Samuel Johnson, published in 1755. This work was an attempt "to fix the language"; it "was really inspired by the same critical purpose which in Italy and France had established the academies, the purpose of improving and permanently establishing the modern language"[1]. At the solicitation of several London booksellers, Johnson agreed to produce the desired standard dictionary. After eight years of toil appeared two great folio volumes with the title "A Dictionary of the English Language, in which the Words are deduced from their Originals, and illustrated in their different Significations by Examples from the best Writers".

Space forbids a detailed discussion of this work, while the almost ~~universal~~ general familiarity with the dictionary renders such discussion unnecessary. His definitions of patron, pension, Tory, Whig, excise, network, Grub Street, oats, and lexicographer are well known. Despite the personal animus and carelessness shown in defining some words, the main value of Johnson's dictionary lies in the definitions, whose example has contributed so much to make common that solid precision of language which was Johnson's great gift, and in the quotations which began the habit among English dictionary-makers of using this method to supplement the inevitable failures and shortcomings of definition[2]

(1) Johnson's Universal Cyclopedia. New York 1894. Vol V p 211.
(2) "English Dictionaries". Littell's Living Age Dec 1873. Vol 119 p 647

The etymologies show little improvement over Bailey's. According to Macaulay, Johnson was a wretched etymologist, entirely at the mercy of Junius and Skinner; and the one great fault of his dictionary was in the derivations. The most remarkable characteristic of the book, and at the same time the special new feature contributed to the development of lexicography was the introduction of illustrative examples from standard English authors in support of his definitions.

Notwithstanding small blemishes Johnson's dictionary was a work unprecedented in excellence, as the many editions through which it went and the subsequent use made of it by later lexicographers will attest. "The most valuable editions of Johnson's dictionary as revised and enlarged by other workers, are the two edited by the Rev. H. J. Todd (1818, 1827). Latham's Dictionary - so called - is said to be 'founded on that of Dr. Samuel Johnson, as edited by the Rev. H. J. Todd, M. A.'"①

The remaining years of the eighteenth century need not detain us long. Their lexicographical history has been admirably summed up by Dr. Murray in a few sentences: -

"The only new feature introduced into lexicography between 1755 and the end of the century was the insertion of the Orthoepy or Pronunciation. From Bailey onwards,

① Our Dictionaries. New York 1890 p 25.

and by Johnson himself, the place of the stress-accent had been marked, but no attempt had been made to show how such a group of letters, for example, as colonel, or enough or phthisical, was actually pronounced; or, to use modern phraseology, to tell what the living word itself was, as distinguished from its written symbol. This feature, so obviously important in a language of which the spelling had ceased to be phonetic, was added by Dr. William Kenrick* in his 'new Dictionary' of 1773, a little later in 1775 by William Perry,† in 1780 by Thomas Sheridan,‡ #

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*"a New Dictionary of the English Language" took one step forward by using, for the first time, figures over the vowels to indicate their sounds

†"The Royal Standard English Dictionary" was a small work which had an extensive circulation both in Great Britain and in this country. "The Synonymous, Etymological, and Pronouncing English Dictionary," a much larger work, by the same author, appeared in 1805.

‡. "a Compleat Dictionary of the English Language, both with Regard to Sound and Meaning, one Main Object of which is to establish a Plain and Permanent Standard of Pronunciation." In this work, which commanded much more attention than preceding pronouncing dictionaries, words were for the first time re-spelled in order to indicate their pronunciation.

and especially in 1791 by John Walker,* whose authority long remained as supreme in the domain of pronunciation, as that of Dr. Johnson in definition and illustration; so that popular dictionaries of the first half of the present [nineteenth] century commonly claimed to be abridgements of 'Johnson's Dictionary with the Pronunciation on the basis of Walker'."①

Thus we see that during the eighteenth century lexicography developed rapidly, and that by the end of the century it had risen to a respectable position. The steps by which that position was attained may be briefly summarized: the first attempt at completeness of vocabulary, by Bailey in 1721; the first introduction of etymology, by Minsheu in 1617 and Blount in 1656, and the popularization and improvement of this department by Bailey in 1721; the first attempt at syllabification and marking the accented syllable by Bailey in 1721; the first use of diacritical marks to indicate sound, by Kenrick, in 1773; the phonetic re-spelling for pronunciation, introduced by Sheridan in 1780; the increased importance attached by Walker (1791) to the indication of pronunciation; the first pictorial illustrations in the anonymous "Glossa-

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*"A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Expositor of the English Language". In this work Walker made pronunciation the leading object; his design, as he himself expressed it, was "principally to give a kind of history of pronunciation, and to regulate its present state."

①The Evolution of English Lexicography Oxford 1900 pp42-43

graphia Anglicana Nova" in 1707; the introduction of proverbs by Bailey in 1730, which may have suggested to Johnson the introduction, in 1755, of illustrative extracts from standard writers; a greater precision, by Johnson, in the use of language for definitive purposes. As yet, however, there had appeared no one dictionary which combined all of these, more or less imperfect, individual contributions into a single, well-ordered volume. This, then, was the state of English lexicography, when, at the very end of the eighteenth century, was published the first American dictionary:

Chap. II.

The Beginnings of American Lexicography.

The first dictionary by an American author published in this country was compiled by Samuel Johnson Jr.*, and printed in New Haven by Edward O'Brien. Of this book, of which only one edition was issued, there are only two copies known to be in existence. The British Museum has a copy presumably perfect; Yale University Library has the Brinley copy, which lacks pages 84-92 inclusive, 101-104 inclusive, 149-152 inclusive, and 157-168 inclusive, out of 198, the total number.

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*. It seems odd that the first name in American lexicography should be that of Samuel Johnson Jr., a man, however, in no way connected with the great English lexicographer. Of his life little seems to be known. The New York Times Saturday Review for Oct. 15 1898, under the heading "Johnson's Dictionary" states: "He was born in the town of Guilford, Conn. on March 10, 1757, and died there Aug. 20, 1836, (his tombstone says June 20, but Dr. Talcott's 'Guilford Genealogies', more trustworthy than the faded stone, gives it as Aug. 20.) He was the son of Samuel Johnson, who, born in Guilford in 1696, was educated at Yale, and was later the first President of King's (now Columbia University) College. The father published, among other works well esteemed at the time, a 'System of Morality' and an 'English and Hebrew Grammar'. He died in Stratford, Conn., in 1772." The Shore Line Times, publishe

Though no date is given on the title-page of the book, 1798 may be considered as the year of publication. In proof of this is cited the following advertisement, directed with the title-page of the Dictionary, taken from "The Connecticut Journal, a newspaper published in New Haven, for Nov. 8 and 19, 1798: "A School Dictionary, being a compendium of the latest and most improved dictionaries, and comprising and easy and concise method of teaching children the true meaning and pronunciation of the most useful words in the English language, not attainable by common school books, and in which the parts of speech are distinguished and explained and a special rule is given for spelling derivative and compound words. By Samuel Johnson, Junr. Published according to act of Congress, New Haven. Printed and sold by Edward

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at Guilford, Conn., in its issue for Friday July 1, 1898, under the leading "Guilford Gleanings" has this to say: "It might be expected that a biographical sketch of this pioneer in Guilford authorship might be found in Steiner's excellent history, [History of Guilford, Baltimore 1877] ..... but his name was only mentioned incidentally, if at all. The index to that book has several Samuel Johnsons, and Samuel Johnson Jr. may be among them. In 1889 Henry P. Robinson contributed an apparently exhaustive paper on 'Guilford and Madison in Literature' .... but one examines his article in vain for facts in regard to this interesting book and its author. ..... In Smith's 'History of Guilford' is a statement that subsequently to 1721 'the school was afterward kept in the family of Samuel Johnson for seventy or eighty years.' The Preface to this dictionary and to the later dictionary produced in collaboration with Collier furnish us with [illegible] information.

O'Brien, who holds the copyright for the States of Connecticut and New York". Furthermore, in the preface to Johnson and Elliott's dictionary, dated Jan. 1. 1800, mention is made of "the favourable reception with which the School Dictionary met, the last year", We may presume that this preface was written a little prior to Jan 1, 1800 and that "last year" refers to 1798. From this evidence we may safely ascribe the first American dictionary to the year 1798.

The dictionary itself, a 24 mo., is 4 7/8 in. in length, 3 in. in width, and 5/8 in. in thickness. The introductory material, consisting of title-page, preface, explanation of the parts of speech, and a key to pronunciation, fills twelve pages; the vocabulary proper embraces pages 13-196 inclusive; the rules for the spelling of derivative and compound words take up the last two pages.

As indicative of the aims and ideals of this first American lexicographer, the Preface to his book is here given in full. It is as follows:-

"The author from long experience as an instructor, having formed the want of a sizeable School Dictionary, has been stimulated to compile, and now offers to the public the following performance. It is not calculated or intended to afford either entertainment or instruction to persons of Education. The design of it is, to furnish Schools with a dictionary which will enable youth

more easily to acquire Knowledge of the English Language. Should it answer this intention, the design of the author will be accomplished, and his ruling passion (that of being serviceable to youth) highly gratified. Candour compels him to acknowledge that the principal part of this little Compendium is a collection from preceding authors of established reputation.

"In addition to those familiar and obsolete words, there are others really useful, and such as are not easily and generally understood by Children: a Knowledge of which is necessary in order to read good authors to advantage; and without which no person can either write, or speak our language with purity or elegance.

"To select these from the huge mass of words with which our language abounds, and to bring them into the Compass of a sizable and cheap school book, so that the spelling, pronunciation, and definition of them may be easily obtained has been the object of the author. The diffidence he has in his own abilities is such, that he dare not expect that this edition will be free from errors, and imperfections.

"He however flatters himself, that after it has undergone the friendly criticism of the judicious, (which he solicits) together with his own observations and experience, that the next edition will be less exceptionable, and that such additions, omissions

and emendations, will, in future, be made, as shall prove to be well calculated to render this little performance a work of public utility" [pp 3-4].

Pages five to ten inclusive of the introduction are devoted to an explanation of the parts of speech, which "are here described in as plain and familiar a manner as possible: which with the assistance of able instructors, it is presumed will have their desired effect." The remaining two pages of the introduction explain the symbols adopted to indicate vowel sound and pronunciation.

The vocabulary, arranged in a single column, of about 21 words to the page, includes about 4150 terms. The two letters at the top of each page seem to indicate that most of the words occurring on that page have such alphabetical succession. On page 15, for instance, are twenty entries, the first being agaric and the last annuity. Of these twenty, seven begin with am, the letters found at the top of the page. On page 44, however, all the words begin with di; yet the guide letters at the top are cu. No explanation for this mistake can be offered save the carelessness of the printer. Many common words, such as advertisement, assemblage, baptize, newspaper, ocean, population, algebra, balloon, and rhetoric, are omitted. These were probably considered as too well known to merit inclusion in a "compendium" of selected words. On the other hand we find such French terms as belles-lettres, bonmot, cap-a-pie, dernier, etc., "not easily and ... understood by Children."

In Spelling, due to the loss of many pages of the dictionary, and to the omission of nearly every test word, it is impossible to state with any degree of certainty Johnson's preference in certain classes of words. I can only give a few spellings without venturing any conclusions. Of the or and our words Johnson has arbor, fervor, and odour, humour. In the Preface he has author and candour. Specter and theater follow the English spelling, and are recorded as spectre and theatre. For the termination ize or ise Johnson seems to have no preference: defined his usage evenly divided. Program and epigram occur with the shortened form only. In no case is any optional form given.

On page 197 we have what he calls "Rules for spelling derivative and compound words." After stating what is meant by a "primitive" word, a "derivative", and a "compound word", he ~~then~~ gives the general rule that 'in spelling the primative word must generally be preserved entire". He then records such exceptions as the dropping of the vowel, except after c and g, before adding a syllable beginning with a vowel; changing of y to i in some derivatives; and the doubling of consonants in some monosyllabic words forming derivatives. But what we wish to know is his method of spelling primitives, and for our purpose these rules are valueless.

The indication of pronunciation is, as we should expect, crude and simple. In the introduction Johnson states: "The different sounds of the vowels are not so accurately pointed out in the following work as they are in the Grammatical Institute by the ingenious Mr. Webster; nor can it be expected: but the author has endeavored to place them in such order as to prevent any material error in pronunciation. The character over a vowel in each word, marks the accented syllable and the sound of the vowels". The macron (—) over the vowel indicates the "first or natural sound", as abāsement; the breve (ŭ) indicates the "second or short" sound, as abăndon. "The circumflex (^) is a more indirect character denoting a sound different from either of the former. It represents the natural sound of the diphthongs, ôi, ôu, or ôw, as chôice, sôund, fôwl, The sound of âu or âw, as câuse, lâw, The sound of u made by e, i, and o, as hêr, stîr, sôme, pronounced hur, stur, sum. The sound of a made by e, and i, as thêir, rêign, pronounced thare, rane."

Even this crude method of indicating vowel length and accent is not employed for all words. In page 61, less than one-third through the book, just before the word enhance, occurs this apologetic note: "The want of a supply of accented Types obliges the

printer to omit the accents in such words as are easily pronounced by the division only." Hence no definite and absolutely confident statement can be made as to Johnson's pronunciations.

The Definitions are good, if one considers brevity as the most desirable quality. They rarely occupy more than a line; usually two or three words suffice. They are sometimes misleading, frequently incomplete in that they give only one meaning, and occasionally indefinite and general. The following will illustrate: populate, to breed people; dirk, a kind of dagger; guitar, a stringed musical instrument; malleability, the quality of enduring the hammer; orthography, right spelling of writing; telescope, a glass for distant views; epigram a kind of short poem, ending in a point or sting.

This meager and general treatment of the first American dictionary must suffice. Excuse is offered on the ground of the mission of many words and the loss of many pages of the book itself, and of the vagueness and crudity of what is recorded. This Dictionary shows no innovations and no improvements on previous English works. It is nothing more than a synopsis, a compendium of existing works, minus a number of their merits, lacking in individuality and following the

beaten path of lexicography. But we must not be too critical; we must bear in mind that Johnson was not attempting an unabridged dictionary, but that his design was only "to furnish Schools with a dictionary which will enable Youth more easily to acquire Knowledge of the English Language", and as a pioneer in American lexicography, he should receive due recognition for a well conceived and carefully executed school dictionary.

Shortly after the publication of this work, Johnson and the Rev. John Elliott* issued "the second American dictionary." "After having been submitted to various persons of prominence in the State – one of the number being Noah Webster, who approved of the 'general plan and execution' – the book was sent to press and published in January, 1800, The Connecticut Journal advertising it in its issues for Jan. 30, Feb. 6, and Feb. 13, 1800" ①

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*John Elliott, born Aug. 28, 1768, died Dec. 17, 1824, great grandson of Rev. Joseph Elliott, himself the son of John Elliott who preached to the Indians and prepared for their use the famous Indian Bible.

① New York Times - Saturday Review - Oct. 15, 1898.

Of this second american dictionary, there were two editions, both in 1800. The first edition has 16 pages of introduction and 212 pages of text; the second, 32 pages of introduction and 203 pages of text, and besides is printed solid with no spacing between the lines. Yale University has a copy of the first edition, lacking the last two pages of introduction; there is a copy in the library of the New York Historical Society, and another in the collection of a gentleman in New York, who is a descendant of the Rev. John Elliott, one of the authors. Of the second edition there are copies in the Lenox and New York Historical Society libraries, and one in the Library of Congress at Washington. The second edition differs from the first only in the length of the introduction and in the closer printing of the text, which accounts for the difference in pages of the dictionary proper. Since the later edition contains introductory material not in the earlier, and since the rest of the two is the same, this second edition will be treated here.

In size it is 5 in. in width, 4 in. in length, and 3/4 in. in thickness; in form it is oblong. The title-page reads as follows:

"A selected, pronouncing and accented Dictionary Comprising a selection of the choicest words found in the best English authors, Being an Abridgement of the most useful Dictionaries now extant; together with the addition of a number of words now in vogue not found in any

Dictionary. In which the definitions are concisely given, the words so divided as to lead to the present mode of pronunciation, and by a typographical character, the sound of the vowels and accented syllables are distinctly pointed out; and the parts of speech noted and explained for the use of schools in America. By John Elliott, Pastor of the Church in East-Guilford, And Samuel Johnson, joint. author of the School Dictionary. In addition to the above, the work contains some general observations on the derivation of words, and an explanation of the inseparable prepositions, together with a table correcting common errors in spelling and pronunciation. The second Edition. Published according to act of Congress. Sheffield: Printed by Edward Gray, for Oliver D. and J. Cook, and sold by them in sheets, or bound, at their Book Store, Hartford, 1800."

The second, third, and fourth pages of the introduction contain recommendations. Among the endorsers of the book is Noah Webster, from whose letter the following extract is printed: "Mr. Elliott, I have not time to examine every sheet of your manuscript, but have read many sheets in different parts of it; your general plan and execution I approve of, and can sincerely wish you success in your labors. I am, Sir, with much respect, your obedient servant,

Noah Webster, Junr."

On pages five and six is the Preface, which is here quoted almost in its entirety:

"The Education of youth, in a free republic is a matter of the highest importance. The increasing attention which has been paid to this interesting subject in our country, for several years past, affords just grounds of congratulation, and joy, among the friends of order, virtue, and religion. Great improvements have already been made upon former systems, but to complete the circle of useful School-Books, a Dictionary of suitable size, seem'd very requisite.

"Serious objections lie against those in common use, arising from their price, but more especially from their want of delicacy, and chastity of language. Many words, there found are highly offensive to the modest ear, and cannot be read without a blush. To inspire youth with sentiments of modesty, and delicacy is one of the principal objects of early instruction; and this object is totally defeated by the indiscriminate use of vulgar, and indecent words. *

"These objections we have endeavored to remove, & to combine as much as possible, cheapness with utility.

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* The distinct moral purpose, indicated here and also seen in the omission of some words of unsavory connotation (~~eg courtesan~~), which had occurred in Johnson's School Dictionary, is undoubtedly due to the influence of the Rev. John Elliott.

"With this object in view we have carefully chosen the most valuable words, whilst many of those which are rarely used, or easily understood, are excluded. . . . . .

"In the division of syllables, and pronunciation of words, our standard has been, the practice of men of letters, & Gentlemen of the first abilities, & experience, in school education in modern times.

"A School Dictionary, without either a rational division of syllables, or other rules, designating the proper accents, & name of the vowels; must appear at once extremely defective to all instructors.

"Custom is daily introducing new words into our Language, many of which are frequently used, and their signification important to be known. These we have attempted to collect, being influenced in our choice, partly by the advice of others and partly by our own judgment.

"The flattering testimonies which accompany this work, lead us to hope, and believe that our endeavours have not been altogether fruitless, and that it will not prove a Labour wholly unserviceable to the public.

"The favourable reception with which the School Dictionary met, the last year, with the remarks of the Author's Correspondents upon it have been one inducement with us, to undertake this compilation, upon a new, and enlarged plan. We have been advis'd to proceed on a plan more extensive, but we have chosen to confine ourselves to narrower limits, proposing to make such additions hereafter, as may be

judg'd necessary, yet not so as to injure the present edition.

"Whatever opinion may be formed of the merit of this work, we shall enjoy the satisfaction of contributing our mite in attempting to disseminate the seeds of literature among the youth of our country, and also of being first in an undertaking of this kind, on which ground we beg the favourable notice of an impartial public."

John Elliott,

Guilford, January 1st, 1800. Samuel Johnson, jun.

The remaining pages of the introduction, except the last, are taken up with an "Introduction to English Grammar", embracing a brief treatment of each part of speech, a list of the inseparable prepositions, general observations on the derivation of words, some general rules for the derivation of words, and a list of "such words as are the same or somewhat similar in pronunciation, but different in spelling and signification", followed by a list of "some vulgar errors in pronunciation corrected". From this first list we find that then air, are, heir were all pronounced alike; the same is true of the following pairs: aunt, aunt; bile, boil; mare, mayor; pear, payer; flour, flower; spear, sphere. But the following pairs of words were pronounced differently: bridal, bridle; rode, rowed; tile, toil. Among the vulgar errors in pronunciation are cowcumber for cucumber, ketch for catch, kiver for cover, coarse for course, cairds for cards, drownded for drowned, git for

yet, larnin for learning, rheumatiz for rheumatism, umberil for umbrella, viage for voyage, widder for widow. These vulgar pronunciations are interesting in view of the fact that they still survive. On the last page of the introduction is a key for the correct pronunciation of the vowels.

We come now to the dictionary proper. The words, arranged in double columns, average about 54 to the page, except the last five pages which total about 175 entries. The vocabulary therefore numbers approximately 10,870 words, including, with few exceptions, all the terms in Johnson's School Dictionary and about 6000 additional ones. This work, like the preceding, was not intended as a general dictionary, but primarily designed "for the use of schools in America". To this end it includes only "a selection of the choicest words found in the best English authors", and is "an Abridgement of the most useful Dictionaries now extant."

The spellings, except ile [aisle], show no eccentricities such as later characterized Webster's Dictionary. In some words the authors adhere to the present English preference, as in arbour, colour, favour, flavour, honour, labour, valour, vapour, vigour; and in theatre, metre, spectre. In ize or ise as a verbal termination, little preference is shown; ize however seems to be the more frequent spelling. The American et is preferable to English re,

as in Deflextin, inflextin, reflextin etc; connextin, however, is spelled connexion. Music, public, physic, hammoc and havoc drop K, the fullest retains it. Diagram and epigram occur with shortened form only; and traveler still retains the double consonant, being spelled travelle. In no case cited is any optional form given.

Pronunciation is aided by syllabification and by a simple set of "typographical characters[5]". These characters are the three accents: the grave ` indicating the long sound, the acute ´ the short sound, and the circumflex ^ "various sounds". The accent marks both the vowel length and the stressed syllable; italics are used for silent letters. "In such words as can not be comprised in the foregoing rules [those relating to diphthongs and silent letters], the word is spelt as it should be pronounced and included in brackets; as Sugar [shugar], Chamois [Shammy]". Here we have the beginning of phonetic re-spelling in American lexicography. By aid of the various devices mentioned, pronunciation can be fairly well determined. In this respect the 1800 book is an improvement over the 1798 one.

The definitions are similar to those in Johnson's 1798 dictionary. Where the same word occurs in both books, the definition is nearly always the same; in some cases it is slightly improved. Thus the defini-

tions of dirk, guitar, malleability [and of sugar] as given in 1798 are repeated here. Epigram, which in 1798 was defined as "a short pointed poem ending in a point or sting," loses its sting and now is only "a short pointed poem".

Though brevity of definition is desirable, it should not be sought at the expense of clearness and completeness. The faults of this book, in the matter of definition, are two: indefiniteness and incompleteness. The following illustrate these defects: ball is "any round thing"; balloon is "a kind of ball, a vessel to traverse the air"; tennis is "a sort of play with a racket and ball". Many of them have a humorous turn; as, amorous, "fond, apt to fall in love"; anti-Christ, "one who opposes Christ, the pope"; coquette, "a jilting airy girl, vain woman"; henpecked, "governed by a wife, dejected." Others would at the present day be considered inaccurate: a ballad is "a trifling song"; a circus is "a place of sports"; doggerel is "vile despicable verse"; a factory is "a foreign district of traders"; mythology is "an explanation of fables"

No derivations are attempted; no illustrative extracts are given; no pictorial illustrations are seen. This second American dictionary, though an improvement upon the first in vocabulary, pronunciation, syllabification, and definition, contributes nothing to lexicography; it marks no advance on methods previously employed

Chap. III.

The Early Editions of Webster.

Six years after the publication of Johnson and Elliott's Dictionary there appeared a small work by Noah Webster entitled "A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language". Though this may be looked upon as merely preliminary to a subsequent and greater undertaking, the work merits consideration. In size the book is not much larger than ~~it~~ of Johnson and Elliott's, being only 7¼ in. in length, 4⅞ in. in width, and 1¼ in. in thickness.

The title-page is as follows:

"A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language. In which five thousand words are added to the number found in the Best English Compends; the Orthography is, in some instances, corrected; the Pronunciation marked by an Accent or other suitable Direction; and the Definitions of many Words amended and improved. To which are added for the benefit of the Merchant the Student and the Traveller, I. Tables of the Moneys of most of the commercial Nations in the World, with the value expressed in Sterling and Cents. II. Tables of Weights and Measures, ancient and modern, with the proportion between the several weights used in the principal cities of Europe. III. The Divisions of Time among the Jews, Greeks and Romans, with a Table exhibiting the Roman manner of dating. IV. An official List of the Post-Offices in the United States, with the States and Counties in which they are respectively situated, and the distances of each from the seat of Government. V. The Number

of Inhabitants in the United States, with the amount of Exports. IV*. New and interesting Chronological Tables of remarkable Events and Discoveries. By Noah Webster, Esq. From Sidney's Press, for Hudson & Goodwin, Book-Sellers, Hartford, and Increase Cooke & Co. Book-Sellers, New Haven, 1806.

From this we see that Webster departed from the work of a dictionary proper by his inclusion of various tables giving general information. This, by the way, was the first occasion, I think, when a word-book had departed from the customary boundaries of such literature. I have been able to find but one precedent, Dyche and Pardon's Dictionary, which, published a few years before, [7th edition, 1752], had contained a supplementary list of persons and places, arranged alphabetically, and apparently only as a museum of curiosities.... The encyclopaedic features of a dictionary are clearly of American addition†, growing out of the more general and exclusive use of the Dictionary as a book of reference, and increased by the suggestions of competition."(1)

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*. Evidently this was a mistake of the printer for VI.

† This statement is open to criticism. Encyclopedic features may be seen in a number of the early English dictionaries, particularly in those of Bullokar (1616) and of Cockeram (1623). Even Entick's "New Spelling and Pronouncing Dictionary" [see p 44 - 2nd] contained, as supplementary matter, much encyclopedic material. Webster, however, extended this department, and was the first to introduce it into American dictionaries.

(1) Noah Webster - American Men of Letters New York 1882 pp 216-217.

The Preface requires considerable attention, even though its length forbids quoting it in toto. Webster here disclaims any great originality. "The following work," he states," is an enlargement of Entick's spelling dictionary,* which public opinion, both in Great Britain and the United States, has pronounced the best compilation of the kind. His selection of words, his orthography, pronunciations and definitions undoubtedly justify this preference." In speaking of his improvement and enlargement of the original, Webster does not depart from the feeling of pride and egotism characteristic of the earlier lexicographers. "With these extensive views of this subject, I have undertaken upon the plan of compiling, for my fellow citizens, a dictionary, which shall exhibit a far more correct state of the language than any work of this kind .... all that I have attempted, all that I can believe to be executed, is a dictionary with considerable improvements; a work required by the advanced and advancing state of science and arts .... To this [Entick's] list of words which is the most complete, I have added about five thousand others, which have been most carefully collected from the best writers, during a course of several years"

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*"New Spelling and Pronouncing Dictionary." The vocabulary filling 361 pages, two columns to the page, includes about 28,000 words. The supplementary material pp 362-378 - comprises: A List of the Post Offices in the United States; A Table of Remarkable Events from the Creation of the World to 1804; and a Succinct Account of the Heathen Deities, Heroes and Heroines etc.

reading. The purchaser of this compend will therefore find the cost of words by far the most complete of any vocabulary that* One is reminded of Wesley's notice printed on the title-page of his dictionary in 1753: "The author assures you he thinks this is the best English Dictionary in the world"; and of Hawkins's addition to the title-page of a revised edition of Coker's dictionary: "The like never yet Extant."

But Webster's pride was not that of the little man; it was the pardonable pride of a great man who feels that he is a pioneer. It was born of unbounded confidence in the future growth and development of America and in the belief that the American language should make progress corresponding to the material development of the nation, and should free itself from the shackles imposed by reverence for English authorities. It was a product of "the very strong national feeling which had grown up in the liberated colonies. One can get an idea of the strength of that feeling by glancing at almost any books taken at random from the American publications of that period. Belief in the great future of the United States is the keynote of everything done and said." (1)

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* Concerning the enlarged vocabulary Webster writes: "Among the new words introduced into this work are many terms of botany, collected from the Linnean school. Adjectives formed from names of places and persons I have ventured to introduce without the authority of any precedent".

(1) Our Dictionaries New York 1890 p 30.

Though this feeling is expressed at greater length in "An American Dictionary of the English Language", it is to be seen here in the following extract from the Preface:

"I am not unapprized of the objections which have been made to this design, even by good men and sincere patriots..... From a different class of men, if such are to be found, whose criticism would sink the literature of this country even lower than the distorted representations of foreign reviewers; whose veneration for trans-atlantic authors leads them to hold American writers in unmerited contempt; from such men I neither expect nor solicit favor. Men who take pains to find and to exhibit to the world, proofs of our national inferiority in talents and acquirements, are certainly not destined to decide the ultimate fate of this performance.

"However arduous the task and however feeble my powers of body and mind, a thorough conviction of the necessity and importance of the undertaking has overcome my fears and objections, and determined me to make an effort to dissolve the charm of veneration for foreign authorities which fascinate the mind of men in this country, and holds them in the chains of illusion."

In his attempt ~~to what~~ to conform to what he considered etymological accuracy, Webster deviates somewhat from the generally accepted orthography. The nature and extent of the changes are thus stated: "I have made no material

alterations in the orthography of words, except to correct most palpable errors. In a few instances I have preferred the orthography of Newton, Prideaux, Hook, Dryden, Whiston, etc. to that of Johnson, as being more analogical and purely English, as in sceptre, sepulcher In omitting u in honor and a few words of that class I have pursued a common practice in this country, authorized by the principle of uniformity and by etymology, as well as by Ash's Dictionary. In omitting k after c I have unequivocal propriety and the present usage for my authorities." In all of these cases, then, Webster does not consider himself an innovator, but simply a recorder of forms for which he has the authority either of present usage and common practice, or of such masters of English as Newton, Dryden, etc. He does, however, innovate in the spelling of medicine and discipline, both of which are spelled without the final e, the presence of which he says "is a relic of barbarism which ought not to be tolerated in the language".

Despite the fact that Webster has been strongly condemned for his supposed orthographical innovations, such criticism is, I think, unjust. In most cases the variations are not innovations, though introduced for the first time into a dictionary. And in nearly all cases he justifies himself by present usage or by the authority of good writers. His guiding principles are analogy, uniformity, and etymological accuracy. His views

are thus set forth: "No great changes should ever be made at once, nor should any change be made which violates established principles, creates great inconvenience, or obliterates the radicals of the language. But gradual changes to accomodate the written to the spoken language, when they occasion none of these evils, and especially when they purify words from corruptions, improve the regular analogies of a language and illustrate etymology, are not only proper, but indispensable". Thus the true orthography down to the twelfth century of leather feather, stead, mould, wonder, thirst is lether, fether, sted or stede, mold, wondor, thurst, and the present spellings are "egregious corruptions of the primitive orthography".

Uniformity and analogy are, to repeat the great words with Webster. "Uniformity is a prime excellence in the rules of language" (VIII) again, "For uniformity in the classes of words is the most convenient principle in the structure of language, and whatever arbitrary rules the learned may frame, the greatest part of men will be governed by habits of uniformity"* (IX), also, "Uniformity

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*"From this reason, rather than from a rigid adherence to the originals we ought to write Defense, pretense, offense, recompense etc. with s instead of c; for we always use that letter in the derivatives, Defensive, offensive, pretension, recompensive"

is the first excellence in the construction of a language" (xix); and once more," "when we have analogies established in our own language, we should in no account violate them by introducing unnecessary exceptions". Hence Webster writes <u>sceptic</u> instead of the Johnsonian spelling <u>skeptic</u>, from analogy to <u>science</u>, <u>scene</u>, <u>scepter</u> etc, though in this case adherence to the principle of analogy leads to error or confusion in pronunciation. His variations then may be attributed to the authority of usage, and to the principles of uniformity, analogy, and etymological accuracy.

The following list of words will illustrate the agreements and variations between Webster (1806) and Johnson and Elliott (1800):

Johnson and Elliott 1800	Webster 1806
arbour	arbor
colour	color
favour	favor
humor	humor
metre	meter
theatre	theater
spectre	specter
anatomize	anatomize
authorize	authorize
characterize	characterize
patronize	patronise

Johnson and Elliott 1800	Webster 1806
modernise	modernize
surprise	surprise / surprize
methodise	methodise
traveller	traveller
envellop (v)	envelop
Develop	Develope
acknowledgement	acknowledgment
abridgement	abridgment
judgment	judgement
Epilogue	Epilogue
Dialogue	Dialogue
Diagram	Diagram
phantom	phantom / fantom
fantasy	fantasy
gipsy	gipsy
connexion	connexion / connexion
alledge	allege
faucet / fawcet	faucet / fawcet
kick up	kickup
segar	segar / cigar
farewell / farewel	farewel

From this list it will be seen that Webster introduces into American lexicography the -or spellings as in arbor, color, etc., and the -er spellings in meter, theater, etc.

It will also be seen that the orthography in neither dictionary is consistent, though Webster seems to be the more nearly so. Johnson and Elliott have *ardour*, *colour*, etc., but *rumor*; Webster adheres strictly to the *or* termination. In both cases the words like *meter*, *theater*, etc. are consistently spelled, Johnson and Elliott in *re* and Webster in *er*. Of the words in *ize* or *ise* Johnson and Elliott show little preference; Webster favors *ize*. Yet neither is consistent as will be seen by a comparison of the words cited. In *acknowledgment* and *abridgment* Johnson and Elliott insert the silent *e* but omit it in *judgment*; Webster omits it in the first two but inserts it in the last. In words of this kind also neither shows consistency. Yet I feel that of the two Webster is throughout more consistent.

Webster's ideas of pronunciation may be clearly seen from his remarks in the Preface:

"The more I reflect upon the subject, the more I am convinced that a living language admits of no fixed state, nor of any certain standard of pronunciation by which even the learned in general will consent to be governed.... Any man who will read Sheridan, Walker and Jones will be satisfied not only that there is no uniformity in what is called the best pronunciation, but that such attempts as have hitherto been made to ascertain and establish a standard, render it

impossible there ever should be one; and that every succeeding compiler only multiplies the obstacles to the accomplishment of his own wishes .....

"The primary and almost only principles which regulate accent in every language - the ease of pronunciation and the melody of sounds" have apparently been overlooked or considered by previous orthoepists as of secondary importance. "That mode of articulating the syllables of a word, which is most easy to the speaker, and most agreeable to the hearer, constitutes the supreme rule of accentuation; a rule which has insensibly established the accent of those words in which all men agree ..... This is the reason why the rules of lexicographers and the practice of poets are utterly disregarded by the bulk of the nation; who regulate and will forever regulate, their practice by a decided preference of sounds - that is, by what may be termed the natural accent. To oppose this popular preference of a natural, easy, English accent, is as fruitless, as it is destructive of the uniformity of pronunciation and the beauties of speaking.

"Lexicographers, in my opinion, err very much in opposing artificial rules to this popular practice; for whatever the pride of learning may suggest, a strong general inclination or tendency to a particular pronunciation always proceeds from some intrinsic reasons of preference which all men may not be able to explain, but which their senses recognize as satisfactory and conclusive, and which in fact are the basis of all accentuation".

Again, under the "Directions for the Pronunciation of Words", which, it must be confessed, are far from satisfactory, he says:

"It is needless to give very minute directions for pronunciation; for in regular words, which are nine-tenths of the whole number, the accent alone is sufficient to teach the pronunciation. The accent being laid on the right syllable and letter, and the accented vowel correctly pronounced, the pronunciation of the unaccented vowels is extremely easy; so easy, indeed, that it is more difficult to be wrong than right"

The directions themselves are very meager and confusing: practically the only assistance given for the correct pronunciation is the accent. On account therefore, of the lack of phonetic characters and a complete system of diacritical marks, the determination of the actual vowel sound at that time is a matter of some difficulty, and even then we are by no means certain that the accurate pronunciation has been obtained. This part of the work is certainly defective.

In pronunciation, then, Webster stands for naturalness and ease, freedom and popular usage rather than for an adherence to the authority of classical scholars and lexicographers. He held that accentuation is a natural outcome of a desire on the part of the speaker to facilitate utterance, and that the accent is always placed where greater ease of pronunciation will result and the least exertion of the vocal organs is required.

No attempt is made to give the etymologies of words. Webster contents himself by severely criticizing in the Preface the etymologies of Johnson - an arraignment far more severe than his own knowledge of the subject at that time warranted

Since the work is admittedly an enlargement of Entick's spelling dictionary, the definitions require no notice. In some technical terms the definitions are enlarged or modified to keep pace with changing connotations due to new discoveries; but with these exceptions they are recorded just as given by Entick. In general accuracy, in increased length, and in greater clearness they are an improvement over those in Johnson and Elliott's Dictionary. No illustrative extracts or pictorial illustrations are given.

The writer realizes fully that this Dictionary has been treated at a length greater than the merits of the work itself warrant. However, apology - if apology be necessary - is offered on the ground that this is Webster's first work as a lexicographer and that in the Preface to this book ~~are~~ are expressed nearly all of the views which he champions throughout life, and which he sets forth the next time in a far more important and ambitious undertaking.

This was "An American Dictionary of the English Language" certainly the first great contribution and Doubtless the greatest individual contribution to American lexicography, first published in 1828 in two large quarto volumes, each 11¼ in. long, 9¼ in wide, and 2½ in. thick. Vol. I contains the words from A to I inclusive; Vol. II, those from J to Z inclusive. This work was the result of twenty years of almost continuous toil. In order to prepare the etymologies and to ascertain the actual pronunciation of the language in England, it became necessary for Webster to go to Paris and later to Cambridge, where he remained until the completion of the Dictionary. In a letter to Dr. Thomas Miller he writes: "When I finished my copy I was sitting at my table in Cambridge, England, January, 1825. When I arrived at the last word I was seized with a tremor that made it difficult to proceed. However, summoned up strength to finish the work, and then, walking about the room, "I am renewed". The publication of the work was delayed until three years after Webster's return from Europe.

The title-page reads as follows:- ~~An~~
"An American Dictionary of the English Language: In which are exhibited, I The Origin, affinities, and primary significations of English words, as far as they

have been ascertained. II. The genuine orthography and pronunciation of words, according to general usage, or to just principles of analogy. III. Accurate and discriminating definitions, with numerous authorities and illustrations. To which are prefixed, an introductory dissertation on the Origin, History and connection of the languages of Western Asia and of Europe, and a concise Grammar of the English Language. By Noah Webster, LL. D. In two volumes. Vol I. 'He that wishes to be counted among the benefactors of posterity, must add, by his own toil, to the acquisitions of his ancestors' - Rambler New York: Published by J. Converse. Printed by Hezekiah Howe New Haven. 1828.

The use of the word "American" in the title was the direct outcome of a deep feeling of national pride possessed by Webster than by the majority of his countrymen. Just greater extent

as many men took pride in the commercial prosperity and political progress of the new nation, so Webster took a similar pride in the greatness and in the importance of the American usage of the English language. The reasons leading to the preparation of an American dictionary as distinct from an English dictionary are thus stated in the Preface:

"It is not only important, but in a degree necessary, that the people of this country should have an American Dictionary of the English Language; for, although the body of the language is the same as in England, and it is

desirable to perpetuate that sameness, yet some differences will exist." Different forms of government, different laws, institutions, and customs give rise to words with connotations differing from those used in England. "A great number of words in our language require to be defined in a phraseology accomodated to the condition and institutions of the people in these states, and the people of England must look to an American Dictionary for a correct understanding of such terms.... The necessity therefore of a Dictionary suited to the people of the United States is obvious; and I should suppose that this fact being admitted, there could be no difference of opinion as to the time when such a work ought to be substituted for English Dictionaries".

Throughout the entire work, in its general tone, in its orthography, pronunciations, definitions, and illustrative extracts, Webster keeps uppermost in his mind the fact that this dictionary is designed primarily to exhibit the usage of Americans. "By all these means, by a certain contempt of Great Britain, by constant reference to American usage, by citations from American authors, Webster made the title to his Dictionary good in every part of it, while by the exercise of individual caprice and of a personal authority, which had grown out of his long-continued and solitary labor, he attached his own name to it."①

① Noah Webster - American Men of Letters - New York 1882 p 274

Webster's original intention extended only "to the correcting of certain errors in the best English Dictionaries, and to the supplying of words in which they are deficient." But after completing two letters of the alphabet, he determined to change his plan. What he sought to do is thus expressed in his own words in the Preface:

"It has been my aim in this work, now offered to my fellow citizens, to ascertain the true principles of the language, in its orthography and structure; to purify it from some palpable errors, and reduce the number of its anomalies, thus giving it more regularity and consistency in its forms, both of words and sentences; and in this manner to furnish a standard of our vernacular tongue.....

"If the language can be improved in regularity, so as to be more easily acquired by our own citizens, and by foreigners, and thus rendered a more useful instrument for the propagation of science, art, civilization and christianity; if it can be rescued from the mischievous influence of scholists and that babbling spirit of innovation which is perpetually disturbing its settled usage and filling it with anomalies; if, in short, our vernacular language can be redeemed from corruptions, and our philology and literature from degradation; it would be a source of great satisfaction to me to be one among the instruments of promoting these valuable objects. If this object cannot be effected, and my wishes and hopes are to be frustrated, my labor will be lost, and this work must sink into oblivion."

Webster was like Johnson in that he wished to purify the speech, to record the language, not so much as it was, but rather as he thought it should be, to redeem it from corruptions, to give it "more regularity and consistency" (1) and "to furnish a standard of our vernacular tongue" But he did not like Johnson attempt to set himself up as an autocrat in language; his aim was the restoration of the language to its earlier and historic form. If he had personal preferences, they were founded upon principles; the two were with him the same. His orthography was the result of an effort to reduce spelling to some uniform system in keeping either with the etymology of the particular word or with the principles of analogy. His definitions were not influenced by personal prejudices as was the case with many of Johnson's. His so-called innovations - and Webster would have keenly resented the application of innovator to himself - are all based upon analogy, common usage, or etymological accuracy as he saw it; they are not the work of a "Dabbling spirit of innovation". Though he made mistakes, though in some cases he was inconsistent, though sometimes his head was wrong, yet his principles were sound, his aim was high, and his heart was right. If we consider the many difficulties which he encountered and overcame, the crudity and inaccuracy of philological science, and the magnitude of his labor and the general excellence of his achievement, we should review the result with pride and overlook the minor mistakes in the work of the greatest man in American exicography.

(1) Preface 1828

The vocabulary comprises, according to Webster, about 70,000 words, and is nearly double that of Walker, Johnson, Sheridan, Jones and Perry, each of whom includes about 38,000 words, while it is also larger by about 12000 than that contained in Todd's edition of Johnson. Webster increased the list by the inclusion of compounds under un and similar prefixes, but ~~also~~ in addition to these, he incorporated in his dictionary many words which had not hitherto appeared in dictionaries, but which might have been found in special word-books.

In the advertisement preceding the Preface, Webster himself has enumerated the words which have augmented the vocabulary. They are grouped under five heads:-

1. Words of common use, many of which are as important as any in the language. Among others he notes: grand-jury, iceberg, eulogist, parachute, glacier, savings-bank, gaseous, perienoular, retaliatory, missionary, electrineer, and many hundred words of this kind.

2. Participles of verbs, the previous omission of many of which has led to misspellings and confusion of definitions, the latter arising from the use of many of these words with an adjectival value.

3. Terms of frequent occurrence in historical works; especially those derived from proper names, as Punic, Shemitic, Augustan, etc.

4. Legal terms.

5. Terms in the Arts and Sciences, the number of which now introduced for the first time cannot be much short of 40000. This was then, as it is now, the largest field for new coinages.

"In general scope or ambit Webster's work is larger and more scientific than Johnson's. He aims not merely to give the literary words of the language and the names of common objects, as the more familiar plants, etc., but to cover the entire vocabulary of English, literary, technical, commercial, and the better vernacular and colloquial terms" (1)

The orthography of the "American Dictionary" differs very little from that of the "Compendious Dictionary" of 1806. In the Advertisement to the 1828 work he expresses his views on the subject more fully and more clearly. "In settling the orthography of words, I have had to contend with difficulties almost insuperable, the diversities of spelling in English books are literally thousands, and no author is consistent with himself in the application of his own principles. Comparatively few changes have been made in this part of the work, and in these, I have aimed at consistency and uniformity". He then gives his reasons for excluding the u and k from such words as honor and music, and for not doubling the final consonant of the primitive in such words as worshiping and counselor. The one is

(1) Noah Webster's Place among English Lexicographers - Allen pp 11-12.

Due to "the decided tendency of the public mind", the other to "one of the clearest principles of analogy." He continues:

"In the remaining changes made or proposed, which are not numerous, usage has at least, in many instances, been diverse, and I have been guided by analogy and etymological correctness .... Some of the errors which I have detected are so flagrant that I could not justify myself in neglecting to expose them. On this subject, as in every other, no improvement can be hoped for until principles are substituted for the authority of names.. .... When a principle or analogy is thoroughly understood, the public feel its value and gradually yield to its control. In the present instance, the old orthography is, in most cases, given in connection with the one proposed. The public will therefore make their choice."

Here, as in the earlier work, Webster is endeavoring to follow certain definite methods. Within the guiding principles, the great words to be remembered in considering his so-called innovations in spelling, are consistency, uniformity, analogy, and etymological correctness. These are the great ends he sought in all things.

As the spelling of certain general classes of words, criticism has largely been directed. Since these are practically the same as in the "Compendious Dictionary", under which they have already been treated, it will be necessary here only to summarize them briefly.

1. The omission of the u in words like arbor, color, honor, neighbor, etc. In so doing, as he states, Webster had the authority of English precedent as well as "the tendency of the public mind". In this class of words usage in England, following the authority of Johnson, was unsettled. Johnson's rule in the spelling of these words was to retain the u in those derived from the Latin through the Norman-French. He failed, however, to apply this rule in a large number of cases; and since his day, and probably in some measure in consequence of his inconsistencies, the u has been dropped gradually from one word after another, until now [1860] in England it is only retained in such words of this termination as are not derived from the Latin, as, for instance, in Harbour, neighbour, behaviour, and a few dissyllables which are of Latin origin. In the United States the prevailing usage is to drop the u entirely. If this be an improvement in the orthography of the language, Webster is certainly entitled to the credit of having contributed very largely toward its adoption." ①

2. The change of re to er, as in meter, theater, sepulcher, theater, etc., after the analogy of chamber, number, disaster, disorder, and other words derived from the French. A large number of words introduced into the English from the French had been reduced to the English form of spelling following the principle of analogy and in an effort to obtain uniformity, Webster with excellent reason,

① De Bow's Review May 1860 Vol 28 p 568.

reduces others to a similar spelling. For so doing he was criticized for unsettling a long established usage."①

3. The almost general use of ize in preference to ise in words like aggrandize, agonize, apologize. Some words, as, for example, patronize, methodize, monarchize, spelled in 1806 with ise, are now spelled with ize. The tendency, then, is to regularize.

4. The failure to double the final consonant in a certain class of words when they receive an additional syllable. Webster's general rule is this: if the word is accented on the ultimate, the final consonant is doubled for derivatives; if the word is accented on any other syllable than the ultimate, the final consonant is not doubled for derivatives. Thus, for the first class, we have

admit, admitted, admitting, admittance
occur, occurred, occurring, occurrence.
rebel, rebelled, rebelling, rebellion.

and for the second class,

counsel, counseled, counseling, counselor
marvel, marveled, marveling, marvelous
worship, worshiped, worshiping, worshiper
travel, traveled, traveling, traveler.

This is now the generally accepted rule in American spelling②

① DeBois Review May 1860 Vol 28 p 567
② Our Language: Grammar - Smith - 1903 p 84 Rule IV.

5. The dropping of final k from words like publick, fthepic, logic, musick, and majestick. But in this instance Webster frequently violated his own rule of omitting final k after c in words of more than one syllable, for he still spelled traffick, almanack, hammock, hillock. From the words cited it will be seen that whenever i preceded c, the rule in ~~disyllabic and~~ polysyllabic words was to drop the k following. Traffick may be considered as the exception which strengthens the rule. Whenever any other vowel than i preceded c, the presence of a k following was seemingly not so objectionable. In the spelling of this group of words, Webster was not an innovator; he had the authority of previous English lexicographers behind him. "But the general impression that Webster was the author of this innovation or improvement is erroneous, for we find it introduced into the dictionary of Benjamin Martin, published in 1754, and also in the dictionary of Johnson, published in 1775"(1)

6. The substitution of s for c in offense, defense, pretense, because s is used in the derivatives offensive, defensive, pretension [see p 48]. This change has met with considerable adverse criticism, according to the critics since there is no reason why the derivatives should not follow the spelling of the primitive and be written offencive, defencive, etc.; and further since it seems far more likely that the primitive rather than the derivative is the more closely related to

(1) DeBois Review May 1860 Vol x8 pp 568-569.

the old form from which the word was derived. In reply to this it may say that the first argument will do well enough in the case of the adjectival derivatives, but that the spelling of the substantival derivatives with a *c*, as *pretencion*, would have been contrary to any tendency of usage; and that the second argument is worthless since in these words the original is spelled with an *s* instead of a *c*, they being introduced into the English from the O. Fr. form *offense*, Anglo-French *pretense*, O.F. *defense*. Furthermore the M. E. forms were *offense* or *offence*, *prekse* or *pretence*, and *defense* or *defence*.

1. The spelling of *mould*, *moult* as *mold*, *molt*, after the analogy of *cold*, *gold*, *bolt*.
8. The spelling of *distil*, *fulfil*, *fullness*, *dullness*, *skilful*, *wilful* with the double consonant in the accented syllable, as *distill*, *fulfill*, *fullness*, *dullness*, *skillful*, *willful*. Modern usage ~~not~~ prefers the single *l* in all of these word except *fullness* and *dullness*.

Other spellings which became marks for the critics are: *ater*, *thred*, *fether*, *lether*, *tuneful*, *whisky*, *iland*, *wimmen*, *bridegoom*. In the case of all of these words, with the exception of *iland* and *whisky*, the accepted form is also given. To attempt any justification of these forms - and for some of them there is justification — is beyond the province of this dissertation. In the general classes, in some instances, some defense has been made; for individual words it is unnecessary.

In the indication of pronunciation "An American Dictionary" shows little, if any, improvement over "A Compendious Dictionary". In the "Directions for the Pronunciation of Words", we are told that "the principal sounds of the vowels are the first or long and the second or short". Examples of the long and short vowels sounds are given, followed by a few rules, the nature of which may be seen by the following: "The principal things to be regarded in learning the pronunciation of English words, are the accent and the sound of the vowel of the accented syllable. Rule I. This mark, ′ called an accent, designates the accented syllable. Rule II. The accent placed immediately after a vowel indicates the vowel to have its first or long sound, either at the end or in the middle of a syllable, as <u>sa′cred</u>, <u>pre′cept</u>, <u>divi′de</u>, <u>explo′de</u>. Rule III. A horizontal mark or point over a vowel shows it to be long, and when no accent is found in the word, this mark designates the accented syllable; as in <u>discōurse</u>, <u>bestōw</u>, <u>enrōll</u>, etc." These and a few more similar rules are the only aids to pronunciation. The short sound of the vowel was indicated by placing the accent after the consonant following, as <u>hab′it</u>; the broad, or Italian, sound of <u>a</u> was indicated by placing the grave (\`) accent before the vowel, as f\`ather. No diacritical marks are used except a very incomplete and imperfect set in what Webster terms "pointed letters"; as when <u>a</u> has the short sound of <u>aw</u> in <u>altar</u> it is indicated by ȁ. The position of the grave and acute accents, whether placed above,

before, or after the vowel, is almost the sole method of determining the vocalic value.

The pronunciation of a few general classes of words may be noted. In words* like path, past, ask, dance, etc., the broad sound of a, as in father, is the only one recognized. A second group, composed of words like log, dog, fog, cog, hog, is pronounced only with the short o sound as in not; phonetically† they would be written ~~log, dog~~ lag, dag, fag, cag, hag. No such pronunciation of dog and log as dawg and lawg is recognized. Of the oo words, roof, hoof, boot, coop, loop, tool are grouped together, the oo having the u sound as in mood, and their phonetic form being rûf, hûf, bût, cûp, lûp, tûl; root, soot, soon hoop, foot are grouped together, the oo having the short sound as in book, and their phonetic form being rut, sut, sun, hup, but. Again in such words as tube duke, due, Tuesday, new, and duty, the u is pronounced as oo in mood, the phonetic form of these words being tûb, dûk, dû, Tûsdi, nû dûti. No iu sound of u is recognized except in the beginning of words, as in unite use. In his examples of the long u sound he cites tree, duty, rude, plainly indicating that they all had the oo sound as in mood.

* For an interesting history of the pronunciation of these words, see "Modern English": New York 1909 - Chas. Scribner's Sons p 132.

† The symbols used in these phonetic re-spellings are those employed in "Modern English" q.v. - pp 117-118

The pronunciation of deaf as dif, to rhyme with leaf, is still retained; either and neither are pronounced with long e sound as generally at present, phonetically, ēdər, nēdər. Of the fourteen* ate verbs examined, all, with two exceptions, have the accent on the first syllable.

Webster's theory of pronunciation was much better than his practice. He himself followed the pronunciation then prevailing in New England, which he maintained to be the best and most historic. Though this may have been true, New England usage was not national usage, and Webster ~~overleaped~~ exceeded his bounds as a lexicographer in attempting to force personal and local usages upon a nation. Even these objectionable pronunciations are indicated in so crude and indefinite a manner as to render their interpretation difficult. Without a doubt this part of Webster's work is most defective and unsatisfactory.

The definitions are undoubtedly the most valuable part of the work and were so considered by Webster himself. According to him "the great and substantial merit" of the work "for general use must lie in the copiousness of its vocabulary and the accuracy and comprehensiveness of its definitions. The following remarks from the Advertisement will show the ground upon which Webster bases his claim for the excellence of this

— o — o — o — o — o — o —

* The words, with accents as occurring, are: álternate, cóntemplate, cónsummate, cónfiscate, concéntrate, cómpensate, déflagrate, démonstrate, désiccate, dévastate, énervate, éxcavate, éxtirpate, íllustrate.

department of the work: "So numerous are such instances [variations in meaning] that between thirty and forty thousand definitions are contained in this work, which are not known to exist in any other

"In the definitions of leading and important words, the principle has been adopted to explain their meaning in one or more sentences with appropriate illustrations, and not merely to address other words of a similar import. In numerous instances, the distinctions between words apparently synonymous are pointed out, and settled by brief examples. It is hoped, therefore, that this work may, to a great extent, supply the place of a book of synonyms"

Webster cites a number of words to which he claims to have given better definitions than Johnson has given" He found Johnson's definitions wanting in exactness, and often rather explanations than definitions. For his part he aimed at a somewhat plainer work. He was under no temptation, as Johnson was, to use a fine style, but was rather disposed to take another direction and use an excessive plainness of speech, amplifying his definition by a reference in detail to the synonymous words. It must be said, however, that Webster was often unnecessarily rambling in his account of a word, as when, for instance, under the word magnanimity he writes: "Greatness of mind; that elevation or dignity of soul which encounters danger and trouble with tranquillity and firmness, which raises the possessor above revenge,

and makes him delight in acts of benevolence, - which makes him disdain injustice and meanness, and prompts him to sacrifice personal ease, interest and safety for the accomplishment of useful and noble objects'." (1) Similar discursiveness is seen in the definition of instinct, which is likewise unsatisfactory in that it requires too much reading to obtain a clear conception of the meaning.

The arrangement of the definitions is not always historical. Though Webster insisted that a lexicographer should first give the primitive signification of a word and arrange the later meanings in historic and chronological order, his theory was not always in accord with his practice. In many cases the present signification is given first, the other meanings following in no seeming order. Thus, of the nine definitions given under fancy, the more modern one comes first; the remaining ones follow with no regard to chronology. The illustrative extracts are taken from writers in this order: Stewart, Locke, Addison, Shakespeare, L'Estrange, Shakespeare, Dryden, Bacon, Mortimer. Sometimes the arrangement is in order of frequency of usage, as under the word bar. But there is no fixed plan followed throughout.

For accuracy, however, the definitions are eminently satisfactory. Take, for instance, this definition of charm:

"1. Words, characters, or other things imagined to possess some occult or unintelligible power; hence, a magic power or spell,

(1) Noah Webster - American Men of Letters - New York 1882 pp 260-261

by which, with the supposed assistance of the devil, witches and sorcerers have been supposed to do wonderful things. spell; enchantment, Hence 2. That which has power to subdue opposition, and gain the affections; that which can please irresistibly; that which delights and attracts the heart; generally in the plural." Other excellent definitions are those of the words fancy, emotion, absolution. Scudder cites the word telescope as an example of one of Webster's admirable definitions.

Webster was inclined to include in his definitions more encyclopedic information than is now considered properly admissible to a dictionary. Thus, under the word bishop, besides illustrative extracts, he gives fully the method of Election in the English Church and also in the Episcopal Church in America. Similar encyclopedic information is given under the word ball. Following the definitions, nine in number, come explanations of such terms as ball-stock, ball-vein, ball and socket, puff-ball, fire-ball. Such information, however, was not as accessible in Webster's day as it is in our own, and Webster, by his inclusion of it with his definitions, was conferring much benefit upon his readers.

The etymologies of Webster's "American Dictionary" are practically valueless. This is due not to Webster's lack of labor and study, but to his lack of knowledge and to the undeveloped condition of the science of comparative philology. To this part of the work Webster devoted the greater

part of twenty years. The result was probably better than ones have been accomplished at that time by any other man; yet in the light of present day knowledge and the development of philology as a science, his derivations are worthless. "The fundamental weakness of Webster's work in etymology lay in his reliance upon external likenesses and the limitation of his knowledge to mere vocabularies. It was not an idle pedantry which made him marshal an imposing array of words from Oriental languages; he was on the right track when he sought for a common ground upon which Indo-European languages could meet, but he lacked that essential knowledge of grammatical forms, without which knowledge of the vocabulary is liable to be misleading." ①

The etymologies, usually very brief, are in many words omitted altogether. The derivation of ballad is put into two lines, only the Italian and French forms of the word being given; in the latest edition (1911) of the Century Dictionary seven lines are given to the etymology ~~of~~ This word may be taken as illustrative of all. Yet Webster must be given considerable credit for his painstaking labor and for the efficiency of his work in a field in which he was almost a pioneer and in which he worked alone.

① Noah Webster - American Men of Letters - New York 1882 p 259

It was a matter of great pride to Webster that he could cite, as authorities for his definitions, American writers on the same page with English writers. These two sentences from the Preface show this feeling: "With this opinion [that the chief glory of a nation arises from its authors] deeply impressed on my mind, I have the same ambition which actuated that great man [Johnson] when he expressed a wish to give celebrity to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and to Boyle. I do not, indeed, expect to add celebrity to the names of Franklin, Washington, Adams, Jay, Marshall, Ramsay, Dwight, Smith, Trumbull, Hamilton, Belknap, Ames, Mason, Kent, Hare, Silliman, Cleaveland, Walsh, Irving, and many other American distinguished by their writings or by their science; but it is with pride and satisfaction that I can place them, as authorities, on the same page with those of Boyle, Hooker, Milton, Dryden, Addison, Ray, Milner, Cowper, Thomson, Davy, and Jameson."

In many instances Webster cites the name of his authority for a certain usage, but omits the illustrative extract. In other instances the illustration is given and the name omitted; these illustrations may have been original with Webster. No historical arrangement of extracts is followed. No references to the page and edition of the work cited are given, thus making the verification of the extract a matter of difficulty. Nor are the examples brought up to date, very few modern writers being quoted.

With this I conclude the treatment of the 1828 edition of "An American Dictionary of the English Language." Before passing to the next edition, it may be interesting to note the reception with which the book met and the general valuation of it as expressed by the following criticisms.

Here is the estimate of the Quarterly Review, an English periodical. We could hardly expect a favorable review. Of this 1828 edition, reprinted at London in 1832, the Quarterly says:

"We had seen Dr. Webster's work so highly praised, particularly, by his countrymen, that we were led to form high expectations of its merit. These expectations have, in a great measure, been disappointed. We give the author credit for great industry - some of which is not unsuccessfully directed. He has added many words, and corrected many errors, especially in terms relating to natural history and other branches of modern science. But the general execution of his work is poor enough. It contains, indeed, the words in common use, with their ordinary acceptations, but conveys no luminous or correct views of the origin and structure of Language. Indeed, as an attempt to give the Derivation and primary meaning of words it must be considered as a decided failure, and is throughout conducted on perverse and erroneous principles. The mere perusal of his Preface is sufficient to show that he is but slenderly qualified for the undertaking. There is everywhere a great parade of erudition and a great lack of real knowledge; in short I do not recollect ever to have witnessed in the same compass a greater number of errors and errors, or more pains taken to no effect purpose" (1)

(1) Quarterly Review - Sept 1835 - Vol 54 - pp 304-305.

~~The~~ The "Southern Review" has this favorable comment:

"The dictionary [Webster] was the best of its day in fulness, etymology, definition, and originality; but the orthography offended those who had been taught to believe in the lexicographical supremacy of Dr. Johnson [p56] ..... In detecting Tooke's fallacies, Webster was in advance of the popular philology, and in his definitions of technical, professional, and scientific terms he was generally accurate, where his predecessors were loose and superficial [p46]" (1)

The "Southern Literary Messenger" (2) gives this opinion: "The merits of Webster's Dictionary may be thus briefly expressed:

For Derivation - Capital
For Definition - Admirable
For Pronunciation - Horrible
For Orthography - Abominable

Webster himself recognizes the difficulties against which he had to contend and the imperfection of the result. And his opinion of his work is thus stated in the Preface:

"This Dictionary, like all others of the kind, must be left in some degree imperfect; for what individual is competent to trace to their source, and define in all their various applications, popular, scientific, and technical, sixty or seventy thousand words. It satisfies my mind that I have done all that my health, my talents, and my pecuniary means would enable me to accomplish. I present it to my fellow citizens, not with frigid indifference, but with ardent wishes for their improvement and happiness; and for continued peace of the wealth, the learning, the moral and religious elevation of character, and the glory of my country".

(1) "American Dictionaries" - Southern Review July 1869 Vol 6 pp 34-69
(2) Southern Literary Messenger. March 1856 Vol 22 [N. S. Vol I] p 172

In 1840 Webster brought out a revised editin of his work with the title: "An American Dictionary of the English Language; first editin in octavo; containing the whole vocabulary of the quarto, with corrections, improvements, and several thousand additional words, etc.; by Noah Webster, LL.D." This, like the previous editin was in two volumes, and, though the price was reduced from #20 to #15, it, also, found little sale.

The nature and extent of the changes may be gathered from the Advertisement:

"The improvements in this editin of the American Dictionary consist chiefly in the addition of several thousand words to the vocabulary; the division of words into syllables, and in the correctin of definitions in several of the sciences, which are made conformable to recent discoveries and classifications. For the latter improvements the author is indebted chiefly to Professor Tully of the Medical College in New Haven.

To these improvements may be added the introduction and explanation of many phrases from foreign languages, frequently used by English authors and in conversation; and also of many foreign terms used in books of music"

With the exception of the syllabification of words and a revision of some scientific terms, the "improvements" are not improvements but additions; the work is increased in extent but improved little in content. What we have is more of a similar kind, not a better presentation of old material.

The additional words are not inserted in their proper alphabetical position in the body of the work, but are grouped at the end of the second volume. Among these newly added words are many, the omission of which from the first edition seems strange. Such are: ac-quaintanceship, actualize, advisably, benedict, brogans, championship, communal, deepen, depositor, desirably, ef-facement, egotism, euphuism, fellowship, freezing, in-dividualism, intact, lynch, necropolis, palaverer, participator, pluralize, quartet, socialism, etc.

The orthography is virtually the same, though occasionally a change is made. Gipsey, the preferable form in 1828, gives place to gipsy; woful yields to woeful; iland becomes island, iland, or island; bridegoom is now bridegroom; nusance is nuisance or nuisance; quiblet is quiblet; acre and aker of 1828 are both retained; likewise thread and thred, leather and lether, group and groop, turkey and turky, tongue and tung, ake and ache; mosk, ribin, skerif, and porpess still hold a place.

Pronunciation, the weakest part of the 1828 edition, remains so in this, only a slight improvement, if any, having taken place. For a few words, as, for instance, sere, catalogue, weather, women, deaf, we have a re-spelling to indicate pronunciation. Definitions, except in the few scientific terms, remain unchanged; the same may be said of the derivations and illustrative extracts.

The later work seems to me more of an expansion than an improvement of the earlier.

With this work Webster's lexicographical labors ended, and the supervision of later editions passed into other hands, men endowed with great philological knowledge, but possessed of no more enthusiasm, no more untiring industry, no deeper feeling of pride in the glory and greatness of the American nation and American language than was possessed by Noah Webster, the great name in American lexicography.

Of Webster and his work Dr Murray says: "Webster was a great man, a born definer of words; he was fired with the idea that America ought to have a dictionary of its own form of English, independent of British usage, and he produced a work of great originality and value"(1). And J. Sturges Allen goes farther and adds that "he was more than that; he was a great lexicographer because he was receptive, conscientious, level-headed, fair-minded and keen-witted"(2)

Notwithstanding Webster's ability, his work was not popular. The chief objections centered around his eccentricities in spelling and in pronunciation. The etymologies, though at present valueless, were at that time as nearly accurate as any man knew. The definitions were admirable, and an improvement over Johnson's. Taken altogether Webster contributes to English lexicography as much as any one individual, and gave to the world the best English dictionary it had yet seen

(1) The Evolution of English Lexicography - London 1900 p 43
(2) Noah Webster's Place Among English Lexicographers - Gr Merriam p. 0

The following extract may be taken as a fair estimate of Webster's work, and as indicative of the general reception accorded it:

"Without intending or desiring to detract from the reputation of the late learned Dr. Webster, yet I do not hesitate to say, that in my judgment, his influence upon our language has been most mischievous, inasmuch as in the United States, he has unsettled what before was fixed, and established an additional rule where previously there was but one. In England his authority in this regard is not acknowledged. In attempting to carry out too far the principles of analogy, he sometimes forgets that language itself is in part a thing of convention and usage, and that uniformity in all cases is not so desirable as to be purchased at any sacrifice. Webster has rendered a real service to English philology in the department of etymology, and generally speaking, his definitions are accurate and comprehensive, but I make my humble protest against his radical and vast innovations in orthography and pronunciation" ①

① A. Roane in "English Dictionaries with Remarks upon the English Language". Southern Literary Messenger March 1856 Vol 22 pp 171-2

Chap IV. The Late Editions of Webster.

The first revision* of Webster's work after his death appeared in one volume quarto in 1847, with the title-page reading in part: "An American Dictionary of the English Language; containing the whole vocabulary of the first edition in two volumes quarto; the entire corrections and improvements of the second edition in two volumes royal octavo, etc.; by Noah Webster, LL.D. Revised and enlarged by Chauncey A. Goodrich, Professor in Yale College. With pronouncing vocabularies of Scripture, Classical, and Geographical Names."

The additional words affixed to ~~the second~~ the 1840 edition are now incorporated into the body of the work, and new matter to the amount of more than three hundred pages has been added. The introductory material consists of the editor's Preface to the revised edition, Webster's Preface and the Advertisement in the 1840 edition, Memoir of Webster, Webster's Dissertation on the Origin, History, and Connection of the Languages of Western Asia and Europe, a discussion of Webster's orthography as exhibited in the present edition, Alphabets of various languages, and Directions and Explanations for pronunciation. The supplementary material consists of Tables of Scripture Names, Greek and Latin Proper Names, and Modern Geographical Names, designed to exhibit the pronunciation of each, prepared under the direction of N. Porter, Professor in Yale College.

———o———o———o———o———o———

*. This is the first edition printed by the present publishers of Webster's Dictionary, Gerry & and Charles Merriam Co. The price of this edition was reduced from $15 to $6.

The chief changes* in orthography are as follows:

(1). Though in such words as center, meter, speaker, etc, the er termination is still preferred, the forms centre, metre, speake, etc., occur as optional spellings.

(2) In defense, offense, and pretense, though the preference is s instead of c, both spellings are given.

(3). The derivatives of villain prefer the retention of i, as villainous, villainy, though both spellings are recorded.

(4). The verbal form practice is preferred to practise, though both spellings are given.

In all the above words Webster in 1840 had recorded only one spelling. The stand taken by the editor of the revised edition in regard to orthography may be seen from this extract from the Preface: "In the present edition, the words are spelt in both ways, for the convenience of the public, except in cases where this seemed to be unnecessary or was found to be inconvenient. These changes, [introduced by Webster] considering the difficulty that always belongs to such a subject, have met with far more favor from the public, than was reasonably to be expected. Most of them have been extensively adopted in our country. They are gaining ground daily, as the reasons by which they are supported are more generally understood; and it is confidently believed that, being founded in established analogies, and intended merely to repress irregularities and remove petty exceptions, they must ultimately prevail."

* For other changes see the list of spellings ~~adopted~~ in Appendix

Though still maintaining Webster's guiding principle "that the tendencies of our language to greater simplicity and broader analogies, ought to be watched and cherished with the utmost care", the editor of the revised edition, "for the convenience of the public", inserts both forms of words of disputed orthography. This means that though the principle is upheld, conformity to usage and established custom is also given due recognition. In other words, though the principle is right, no attempt is made to enforce it in the face of established usage. There is here then less of the dictatorial which in Webster was so objectionable to some critics, and more of the broader view that the proper function of a dictionary is not to make the spelling but simply to record it, that the usage of educated people is just as important as etymology in determining the orthography of words. Analogy is still upheld as one of the guiding principles in spelling, but etymology is dismissed, because not being sufficiently well appreciated by the public, it can not longer be considered as a determining force in orthography.

The greatest improvement in my opinion in this edition is in the Department of pronunciation. The necessity for some improvement [in this department] seems to be recognized by the editor, who, in the Preface, states: "On the subject of Pronunciation, much labor has been bestowed in the progress of this revision. A careful comparison has been made with the latest authorities, and wherever changes seemed desirable, and could be made

in consistency with the author's principles, they have been introduced. The Key to pronunciation has been somewhat enlarged, and placed at the bottom of each page for greater ease of reference, and the pointed letters have been used to a still greater extent. Many thousand words have been re-spelled, and no efforts have been spared to render the work, in all respects, a complete Pronouncing Dictionary."

The chief improvements in this department are the re-spelling of many words, not with symbols but with the ordinary letters, and the placing of the Key to pronunciation at the bottom of each page. Thus we have the words announced, antiquity, chaise, chalked, chaos, colored, encompass, exquisite respelled as an-nounst, an-tik'-we-te, shāz, chawkd, Kā-os, Kwi'-kwit, en-kum-pas, eks'-kwe-zit. In none of these words had Webster given any respelling

Some changes in pronunciation are made. These may be divided into two classes: those showing changes in vowel value, and those showing changes of accent. The greatest change in the first class is in words like tube, duke, due, etc in which u is now given the ū sound as in tune; the phonetic re-spelling accordingly would be tūb, dūk, dū. The same sound of u is given in words like institution, constitution, adduce. Webster had never shown any recognition of any such sound of the vowel. The broad, or Italian, a is still the only one recognized in path,

past, *ask*, etc., though *answer* drops out of the group and is now given only the short *a* sound, as in *hat*. The words in *oo* show no change, except that *root* is changed from *rut* to *rat*. The chief change of accent takes place in the polysyllabic verbs terminating in *ate*, in nearly all of which the preferred pronunciation is now upon the root syllable, as *complicate*, *confiscate*, whereas Webster in 1840 preferred the accentuation of the penultimate syllable.*

The etymologies show no material alterations; in a very few cases of obvious necessity, some slight change has been made. "But the chief labor, in reference to this part of the work, has been bestowed on the difficult task of giving with accuracy the numerous words from Oriental and foreign languages, which are used in tracing the origin of our own."①

The definitions, as in previous editions, are the best portion of the work. To secure a greater degree of accuracy many recent and valuable works, not only in lexicography, but in the various departments of science and arts embraced in the "new-am. Dictionary" have been consulted; and "numerous special dictionaries, or vocabularies confined to some single department, have also been collated with this work; and the ablest treatises in important branches of science and art have been diligently examined."②

Both in orthography and pronunciation this Edition shows greater freedom in choice, a broader ap-

① Preface.

* This and additional changes see appendix.

preciation of usage, and a larger recognition of its importance. Though still in great measure dominated by the influence of Webster, the dictionary is beginning to free itself from its author's narrow-mindedness, to disregard etymology and analogy as the sole or chief factors in orthography, and to take as its guiding principles conformity to usage and Ease of Consultation.

Following the 1847 edition came that of 1859, in all essentials the same as the preceding except for the addition of tables of synonyms, a supplement of new words, and a pictorial supplement - a new feature in American Lexicography. "This edition was, however, a provisional one, designed to serve only until the more careful and thorough revision, which had been so long in contemplation, could be perfected."①

This carefully revised edition, the first to become known as the "Unabridged", appeared in 1864 in two volumes. The title-page reads thus: "An American Dictionary of the English Language; by Noah Webster, LL.D. Thoroughly revised and greatly enlarged and improved. By Chauncey A. Goodrich, D.D., LL.D., Late Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory, and also Professor of the Pastoral Charge, in Yale College, and Noah Porter, D.D., Clark Professor of Moral Philosophy and Metaphysics in Yale College".

The introductory material consists of the Preface, by Noah Porter, Index to a Classified Selection of Pictorial Illustrations, Preface to the Revised Edition of 1847, Preface to

① Preface to 1864 Edition

The Editin of 1828, Memoir of Noah Webster, by Goodrich, a Brief History of the English Language, by James Hadley, M.H., Key to the Pronunciatin, Principles of Pronunciatin, a discussion of Orthography, and Abbreviatins and Explanations.

The vocabulary comprises an aggregate of upward of 114,000 words. Though this number is about 10,000 in excess of any other previous dictinary of the language, very few terms were admitted which are not fairly entitled to a place in a dictinary designed for popular use.

The orthography of this editin is practically the same as in the 1841 editin.* "In this department no change has been made in the principles adopted and clearly set forth in the Revised Editin of 1841, and so generally accepted by the American public..... In two or three instances it has been found that the forms introduced by Dr. Webster, or to which he lent his sanction, were based upon a mistaken etymology; and therefore these forms have been set aside, and the old spelling has been restored"①

Pronunciatin, heretofore a weak point, is one of the strong points of this editin. This department has been materially improved by the addition of some few symbols to those previously used, by a long and admirably illustrated article on the Principles of Pronunciatin, and by a greater conformity to the usage of the best speakers. The Preface

*. For the few changes see Appendix.
① Preface to 1864 Editin

states that, in the editor's opinion, "a more thoroughly practical and satisfactory treatment of the subject can not be found in the language".

The principal changes* in pronunciation, as recorded in this edition, may be briefly summarized:

(1). The words <u>fast</u>, <u>ask</u>, <u>glass</u>, <u>dance</u>, <u>command</u> are now pronounced with the intermediate sound of <u>a</u> as in <u>last</u>; but <u>answer</u> and <u>path</u> still remain as in the 1847 edition.

(2) Of the <u>oo</u> words, <u>soot</u> is pronounced as <u>sut</u> or <u>sût</u>, and <u>hook</u> as <u>hûk</u> or <u>huk</u>; the other words of this class show no change.

(3). The accentuation of the prepositional syllable in polysyllabic verbs ending in <u>ate</u> is generally preferred, whereas in 1847 the root syllable was preferred. Both accentuations are however generally given.

The definitions have been considerably improved. The principle adopted by the Editor was "freely to accept and make any change in the matter and language of the previous edition which he had reason to suppose would be desired by Dr. Webster himself, were he now living" (1)

The improvements as stated in the Preface are:

(1) The contraction and condensation of the definitions into as few general heads, or numbered divisions, as practicable. The revisers have sought to avoid all redundancy and tautology and yet at the same time they have been

(1) Preface to 1864 Edition

* For minor changes see Appendix.

studiously careful to retain the exact language of the earlier edition, wherever possible. In many cases in which the numbered articles under a word have been diminished it will be found that the number of real definitions has been materially increased, and that the collecting of them into fewer groups has contributed to their more easy comprehension and more ready use.

(2). The arrangement, as far as possible, of the various meanings in the order of their actual growth and history, beginning with the primitive signification, as indicated by the etymology.

(3). The addition of many new meanings.

(4). The careful revision and elaboration of the scientific and technical definitions.

The illustrative citations also show improvement. More modern writers are quoted as authorities; extracts from authors previously used have been verified and carefully copied; Biblical quotations are referred to the book, ~~page~~ chapter, and verse. In many cases, however, only a name is given as authority for a particular meaning; the extracts from profane literature do not give references to the page or book from which they are taken. Yet the work in this department was perhaps in advance of any other English dictionary which had then appeared. Such at any rate is the belief expressed in the Preface: "It is believed that no dictionary of the language contains so many apt illustrations from so large a variety of writers."

The incorporation of a large number of synonymous terms into the body of the work greatly facilitates the obtaining of the exact shade of meaning desired. Thus under because we find a full treatment of the conjunctions because, for, since as and inasmuch as, with illustrative sentences to bring out the various shades of meaning and the distinction between them. In addition, to many important words, a list of synonymous terms has been attached. Under clear, for instance, is this list: manifest, pure, unmixed, pellucid, transparent, luminous, obvious, visible, plain, evident, apparent, distinct perspicuous. The reader is then referred to manifest where he finds the distinction between manifest, clear, plain, obvious, evident.

The pictorial illustrations, numbering more than three thousand in number, are, for the most part, inserted in their proper places; many, however, too large for incorporation, have been collected in classified form at the end of the volume. These woodcuts, all skilfully engraved, have been used to illustrate those objects of which a drawing would convey a better conception than a mere verbal description.

Encyclopedic information is also included. Much of this is new material; that previously used has been greatly improved. Under trigonometrical we find explanation of trigonometrical curves, trigonometrical lines, trigonometrical functions, trigonometrical survey; under scheme is given the date and

place of the first schooner constructed, also an interesting account of how the name came to be applied to this type of vessel; under cloud is given a classification and explanation of the various kinds of clouds.

The most thorough revision is in the etymologies, a department in which the dictionary offered the greatest opportunity for improvement. This work was in charge of Dr. C.A.F. Mahn, of Berlin, and hence this edition is known as the Mahn-Webster. Dr. Mahn was admirably fitted for the undertaking, having made etymology a special study and being thoroughly informed of the true principles upon which the science rests. So well was this work performed that this dictionary was considered the best treatise on English etymology that had yet appeared.[1] To cite illustrations of this improved etymology would be needless. One has only to compare the 1847 and 1864 editions to find on nearly every page of the later work an enlargement or correction of former derivations.

The appendix contains: Explanatory and Pronouncing Vocabularies of the names of noted fictitious persons, places etc., modern geographical names and common English Christian names; Pronouncing Vocabularies of Scripture proper names, Greek and Latin proper names, and modern biographical names; Explanatory Tables of quotations words, phrases, proverbs, etc., from the Greek, the Latin, and

① Atlantic Monthly. Nov 1864. Vol 14 p 642

modern foreign languages; abbreviations and contractions used in writing and printing; arbitrary signs used in writing and printing; and a classified selection of pictorial illustrations.

In all departments this edition shows great improvement. In the enlargement of its vocabulary, in the insertion of optional forms of spelling, in the indication of pronunciation, in the clearness, comprehensiveness, and orderly arrangement of definitions, in the reliable etymologies, in the enlarged and valuable introduction and appendices, in its ease of consultation, with completeness and accuracy, the work was far in advance of any preceding English dictionary.

The next unabridged edition, with supplement of nearly five thousand words and the addition of a new pronouncing Biographical Dictionary, was issued in 1879. Materially it does not differ much from the 1864 edition. A few examples from the supplement will indicate the character of the added words, and also afford a glimpse of the world's progress: aggressively, alcoholism, bicycle, card-catalogue, carpet-bagger, Darwinian, derringer, dynamite, evolution, Gatling-gun, greenback, heliotype, Krupp-gun, lacrosse, microphone, nihilist, phenomenal, phonograph, Pullman-car, type-writer.

As in previous editions the dictionary records words and meanings without attempting to exercise to

any great degree the judicial faculty. This attitude was recognized by the reviewer in the Atlantic Monthly[1] who wrote as follows:

"To our minds this dictionary has ceased to be encumbered with the personality of Webster. The name of its founder still rightly clings to it, and the very height of the growing shadow lends something to the stature of the original personality which gave birth to this mighty thing; but the impetus which this creation of scholarship has now obtained, together with all the material interests involved in its fortunes, gives us a right to regard the dictionary as an organic institution, with an interest for all Americans, quite freed from any petty considerations of partisanship."

Following the 1879 edition there came in 1884 two editions. Both had practically the same title as the preceding issue; to the first was added a new Pronouncing Gazetteer of the World; to the second was added a historical supplement. In 1884 there was also issued an abridgment of the quarto with the title, in part, "National Pictorial Edition with supplement. A Dictionary of the English Language with a copious Appendix."

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[1] Atlantic Monthly. Oct 1879. Vol 44 p 551

In 1890 appeared the next edition*: "Webster's International Dictionary of the English Language. Being the authentic edition of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, comprising the issues of 1864, 1879, and 1884: Now thoroughly revised and enlarged under the supervision of Noah Porter, D.D., LL.D., of Yale University. With a voluminous Appendix." In 1900 a new edition of the International was issued, with a supplement of 25,000 words and phrases. Though these two editions of the International marked definite stages in the development of the Webster dictionary, each, for instance, as is indicated in the change of name from American to International, it is impossible in this dissertation to give further notice to them.

Much more extended treatment, however, must be given to the latest edition, the New International, which appeared in 1909 in one volume quarto. The title-page is as follows: "Webster's new International Dictionary of the English Language. Based on the International Dictionary of 1890 and now completely revised in all departments. Including also a Dictionary of geography

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*. "This Edition, like its predecessor, was under the general supervision of President Noah Porter, with Loomis J. Campbell, LL.D., as the head of the office staff. Associated with him were many assistant editors, including Mr. J. Sturges Allen, the General Editor of the present work, and many eminent specialists. This was the most extensive and exhaustive revision that the dictionary had received. The vocabulary was extended to about 175,000 words." Preface to New International

and biography, being the latest authentic quarto edition of the Merriam series." Of this Edition W. T. Harris, Ph. D., LL. D. was Editor-in-chief and J. Sturges Allen, General Editor.

"A novelty of make-up, introduced, we are told, for the greater convenience in consultation, is the division of the page into two sections. The upper section holds the main vocabulary; to the lower division, a sort of lexicographer's limbo, have been relegated unfamiliar words, obsolete words, and all the encyclopaedic matter contained in the special supplements to the 1890 edition, proper names, foreign phrases, etc. — with the exception of the gazetteer and biographical lists" ① By this division of the page, by the use of smaller type and a narrower column much space has been saved; this saving has permitted the insertion of a larger vocabulary, of fuller definitions, and of more encyclopedic matter than have hitherto been found in a one-volume dictionary.

The vastness of the vocabulary is amazing. The American Dictionary of 1828 contained 70,000 words; the Unabridged of 1864, 114,000; The International of 1890, 175,000; The New International of 1909 has more than 400,000. This number is more than double the number included in the 1900 edition, which embraced the vocabulary of the International and added a supplement of 25,000 words.

① Nation. Nov. 4, 1909. Vol 89 p 434

This great increase is due to the coinage of derivatives and compound words, and to the enlargement of encyclopedic matter.

The following general classes of words make up the vocabulary:

(1) neologisms and slang. In its inclusion of recent coinages the new edition is decidedly progressive. We find recorded such slang terms as bluff, cinch, rough-house, stand-pat, make good, classy, mosey, bum, peach, swipe, doke, flunk, fire etc. Under bluff we find its use in poker and also its slang use, as "he bluffed me off" and "his talk was all bluff"; under cinch we have the definition "to get a sure hold upon". Classy is properly recorded in the lower section of the page, since then the word was just coming into use. The principle of inclusion and exclusion of these words is this: "Slang terms have been in general omitted, except where they have had considerable literary usage or have acquired some special interest of meaning, origin, etc., that is likely to make them a subject of inquiry."[1] Among the omitted terms are: hot-air, talk-fest, boozy, movies, goat in the expression "to get one's goat", crib in college phraseology, joy-ride, lid for hat, and "to pass away", the euphemistic phraseology denoting the passage into oblivion as a result of intoxication.

(1) Preface.

2. Obsolete words of the middle English period; dialectic and colloquial terms.
3. Foreign words. These have been admitted only upon evidence of their having more than occasional use in literature or upon evidence of their being in common colloquial use.
4. Baseball parlance. Such terms as fly, hit, bat, foul, fair ball, ball, etc., are explained.
5. Scientific and technical terms
6. Literary terms.

"As a whole, the vocabulary of the New International is a more complete reflection of the multiform human ideas embodied in words than has ever before been included in a dictionary" ①

In regard to orthography, the editors thus express themselves: "The principle of the new International, as of its predecessors, has been that it is the function of the dictionary, in spelling as in other particulars, to record usage rather than to create it.... [the lexicographer] should ascertain and record as nearly as possible the current prevailing usage in the spelling of various classes of words and the most evident tendencies in changes that may be taking place. In the case of indeterminate or shifting usage, his sympathy with the principles of simplicity and consistency may legitimately be shown. The policy of this book has been to recognize the advantages of a simpler spelling of many English words; to give the simpler form of

① Preface.

spelling the preferences, so far as justified by facts, as in cases where two forms are in about equally current usage; and to indicate changes proposed, but not yet generally accepted."

The Websterian preferences for centre, meter, etc., for honor, labor, etc., for the single consonant in derivatives of words accented on any other syllable than the ultimate, as traveling, marveled, for the double consonant, in the primitive, in the derivatives willful, skillful, etc., have been retained. In each case, however, the alternative spelling is recorded after the preferred form, if this alternative is in general use.

In regard to reform spelling the dictionary is conservative. The forms proposed by the Simplified Spelling Board have justly not been included "since not only is it impossible to tell, as yet, what the result of this movement will be, but also the changes proposed by this Board are being added to so rapidly as not to admit of their being here recorded"[1]. However, the changes recommended by the Philological Society of England and the American Philological Association have been incorporated in the vocabulary, because some of these forms, as program, catechize, criticize, etc., have been adopted and are accepted preferences.

The synonyms, which were intrusted to Professor John L. Lowes, of Washington University, Missouri and supervised by Professor Kittredge of Harvard, have been greatly improved

[1] Preface.

and enlarged. Those recorded in the International were the same as those in the 1864 book. In the present work they have been thoroughly revised. The extent of this revision is best indicated by the increase in the number of articles from 600 to 1448, of separate words treated, from 1687 to 4810, and of illustrative citations from less than 400 to about 6000. The distinctions indicated are based on actual usage, and are supported by citations from standard English writers that exemplify the particular shade of meaning under discussion. Comprehension of the distinction between synonymous terms is further aided by a system of cross-references. The nature and extent of the improvements may be seen by a reference to clear and a comparison of its treatment in the 1890 edition [sep 90] with that in the later work.

As in the more recent preceding editions, the indication of pronunciation is one of the strong points of the New International. No difficulty is had, as in the earlier editions, in determining just what pronunciation is intended. A comprehensive and practical treatment of the subject of English orthoëpy is found in the introductory "Guide to Pronunciation."

In general the pronunciations as recorded conform to present usage; in some words, however, all of the present pronunciations of educated people are not indicated. Thus path is given only as păth (ă as in staff), whereas pāth (ā as in ~~fat~~ fate) and päth (ä as in father) are still in current usage by some of the best speakers. Hog is recorded only

as hag (o as in odd), though hog (o as in soft), is frequently, if not more generally, heard. For soot we have a choice between sut (oo as in foot) or sūt (oo as in food); the common pronunciation sŭt (rhyming with but) is erroneously said to be archaic and dialectical. Though many good speakers pronounce tube, duke and words of this class as tūb, dūk (u as in true), the New International records only tŭb, dŭk (u as in tune). Again drama has given only the pronunciation drăma (a as in father), though drē'ma (a as in mate) and draema (a as in hat) are frequently heard. In some respects, therefore, this Dictionary does not record all pronunciations in good usage.

The etymologies, revised by Professors E. A. Sheldon and Leo Wiener of Harvard are, in nearly every case, complete and accurate. "The principle of historical arrangement followed in the earlier editions has been adhered to in the present revision of the etymologies, but it has been more strictly carried out than was then done" (1) Thus first words derived from Anglo-Saxon, the Middle English form, omitted when obvious, comes first, followed by the Anglo-Saxon word. This completes the etymology, so far as its English derivation is concerned; however cognates in the various Indo-European languages are recorded, for example, see under father, mother, man, book and other common words. "If the word, though found in Anglo-Saxon, is not native, then its immediate source, if known,

(1) Preface

is added; and when the word has been traced as far as possible (for example, to Latin) cognates and cross-reference are added, as above, if there is occasion"[1]. Thus, for the word bishop, the M.E. form is first recorded, then the A.S., and then the Latin and Greek forms follow. The word abbess, which occurs in Bede's narrative of Caedmon as abbudisse, has no A.S. form given, only the O.F., L., and Latin being recorded. Similar omission is to be noted [illegible] apostle, a word of frequent occurrence in Bede's writings. These omissions would naturally lead one to suppose that these words were first used in the M.E. period and therefore more than likely brought in by the Normans from the French, whereas they were introduced directly from the Latin in the A.S. period. Of words of foreign origin, not occurring in the Anglo-Saxon, the greater number is derived from the Latin, many through the French as an intermediate language. This is also indicated; honor, for instance, is shown to be introduced into M.E. from the Latin through the French. As an introduction to the subject of etymology, "A Brief History of the English Language", prepared originally by Professor James Hadley and now revised by Dr Kittredge, is included in the introductory material.

The definitions of the new International maintain the high standard of former editions. An added feature is the defining of many purely formal derivatives by reference to

(1) Preface.

their prefixes or suffixes. Thus the general meaning implied by the suffixes -hood, -ship, -ness, etc., and the prefixes ante-, anti-, un-, etc. is given under these forms. Along with the definitions a great deal of encyclopedic matter has been included. Thus under army organization tabular information is given concerning the principal modern army organizations; under measure two full pages are devoted to a table of measures, in which are given the name of the measure, the place used, and its equivalent in the United States and in Great Britain.

The arrangement of the definitions does not seem to be always historical. Under fond are seven definitions, of which the first and last are marked obsolete. Evidently then the arrangement in this case is neither that of historical development nor that of frequency of use. Of the seven definitions of silly, the first five are obsolete, though historically arranged; the last two are the ordinary and current meanings. Of the five definitions of idiot, the first, second, and last are marked obsolete. Of the two remaining, one defines as "a person afflicted with idiocy", and the reader is referred to idiocy. By the process of elimination one finally arrives at the present meaning.

To aids to a better understanding of the definitions we have, where needed, illustrative citations and pictorial illustrations. The former, selected with

good judgment, are apparently used less frequently than in former editions and only where necessary to enlighten the reader. Modern works are drawn upon to a greater extent than heretofore. The pictorial illustrations number more than 6,000, nearly half of which are new. "The purpose has been in every instance to furnish illustrations that will tell a story or explain some feature more clearly or more concisely than could be done by words" (1) By far the larger number of cuts deal, as they should, with machinery, scientific instruments, and natural history. A selection of these pictorial illustrations in classified form is found in the Appendix, which also includes a table of arbitrary signs, a Pronouncing Gazetteer, and a Pronouncing Biographical Dictionary.

In this work the aims of the editors have been first, accuracy, second thoroughness and adequacy of treatment, and finally, symmetry and unity of the work as a whole. "Its salient features in comparison with its predecessor are: a more full and scholarly treatment of the whole field of the English language; a great addition of words and definitions; a greatly increased amount of encyclopedic information; a more exhaustive and discriminating treatment of synonyms; a greater comprehensiveness in the illustrations; and an arrangement of material that makes the dictionary much easier of consultation" (2)

(1) Preface

In large measure these aims of the editors have been realized. In the vastness and inclusiveness of its vocabulary, in the simplicity, clearness, and accuracy of its definitions, in the clear indication of pronunciation and its general conformity to present usage, in its progressive attitude toward spelling, in its admirable treatment of synonyms, in its wealth of illustrations, in its scholarly introduction and valuable appendixes, in its typography and make-up, in its convenience of consultation and in the abundance of information contained within its covers, in general accuracy, completeness, and practical usefulness, - in short, in all the essentials of a good dictionary - the New International is probably the most complete and valuable single-volume dictionary in this or in any other language.*

* This statement may need modification upon the completion of the New Standard

Chap. V.

Worcester's Dictionary of the English Language.

Before the appearance of "a Dictionary of the English Language", its compiler, Dr. Joseph E. Worcester, had been already engaged in lexicographical work. In 1830 had appeared "a Comprehensive Pronouncing and Explanatory Dictionary of the English Language"; in 1846, "a Universal and Critical Dictionary of the English Language"; and in 1855, "a Pronouncing, Explanatory, and Synonymous Dictionary of the English Language". The second of these, the most important of the three in that it contained nearly 27,000 more words than Todd's edition of Johnson's Dictionary, was made the basis of "a Dictionary of the English Language".

This work appeared in one volume quarto in 1860. The vocabulary* comprises the words found in the 1846 volume, and in addition about 19000 words from a great variety of sources. The total number, about 104000, is greater than had been included in any preceding American dictionary. The list, however, is swelled by the inclusion of a superfluous number of compound words, the meaning of many of which is obvious; there are, for instance, upwards of twenty pages of such words formed with the prefix-un.

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* It is interesting to note the inclusion of phantom-nation, defined as "illusion", a word taken by misapprehension from Pope. Richard Paul Jodrell, with a passion for compound words, recorded the two words phantom and nation as one. The word is found in Webster's Unabridged and in all editions of Worcester.

Synonyms are given little attention; here and there we find a few words meagerly treated. This, however, is an entirely new feature for which Worcester should be given credit.

In orthography Worcester was conservative. In the prefatory remarks upon the subject his general principle is thus stated: "In adjusting the orthography of this Dictionary much care has been taken; in doing it, attention has been paid to etymology, analogy, and usage; and in cases in which good usage is divided, etymology and analogy have been consulted in deciding disputable points. But no innovation has been made with respect to those cases in which usage is invariable and settled"[1]. Of two forms, then, both of which are in good usage, Worcester prefers that one which is more in accord with the etymology. Thus *ambassador* is preferred to *embassador*, and *encumber* to *encumb*, though both forms are given.

To quote from the Preface: "Much care has been bestowed upon orthography; and the design has been to give that which is in accordance with the best usage both in England and the United States". When, however, English orthography conflicts with or differs from American, that form preferred and supported by prevailing usage in this country is the only one recognized. Thus the words like

① Remarks on Orthography p XXV

arbor, honor, etc. omit the u; music, public, physic, etc. drop the final k. Words like meter, sepulcher, specter, etc. are spelled metre, sepulchre, spectre, etc., because, according to Worcester, they are supported by the prevailing usage of derivatives. In the spelling of polysyllabic verbs with single consonant terminations Worcester's rule is this: Verbs of two or more syllables, ending with a single consonant, and having the accent on the last syllable, double the final consonant of the verb on assuming an additional syllable; but when the accent is not on the last syllable, the consonant is not doubled. Thus we have abhorred, deferred, expelled, etc.; and credited, entered, suffered, etc. But Worcester makes an exception to the last clause of the rule in the case of words ending in l," which, on assuming an additional syllable, are allowed, by general usage, to double the l". Thus the derivatives of counsel, label, travel, marvel are spelled counselled, counsellor, labelled, travelled, traveller, marvelled, marvellous. Worship is another exception, the derivatives being spelled worshipped, worshipper.

Of the verbs ending in ize or ise Worcester spells those derived from the Greek and others formed after the same analogy with ize, as agonize, characterize, anatomize; but words derived from the French prendre and dissyllabic verbs generally have the termination ise, as

D Remarks on Orthography p xxv

chastise, enterprise, compromise. Only the single consonantal termination of the primitive is recognized in words like fulfil, fulness, skilful, wilful; and only c in offence defence, pretence.* Prefixed to the main work are the rules governing the orthography as exemplified in the volume, and a list of words of doubtful or various orthography.

In pronunciation the work differs very slightly from the 1864 unabridged edition of Webster. The chief difference† is in the accentuation of the ate polysyllabic verbs, like alternate, contemplate etc. Webster, it will be remembered, preferred to accent the antepenult, or prepositional, syllable, though, in most cases, he recorded the penult accentuation as an optional one. Worcester, following the English orthoepists,‡ as a rule places the accent only on the second syllable. However, in the case of these and other words of various, doubtful, or disputed pronunciation, the work "is so constructed as to exhibit the modes in which they are pronounced by all the most eminent English orthoepists."①

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* For other spellings and for a comparison with Webster, see Appendix.

† For minor differences see Appendix.

‡ Under the word contemplate (p 393) Worcester writes: "With respect to all these words, Dr. Webster places the accent on the first syllable; the English orthoëpists, with little variation, place it on the second syllable".

① Introductory article on "Orthoepy and Orthoepists" (p XXII)

In etymology the book is decidedly weak, though perhaps the shortcomings in this department should be charged rather to the general ignorance of the subject and the unscientific method of treatment of the time than to Worcester himself. O.E. and M.E. forms are seldom given except for words native to the language. These forms are not essential to the explanation of the etymology, though their inclusion would be expected, to say the least. Nor is the derivation of words native to the language particularly satisfactory. For man this etymology is given: M. Goth. manna; A.S. man or mon; Dut. and Sw. man; Ger. mann; Dan. mand; Icel. madr; W. manac; Sanse. man. It is impossible to tell from this collection of cognate forms that the word man is a native English word, but this is about as far as one can go.

The definitions are better. Those of concrete objects are, on the whole, concise and accurate; those of abstract conceptions are not so good, being frequently vague and usually given in terms of the word defined. Thus, to take a single page, one of the definitions of admittance is "the act of admitting; of admonition, "act of admonishing"; of adoption, "act of adopting"; of adoration, "act of adoring". In each case the noun is defined by the participial form of the corresponding verb, preceded by the vague act of. Again, every noun ending in ness, is defined in terms of "state" or "quality of being" followed by the adjectival form of the word

defines. For example, highness is "the state of being high"; goodness, "the quality of being good"; richness, "the state or quality of being rich"; profaneness, "the quality of being profane." The faults of these definitions of abstract words are three: vagueness, monotony in phrasing, and inclusion in the definition of some form of the word defined. The names of inventions and scientific terms are usually well defined, though telephone as "an instrument for conveying sound to a great distance" is open to criticism because of its lack of definiteness and accuracy. Altogether the definitions lack the simplicity, the clearness, the definiteness, and the accuracy of Webster.

The arrangement of the definitions is generally historical; the literal or etymological significations come first, followed by the obsolete meanings, if there are any. This, however, is not always the case; mistrow, for instance the obsolete meaning comes last. In the case of words recently introduced and having no obsolete meaning, or in the case of words having a variety of meanings, there seems to be no definite plan pursued. They are certainly not always arranged according to frequency of use, e.g. check; as a rule, however, technical significations or usages peculiar to a profession or science follow the common acceptations.

The definitions are exemplified in many instances by citations from reputable authors, and illustrated by wood-cuts in cases where a pictorial representation could not well be spared. These citations are fewer in number and inferior in quality to those in Webster's 1864 edition.

In addition to the prefatory matter already mentioned, the Introduction contains a discussion of Archaisms, Provincialisms, and Americanisms; an admirable History of English Lexicography; a valuable Catalogue of English Dictionaries, Glossaries, Encyclopaedias, etc. The Appendix contains A Key to the Classical Pronunciation of Greek, Latin, and Scripture Proper Names; Pronunciation of modern Geographical Names; Pronunciation of the names of Distinguished Men of modern Times; Abbreviations and Signs used in Writing and Printing; and a Collection of Words, Phrases, and Quotations from the Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish Languages.

The publication, in successive years, of Webster's Pictorial Edition in 1859 and of Worcester's Unabridged in 1860 evoked considerable discussion as to the relative merits of the two Dictionaries. Many scholars and leading periodicals preferred Worcester; their chief objections to Webster lay in the eccentricities of spelling and in the sweeping changes which he advocated. Though the majority of the educators and publishers failed to endorse Webster, some state legislatures introduced his Dictionary and the debates in Congress employed his spelling (1)

(1) De Bow's Review May 1860 Vol 28 p

The following extracts will show the tone of contemporary criticism:

"The volumes before us show a vast amount of diligence; but with Webster it is diligence in combination with faithfulness, with Worcester, in combination with good sense and judgment. Worcester's is the soberest and safest book, and may be pronounced the best existing English lexicon." ①

"We believe Dr. Worcester's Dictionary to be the most complete and accurate of any hitherto published. He intrudes no theories of his own as to pronunciation or orthography, but cites the opinions of the best authorities, and briefly adds his own where there is occasion. He is no bigot for the spelling of certain classes of words .....

"A conclusive reason with us for preferring Dr. Worcester's Dictionary is, that the author has properly understood his function, and has aimed to give us a true view of English as it is, and not as he himself may have wished it were to be or thought it ought to be." ②

"The great and prominent merit of Worcester's Dictionary, after all, is that it is a faithful record of the present condition of the English language, as it is used by the best writers and scholars, and by the most refined society in England and America" ③

① London Athenaeum Feb 1870 ?

② Atlantic Monthly May 1860 Vol V p634; p636.

③ Dr Bowis Review May 1860 Vol 28 p572

The following was found in a copy of Worcester's Dictionary belonging to Professor Holmes, then of the University of Virginia:

"At a meeting of the Faculty, held July 7, 1860, Prof. Holmes offered the following resolutions:

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this Faculty, Worcester's Dictionary affords the most reliable authority of the English Language.

Resolved, Therefore, That Worcester's Dictionary is for the present recognized by them as the standard of propriety in this respect.

Prof. Minor moved to lay these resolutions on the table, which motion being decided in the negative, they were then passed."

This preference for Worcester lasted only a few years; with the appearance of Webster's Unabridged in 1864, critical opinion changed. The Nation (1) and the Atlantic Monthly (2) both came out strongly in favor of Webster. Littell's Living Age (3) also considered the late Webster the better book as will be seen by the following extract:

"Worcester's 'Dictionary of the English Language' has also an English as well as an American publisher, and deserves the good reputation which it has in England. Looking at it from a practical point of view, it may be sufficient to define it as a vast, industrious, and careful work, superior to the 'Imperial Dictionary', but inferior in most points to the Webster-Mahn."

(1) Nation. Aug. 16, 1866 Vol III p 125-127

(2) Atlantic Monthly. Nov 1864 Vol 14 pp 642-644

(3) Littell's Living Age Dec. 13, 1873. Vol 119 p 650

The next edition of Worcester's dictionary, which appeared in 1881, differs from the preceding only in the addition of a supplement of 204 pages containing about 12,500 words, and an admirable vocabulary of synonyms of words in general use. The last edition, that of 1886, makes no change except one of order. The supplement is now put between the main body of the work and the Appendix, to which has been added a Pronouncing Dictionary of Biography, a Pronouncing Vocabulary of Christian Names, and a Pronouncing Gazetteer of the World. With the exception of these additions, the last issue is the same as the first. Each successive edition has been a reprint of the preceding; no textual changes have been made. The main body of the work is today just as it was in 1860.

No one now considers Worcester as an authority. The book has not been kept abreast of the times and probably will never be revised. The publishers, J.B. Lippincott Co., seem to have no intention of financing a revision of a book which has long since passed out of use. In regard to the work they wrote me as follows: "Worcester's Quarto Dictionary has not been revised for twenty years or more, and while in its essential features it is an excellent book for the average man, yet it will not meet the requirements of those who desire the up-to-date terms, for it is deficient in this particular. We have long since ceased to send out circulars of this book." Unless the book is thoroughly revised and greatly enlarged it will, as far as practical service is concerned, very soon pass into oblivion.

Chap VI.

The Century Dictionary and Encyclopedia.

Begun in 1889, the Century Dictionary first appeared 1889-1891, under the editorship of the late Professor William Dwight Whitney, the leading philologist in America. The title of this six volume edition was "The Century Dictionary, an Encyclopedic Lexicon of the English Language." "As its name states, it was a dictionary, but its broadly encyclopedic treatment of words and things made it much wider in scope and vastly more useful than any mere lexicon."① According to the Preface, the aim of the work was therefore: "The construction of a general dictionary of the English language which shall be serviceable for every literary and practical use; a more complete collection of the technical terms of the various sciences, arts, trades, and professions than has yet been attempted; and the addition to the definitions proper of such related encyclopedic matter, with pictorial illustrations, as shall constitute a convenient book of general reference. The attempt to accomplish these ends, and at the same time to produce a harmonious whole, has determined both the general character of the work and its details."

① Prospectus, announcing the publication of a new and enlarged edition of the Century Dictionary, Cyclopedia, and Atlas. p 8

Since the latest edition of this dictionary has incorporated into itself, in a form improved by expansion or condensation, all of the material of the first edition, it will not be necessary to enter into a detailed treatment of the earlier work. As it first appeared The Century contained a vocabulary of about 200000 words, required about nine years of work, and involved an outlay of nine hundred and eighty thousand dollars before the first set of printing plates was produced.

In 1894 was added an additional volume, "The Century Cyclopedia of Names", devoted to accounts of notable people, places, streams, historical events, books, works of art, famous streets, buildings, institutions, and so on, with the spelling and pronunciation of their names".(1) In 1897 the work was further extended and supplemented by the addition of "The Century Atlas of the World," which contained the most elaborate and costly series of maps ever produced in this country, with a geographical index to the maps including upward of one hundred and seventy thousand names".(1) With the addition of these two volumes the completed work took the title of The Century Dictionary, Cyclopedia, and Atlas. In 1904 appeared two additional volumes containing a supplementary vocabulary. The second volume contained also a ninety-two page supplement to the Cyclopedia of Names.

work in ten the first names lary, with the of Names the sixth Atlas.

(1) Prospectus pp 8-9

Such in brief is the history of the Century before the publication of the latest edition in twelve volumes in 1911. Great as it was before, it is now even greater. "Its information is wider and more varied; it is even more encyclopedic, for it has not only extended many of the earlier encyclopedic articles but has added many that are new."(1) Each of the volumes published previously has been subjected to careful revision and the results embodied in the latest edition.

The Century Dictionary and Encyclopedia, as it appeared in 1911, is, in typography and presswork, of the highest excellence. In typography it is a model of compactness and legibility; in presswork it approaches very near to absolute perfection." After much deliberation the printing was finally given to the famous De Vinne Press.... under a contract providing that 'the printer shall make the presswork of this new edition the finest of any large reference work now in existence, and in keeping with the best traditions of both the De Vinne Press and The Century Co'. .... In its rich black impression, perfect cleanness, and even register, The Century is unrivalled"(2)

Of the twelve volumes the first ten include the vocabulary; Vol. XI contains the Cyclopedia of Names, and Vol. XII the Atlas. To each of these volumes, except the last, supplementary material has been added. The pages of this edition, supplements excluded, correspond to those

(1) Prospectus p. 10
(2) Prospectus p. 13.

of the first edition. Since text changes, necessary to bring the work up to date, are numerous, one wonders why the editors should have adhered to the old page-numbering and appended the bulk of the supplementary material to the various volumes instead of incorporating it in the main portion of the book. The correspondence of pages is made possible by the use of smaller type where necessary, by occasional condensation of definitions and by omission of some old and unimportant material. Whenever the new material could be included in the main body of the dictionary without changing the page numbers, it was done; wherever this was found impossible the new material was added in the supplement. Take, for example, the word case, vol III. p. 841. Here the latest Edition differs from the first in the following ways: Bradlaugh's case is condensed; the extract illustrating in case is omitted; Knight's Case, Northern Securities case, Standard Oil Case (decided May 1911) are added; a phrase in Taltarum's case is omitted; Tobacco case (decided May 1911) is added; Tweed's case is condensed; under case[2] all of the extracts illustrative of the third definition, and two illustrative of the fifth definition, are omitted. Additional material on case is given in the supplement.

The arrangement of the vocabulary, as regards the division of words beginning with the same letter into two volumes, is not to be commended from the standpoint of practical usage and convenience of reference. By compressing the whole vocal-

ulary of a single letter into a single volume, there would result a great saving of time to the reader. Though the scope of The Century would hardly permit of fewer volumes of convenient size, at the same time it would be easily possible to arrange the vocabulary so that all words initially the same should be included in one volume. In all matters relating to form and arrangement, the convenience of the consulter should be the controlling principle.

The vocabulary of the first edition contained about 200,000 words, 25,000 more than were in The International of 1890. To this number were added in 1909 two supplementary volumes; this revised supplement, together with further additions, has been included in the latest edition, which contains a vocabulary larger than any completed dictionary as it now stands, The Century Dictionary, Cyclopedia, and Atlas contains upwards of 530,000 words and phrases. The broad scope of the vocabulary is the result of the Editor's belief that "the first duty of a comprehensive dictionary is collection not selection." The Century is, accordingly, "designed to be a practically complete record of the main body of English speech from the time of the mingling of the old French and Anglo-Saxon to the present day, with such of its offshoots as possess historical, etymological, literary, scientific, or practical value."[1] Some words, however, must be excluded. Among these are: words used only for the nonce; recent coinages which have not been

(1) Preface.

generally accepted; many special names of recent inventions and commercial articles; a large group of derivatives ending in -ness, -ish, -ly, -ing; dialectal, provincial, or colloquial words ~~in so far as they~~ which stand out of vital relation to the main body of the language. The whole question of inclusion or exclusion of words is there summed up in the Preface: "None of these considerations is of the nature of a definite rule that can be used with precision in all cases. On the contrary, the question whether a word shall be included, even in a dictionary so comprehensive as this, must often be decided by the special circumstances of the case"

Slang, cant phraseology, dialectical and colloquial terms are all fully treated. Among slang terms we find such expressions as to bark at the moon, to bark up the wrong tree, to kick the bucket, to go for in the sense of assail, to hit it off, to hit the pipe, etc. Certain words and expressions like greenhorn, grit, greaser, to make good, which still have a slangy flavor, are not so designated. Some expressions naturally [and, perhaps purposely,] occur; among these are to get in good, to get one's goat. It seems strange, however, that such frequently used slang words, as swell in "this is a swell place", and class and classy, in "there is some class to this", "We have a classy bunch", should be omitted. Base-ball parlance receives excellent treatment. We find explained such terms as to found out, foul ball, base-hit

fair-hit, safe hit, two-base hit, a sacrifice hit, to steal, to bunt, to bat, etc. Strange to say fly and to fly out are not given; explanation of the squeeze play is omitted. Many dialectical words, such as tote, tater etc, occur; others, such as spirium, gwine, 'lasses, etc., are excluded. The inclusion of tater would certainly warrant the inclusion of 'lasses. Also chunk as a verb, in common use in the Cotton States in the sense of to throw, to cast, is omitted. On the whole, however, The Century is, in respect to all of these classes of words, more inclusive than any of its predecessors.

To test the extent of its inclusion of Middle English words, I glanced over that portion of the glossary of Mead's "Selections from Le Morte Darthur" embracing the letters M, N, and O, and then looked these words up in the dictionary. Maugre (but not maulgre), mesel, mere, mocke, mickle (but not mykel), noyous, orgul, orgulous all occur; moyane and neyeshe do not. Again the word medle occurs as meddle, but is not defined in the sense of "cohabit" as used by Malory.* Mysereaunt, noselynge, nygromancy, though occurring in the illustrative extracts with this orthography, are recorded in the vocabulary with their modern spelling miscreant, nosling, and necromancy. These few examples will enable one to judge as to the scope of The Century in this department of its vocabulary.

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*"And in the same tyme that they medled togyders there was Abel begoten" — Mead's Selections from Le Morte Darthur. Ginn & Co. p 130 l 27.

Foreign words and phrases, particularly those from the French receive satisfactory treatment. These are included in their proper alphabetical order, and not grouped at the end as in so many preceding dictionaries. Some omissions, which we hardly expect, are merci, affaire d'amour, and beau temps. Technical and scientific terms have been included in large numbers. In my opinion many of these might well have been omitted, such, for instance, as Abeona Ablephari, Abranchiata, half of the Acan- words, Aclidae, Acmaeidae, because of the rarity of their occurrence. Furthermore, the definitions are couched in technical phraseology so absolutely unintelligible to any but the learned scientist that to the general student they are absolutely valueless. However by its inclusion of such a large number of technical and scientific terms, The Century has rendered a valuable service to botanists, biologists, geologists, and other members of the ist family.

In connection with the vocabulary a word may be said regarding the treatment of homonyms. These have been distinguished by small figures placed above the word (¹, ², ³, etc.); in numbering these "the rule has been to give precedence to the oldest or the most familiar, or to that one which is most nearly English in origin. The superior numbers apply not so much to the individual word as to the group or root to which it belongs; hence the different grammatical uses of the same homonym are numbered alike when they are separately entered in the dictionary." ① "The Century's treatment of these words is the most satisfactory to be found in American lexicography

① Preface.

Orthography in the latest edition of American dictionaries may be discussed from two standpoints: first, the preference for American or English spelling in certain general classes of words in which there is a recognized distinction; second, the attitude of the work to the question of simplified spelling. Both of these questions may be settled briefly.

The general classes of words referred to, in the spelling of which usage varies, and for either form of which there is excellent authority both in this country and in England, are: (1) words ending in or or our, as arbor or arbour; (2) words ending in er or re, as theater or theatre; (3) words ending in ize or ise, as civilize or civilise; (4) words having a single or double consonant after an unaccented syllable, as traveler or traveller, worshiper or worshipper; (5) nouns in ion derived from verbs in ct, as inflection or inflexion. In all of these classes the Century prefers the first, or American, spelling, though in every case both forms are given.

Again, the preference of the Century is, in most cases, for the simplified form of spelling; but it must not be understood that it lends its sanction to the latest abominations of the reform spellers. Nor does it give, except in a slight degree, its approval to the comprehensive 'ten rules' as adopted in 1883 by the American Philological Association and by the Philological Society of London. Simplified spelling is preferred when it does not conflict with etymology and native analogy. Thus the preference of the Century is:

1. e, instead of ae, oe, in words like esthetic, encyclopedia, medieval, diarrhea; but archaeology and manoeuver, because these forms are more in accord with their etymology.
2. ow, instead of ough, in plow.
3. i, instead of y, in gipsy, gaiety, gaily; but pygmy in preference to pigmy, though from derivation and analogy pigmy would seem to be preferable.
4. omission of silent e in judgment, acknowledgment, development, abridgment (the only form recorded), adz, ax, gelatin, glycerin (only form recorded), develop, envelop. But domicile is preferred to domicil, and woe and woeful to wo and woful.
5. rejection of the final -me in diagram (only form recorded), gram, program; of the final -te in epaulet and omelet (only form recorded), but recognition of only the one form coquette; The final -ue, however, is the only spelling recognized in catalogue, dialogue, epilogue, though prologue has prolog as an optional spelling.
6. the single consonant in the accented syllable in the words bun, distil, fulfil, skilful, imful, fagot, wagon, woolen; but fullness and dullness are preferred to fulness and dulness.

In phonetic spelling the Century has little charity. Though it prefers fantasy to phantasy, on the other hand it

prefers* phantom to fantom and phantasm to fantasm; condemns sulfur as obsolete†; does not recognize crost, crusht (though it admits that clipped is sometimes clipt), ~~though it~~ nor tho, altho, and thoroly.

In all words given above, except those stated as the only form recorded, both forms are given, with an expressed preference for the briefer one, or that more in accord with etymology and native analogies. Moreover, The Century seeks to record not innovations and unestablished forms, but only accepted spellings. "It is not the office of a dictionary like this to propose improvements, or to adopt those which have been proposed, and have not yet won some degree of acceptance and use"①. In orthography, then, The Century is a sane and safe guide; it neither seeks the power of an autocrat, nor assumes the office of a dictator.

———o———o———o———o———o———

*. This is open to question. For, though the definition is given only under phantom, the etymological treatment states that the word is "more properly spelled fantom, being originally spelled with f. in England and later conformed initially to the Latin spelling".

†. This is certainly an error, for the ~~majority~~ evidence of chemical journals is to employ the f in preference to ph in such words as sulfur, sulfuric, fosfate, etc.

① Preface.

In pronunciation, a dictionary should record all pronunciations used by good speakers, and clearly indicate these by symbols and phonetic re-spellings. *The Century*, it is to be regretted, does not record, in all cases, different pronunciations which are in present reputable usage. A few words in which good usage varies from the pronunciation recorded in *The Century* are *acclímate*, *éxquisite*, *véhement*, *in-quíry*, *resóurce*, *o-á-sis*, *automóbile*, *octópus*, and *pér-emptory*. For these words the only accentuation given is as is indicated above; yet the pronunciations *ácclimate*, *ex-quísite*, *vehément*, *ínquiry*, *résource*, *ó-a-sis*, *áutomobile*, *óctopus*, and *perémptory* are as frequently heard. Again *The Century* gives preference to the accentuation of the second syllable in words like *concentrate*, *confiscate*, *consummate*, *contemplate*, *compensate*, *demonstrate*, though the far more usual pronunciation accents the first syllable. The words *path*, *past*, *ask*, *glass*, etc., are pronounced in The Century only as pȧth, pȧst, ȧsk, glȧss, the *a* having the sound as in *fast*. Though this intermediate sound of *a* is perhaps the more generally used in pronouncing these words, yet the pronunciation päth (*a* as in *father*) and păth (as in bare) are frequently used by good speakers. The words *log*, *dog*, *fog*, *bog*, *cog*, *hog* are all given only the pronunciation of *o* as in *not*, except *dog* which has a secondary pronunciation dog (dawg). Yet the pronunciations dog (dawg) and hog (hawg) are as generally used. Once more, the very common

pronunciations of soot as sUt (oo as in blood), of hoof as huf (oo as in book), of coop as cup (oo as in book), are not recognized in the Century. I do not make the criticism that the Century does not record the best pronunciation; I do maintain, however, that in the examples given it does not record variant pronunciations which are in good usage. A dictionary should indicate some preference for a particular pronunciation; but when there are alternative pronunciations in current reputable use, these should be recorded also.

The second duty, indication of pronunciation, the Century has performed admirably. Vowel length is indicated by a well-chosen set of symbols, such as dots placed above or below the letter, straight lines, etc. Furthermore every word is phonetically respelled. It is to be regretted that the Century did not adopt the method of the New International and Standard and place a Key to pronunciation on each page. One seeking the pronunciation of many words loses much time in turning to the front of the book and hunting through the Key each time one wishes to see what sound is to be given to a particular vowel.

The etymologies, having the authority of Professor William Dwight Whitney, the most eminent philologist yet produced in America, and being further supported by the authority of Mr. C. P. G. Scott who wrote them, with the assistance, in some part, of contributions from such scholars as Professor James A. Harrison,

Professor William M. Baskerville, Professor Francis A. March Jr., and others, are as clear and as accurate as the science of philology can make them. In extent, general interest, scholarship, and accuracy they have been equalled by no American dictionary.

A few examples from Vol I will be sufficient to indicate the general excellence of this Department. One has only to compare with Worcester the etymologies of abut, accomplice, accuse, ache, bat², bay¹, the verb to be, bless, etc. to see the difference between past guess-work treatment and the present scientific method. "Noteworthy features of the etymologies will be found to be the method followed in stating the ascertained facts of the history of each word, and the extensive collation of cognate or allied words. Beginning with the current accepted form or spelling, each important word has been traced back through earlier forms to its remotest known origin .... The rule has been to deduce from a comparison of all the principal forms the primitive sense or form, and also to make the process of inference clear to the consulter of the dictionary" ①

Care has been taken to record, in support of a given derivation, only those forms which are historically attested, while suppositious ones have been marked with an asterisk. In etymology, then, The Century may be regarded, with almost perfect confidence, as the lexicographical authority in America.

① Preface pp XI - XII.

The definitions are, in nearly all cases, admirable. Abstract terms, as adversity, admiration, ambition, etc., are well defined. The distinction between vocation and avocation is well brought out in the definitions under the latter word. The inclusion under avocation of this definition, "a person's regular business or occupation; vocation; calling", – a definition which is stated as being "an improper though common use of the word" – is in keeping with the general policy of the book, that of recording actual usage, indicating its own preference, and leaving the decision with the reader. Among other words well managed, to quote only a few of the many, are action, actual, anchor, and apatite. The editors are not satisfied with some vague rendering for ~~ask~~, such as a kind of serpent, but describe it in detail, giving its habitat, illustrating its appearance, and adding interesting bits of historical information connected with its life.

All words, however, are not treated so elaborately or so satisfactorily. The word adjective is not defined in its grammatical sense as fully as it should be. Besides expressing quality or condition, an adjective also expresses quantity and indicates a certain degree of definiteness or indefiniteness. We should naturally expect a treatment of the kinds as well as of the uses of adjectives. This meagerness of definition is in the nature of an exception; in nearly every instance, the definitions are models of comprehensiveness and accuracy.

The arrangement of the definitions is usually historical, though this has not been possible in every case. This method of giving the meanings in the order of their development is, in the views of the editors of the Century, the desirable one," and it has been adopted wherever, from the etymological and other data accessible, the historical order can be inferred with a considerable degree of certainty."[1] Obsolete meanings are marked by a dagger (†), thus distinguishing them from present meanings.

Closely allied to the definitions is their illustration. This is accomplished by one or all of three methods: by illustrations from reputable writers; by an explanation and differentiation of synonymous terms; and by pictorial representations. In all of these departments the Century is exceptionally strong.

The illustrative citations, of which there is a vast number, represent all periods and branches of English literature. All of these, with the exception of a few taken from the Imperial Dictionary, are furnished with exact references to the works from which they have been extracted, and are given in the orthography of the texts from which they have been taken. These extracts have been collected not only from all the well known names of English literature, but also from many of the recent and less known authors and speakers like Bayard Taylor, E.C. Stedman, J.T. Clarke, R.H. Stoddard, and G.C. Harris. Even newspapers and periodicals, such as the London Times and the North American Review, furnish examples.

1) Preface.

The fitness of these quotations is beyond criticism, and can be appreciated only by examination. Two examples must suffice. The illustration from Fuller of the fourth meaning of avocation is even more clear than the definition. The caller is: "That which calls one away from one's proper business; a subordinate or occasional occupation; a diversion or distraction." The quotation is: "Heaven is his vocation, and therefore he counts earthly employments avocations." Again, the eleventh definition of butt[2] is: "A goal; a bound; a limit." The quotation, taken from Shakespeare, is:

"Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail."

In others equally as good, see the second meaning of actual, the third meaning of author, and the first meaning of buss.

If the quotations are good, the treatment of synonyms is better. No accurate conception of the value and excellence of this portion of the work can be obtained by a mere statement. To appreciate, one must see for one's self. These synonymous terms are not only discussed fully and carefully distinguished from one another, but are, with few exceptions, aptly illustrated by quotations from standard writers. For examples of the superiority of the Century in this department to its predecessors, one has only to read the discussions on acrimony, appreciate, arrogance, or bashfulness.

The pictorial illustrations number nearly ten thousand, of which several thousand are wood-engravings. The excellent opaque paper used in the Century is well adapted for reproducing the original with great clearness and distinctness. Altogether there are 44 full-page plates, of which 18 are in full color, and 26 in black and white. Aeroplane and automobile each have two full pages of illustrations, one showing the kinds and the other the mechanism of the machines. Two pages are devoted to illustrations of the different types of architecture. Of particular excellence are the figures of animals, especially those of birds, fishes, and insects. The most inferior figures noted in Vol I are those illustrating boa, blood, Botrychium, buttress. But these indistinct figures are few; they are simply exceptions to the general excellence to be found in the illustrations.

The encyclopedic material is not properly a part of a dictionary and falls without the limits of this dissertation. One would not expect, for instance, to find a discussion of Aristotelian philosophy in a dictionary. It may be said, however, that in the Century, as it name implies, the encyclopedic information constitutes one of the chief features.

In addition to the ten volumes comprising the dictionary proper, The Century includes two additional volumes, one giving biographical information of more

than twenty thousand noted men and women of all nations, the other being an Atlas with an index of upwards of one hundred and eighty thousand names.

It only remains to be said that the Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia comprises within its volumes in easily accessible form nearly all the information one could wish. Altogether, the Century far surpasses anything in American lexicography.

Chap VII.

A Standard Dictionary.

The work which is now to be considered, a Standard Dictionary, enjoys a distinction unique among present reputable American dictionaries. In the preparation of Webster's New International, the editors drew largely upon the International; this was based upon the Unabridged, which in turn was based upon the American. The Century utilizes much of the material, definitive as well as illustrative, of Annandale's edition of Ogilvie's Imperial Dictionary. The Standard was made from the start as an absolutely independent work.

Under the supervision and editorship of Dr. Isaac K. Funk, the Standard Dictionary first appeared in two volumes; Volume I was published in 1893, and Volume II in the following year. In the latter year, 1894, these two volumes were, for the convenience of the consulter, combined into one. Subsequent editions were published yearly until 1903. Each of these underwent minor revisions and textual changes necessary to bring the work up to date; more than 25,000 such changes were made in the book between the years 1894 and 1903. In 1898 an addendum, running from A to K and containing approximately 2000 words, was added after page 2100. In 1903 were added: (1) a supplement containing

approximately 15,000 additional words; (2) a department treating the formation of plurals of nouns; 3) a department giving Bible names and their pronunciation; and (4) an entirely new department of proper names of all kinds.

In addition numerous changes were made in the pictorial illustrations, as may be seen by comparing the plates of Decorations of Honor and Coats of Arms as they appear in the 1894 and 1903 editions. It may be of interest to state that the revisions of these plates was accomplished and their [present] accuracy secured by referring each one of the Decorations and each one of the Coats of Arms to the various Secretaries of State of the different countries where the Decorations are conferred and where the Coats of Arms are used. Furthermore the progress of science rendered necessary the insertion of additional pictorial matter, such, for instance, as the illustration of Roentgen Rays and the apparatus used in wireless telegraphy.

In 1910 was issued another edition, which repeats all of these features already mentioned and which contains beyond them a four-page supplement of about 1200 additional words. In addition to these supplementary additions, the text was subjected to a thorough revision. Such, in brief, is the history of the Standard Dictionary down to the present time. I shall take as the basis of a few remarks the edition of 1898, and conclude with a notice of the New Standard Dictionary which is soon to appear.

The title page of the 1898 edition is as follows:
"A Standard Dictionary of the English Language. Upon Original Plans. Designed to Give, in Complete and Accurate Statement, in the Light of the most Recent Advances in Knowledge, and in the Readiest Form for Popular Use, the Meaning, Orthography, Pronunciation, and Etymology of all the Words and the Idiomatic Phrases in the Speech and Literature of the English-Speaking Peoples. Prepared by More than Two Hundred Specialists and Other Scholars, under the Supervision of Isaac K. Funk, D.D." The originality of the work has already been mentioned. The words, "in the readiest form for popular use", indicate that one of the leading features of the work is to be ease of consultation and that it is intended primarily for popular use. And it is from these standpoints that I shall discuss the book.

The vocabulary embraces the words from Chaucer to the present, including colloquial usages, handicraft terms and new words in the arts and sciences. Obsolete, foreign, dialectical, and slang words are recorded only if likely to be sought for in a general English dictionary. "The simple general rule of inclusion has been followed: Omit no word found in a living book — that is, in a book now read by any considerable number of people — and whose meaning is likely to be sought for in an English dictionary."① By the observance of this simple guiding principle, which precludes the unnecessary

① Preface.

inclusion of many obsolete and archaic words now easily accessible in O.E. and M.E. glossaries, and which thereby limits the vocabulary to such words as are likely to be sought by the general reader, ease of consultation is promoted. The placing of the proper names in an appendix, instead of including them in their proper alphabetical position in the body of the work, is, from the standpoint of convenience of reference, the only adverse criticism which may fairly be made of the arrangement of the vocabulary. In one other point of arrangement I differ with the editors. My personal preference would be the grouping of the variant spellings, as is done with the alternative spellings, with the approved or preferred spelling, instead of recording them, in some cases, after the etymology.

A feature of much value is the inclusion under a general term of many special terms connected with the parent word. Thus under printing, brick-making, mining, etc., we have lists of terms used specifically in these industries. Whenever these terms are not self-explaining, they are defined in their proper alphabetical places. The advantage of thus grouping specific terms under a generic one is obvious. Should the writer or speaker fail to recall the specific technical word needed, he has only to glance at the general term and run over the list of words included under it to obtain that one which he desires.

In spelling the Standard advocates the simpler of two recognized forms. Thus for the general classes of words represented by the following particular ones, this dictionary prefers: arbor to arbour; meter to metre; judgment to judgement; domicil, gelatin, glycerin, ady, ax, etc to the forms ending in e; gram and program to the forms ending in -me; medieval to mediaval; the single exception is the accented syllable in distil, fulfil, fulness, skilful, wilful, woolen, and in the derivatives of counsel, label, travel worship, etc. Chemical terms, as bromin, chlorid, sulfid, etc., have been thus spelled in accordance with the desires of the Chemical Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The 3500 (circ.) words, to which the principles of spelling reform have been applied, are included with their proposed orthography; but when these spellings are not the preference of the editors of the Standard, they are marked with the abbreviation Phil. Soc. By their inclusion of these phonetic forms the editors have advanced no theories of their own, but have simply accorded a just recognition to forms in common use. Nor does a preference of the editors for a particular form mean a disregard of the claims of other forms; in each case the alternative or variant spelling is recorded, in the one case bracketed with the preferred spelling, in the other placed after the etymology and marked with a double dagger (‡). By its advocacy of simplicity in spelling, and by its recognition of phonetic forms, the Standard has conferred a benefit upon the many who have become confused in the intricacies of orthographical mazes.

The favorable criticism by the Atlantic Monthly[1] of the 1894 edition is equally applicable to that of 1898. "In the ticklish matter of phonetics and orthography, by its adoption of the standard phonetic alphabet used by the Spelling Reform Association of 1877, it introduces for wider attention what is, on the whole, the simplest and best method of phonetic representation yet devised .... The printing, in a separate section, of the list of disputed spellings and pronunciations is one of the features of the dictionary, and a very welcome one." From the list of disputed pronunciations appended, one may easily see the preference of the leading dictionaries and of the various members of the Advisory Committee of fifty philologists to whom the disputed words were referred.

The Standard has not consistently followed the American preference for the recessive accent, particularly in the case of the verbal forms in ate. If we may judge by the various editions of Webster, the preferred American pronunciation has always accented the prepositional syllable.* The preference of the Standard is not easily determined, for in some of these words the accent is placed upon the first syllable and in some upon the second.† However, for

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*. This is negatively proved by Worcester who in a note under the word contemplate states that the prevailing English accentuation is upon the root syllable. See p

†. For these and other pronunciations see Appendix.

(1) Atlantic Monthly Sept 1895 Vol 76 p414

These words, as for many others, the preference of other dictionaries is indicated under the word in question. Though usually the consulter is referred to the list of disputed pronunciations already mentioned: all words in common use are phonetically re-spelled, except when their pronunciation may be easily determined by the re-spelling of a word recorded in close proximity. The key to vowel and consonant sounds is given at the foot of each page.

Following the belief of the editor that the general reader seeks from a dictionary, first, spelling, second, pronunciation, and third, definition, the Standard has, for the convenience of its readers, placed immediately after the word its definition. Again for the special convenience of the consulter, the definitions are arranged, not in chronological order as in the Century, but in order of usage, the present meaning coming first. Thus historical precedence is ignored for the sake of convenience, and an appeal is made rather to the general consulter than to the scholar. One example may be given by way of illustration. Under the word knave the latest edition of the Century gives: "(1) a boy; a boy as a servant; a servant; a fellow; (2) a friend; a crony; used as a term of endearment; (3) a false, deceitful fellow; a dishonest person; one given to fraudulent tricks or practices; a rogue or scoundrel." In the Standard the order of definitions is reversed; the present meaning comes first, and the obsolete meaning last. For purposes of practical usefulness, the superiority of this arrangement is evident.

The definitions are unusually clear, simple, and accurate, and in many cases superior to those in the first edition of The Century, as a comparison of almost any word in the two dictionaries will show. This simplicity, clearness, accuracy, and the use of definitive statements first, make the definitions of the Standard, on the whole, the best in any American dictionary up to that time. Excellent as they are in themselves, the definitions are, in most instances, supported and further clarified by an admirable treatment of synonyms and antonyms, and by well-chosen and appropriate illustrative citations collected from the best English and American writers. In these quotations recent authors are given the preference; moreover newspapers are drawn upon not infrequently. Each extract is referred to the author and to the work from which it was taken, thereby making verification an easy matter. Furthermore, these citations are printed in smaller type, thereby minimizing the possibility of confusing them with the definitions proper.

The full-page pictorial illustrations in black and white and in full color are in harmony with the general excellence of the work. Especial mention should be made of the plate of Decorations of Honor. However, to the great number of smaller cuts included in the text, high praise cannot be given. They are deficient not so much in quantity as in quality. In this latter respect they do not compare favorably with those in the early edition (1889-1891) of the

Century, as may be seen by a comparison of the illustration in each dictionary of aurochs, avoset, aye-aye, axolotl. In each case the representation in the Century is superior in size and in distinctness. In general the pictorial illustrations in the Standard are not so clear and distinct as they should be; nor are they up to the standard of the other departments of the work.

The etymologies, in keeping with the plan of the book to facilitate reference to the essential points desired by the general reader, are placed after the definitions. This innovation in arrangement is perhaps the best of many practical advantages possessed by the Standard, and the editors deserve all the credit accruing to those who make a genuine contribution to lexicographical progress. A limited examination shows them to be accurate and concise, unencumbered by an accumulation of "insane roots that take the reason prisoner." The writer of the etymologies, Dr. Francis A. March, unlike

> "those learn'd philologists, who chase
> A panting syllable through time and space,
> Start it at Rome, and hunt it in the dark
> To Gaul - to Greece - and into Noah's ark -" ①

does not believe in the unnecessary collocation of cognate forms. Brevity, however, has not been secured at the expense of clearness, completeness, and accuracy; the etymology has been traced back in a direct line without the inclusion of unnecessary intermediate forms, and without extended incursions into cognate languages.

Cowper.

Encyclopedic material, necessarily limited in a one-volume book, has been selected with good taste and judgment. The Appendix contains a list of proper names, a glossary of foreign words and phrases, an excellent and useful article on family duties, a list of disputed spellings and pronunciations, a list of abbreviations and contractions, arbitrary signs and symbols, and symbolic flowers and gems.

So much for one of the early editions. It now remains to offer some observations upon the latest revision*.

The function of a dictionary is thus expressed by Dr. Isaac K. Funk: "The chief function of a dictionary is to record usage; not, except in a limited degree, to seek to create it. Yet, when custom or usage varies, it is important that a dictionary should be most careful, in its preferences, to give its sanction to the best forms and tendencies. It has manifest opportunities to render good service to the language by characterizing certain words and various forms of words, and certain meanings or usages, as archaic or obsolete, as foreign, dialectic, or provincial,

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* The new Standard, which will appear in April. The prospectus, introductory material, and sample pages of this new edition have been obtained through the courtesy of Mr. Frank H. Vizetelly, the Managing Editor. The lack of a complete text renders it necessary, however, to quote freely from the introduction.

as colloquial, vulgar, slang, or law, as inelegant or erroneously formed".

In this connection the introduction to the New Standard states: "The principles here enunciated served as guides for the Editors of 'A New Standard Dictionary of the English Language', which will be found to differ materially from its predecessor in form and contents, in so far as the requirements of progress have made this necessary, and more particularly in the number of words it contains." The vocabulary of the first edition contained 304,000; that of the New Standard will contain 450,000. The editors, as before, have aimed to present to the reader the living language; in doing so they have eliminated, as superfluous, many obsolete and archaic words and ephemeral slang words and phrases. It must not be understood, however, that the New Standard is opposed to slang, for these words are to be included in considerable numbers. "Only that part of slang which is merely the expression of passing fancy or varying whim has not been included". To promote further the main purpose of the book, to give an easily accessible fund of accurate information, the New Standard has included, in their alphabetical places in the vocabulary, all proper names and foreign words and phrases which in former editions had been relegated to the appendix. Thus there results one alphabetical order throughout — a detail in which this work differs from all predecessors and which presents

a distinguishing feature that none other can claim." [1] A recent new feature is the plan of giving at the top of each page the first vocabulary term on the left-hand page and the last vocabulary term on the right-hand page. By these means consultation has been facilitated.

The New Standard, following previous editions, prefers the simpler of two recognized spellings. "In its efforts to help in the simplification of spelling it is conservative, and yet aggressively positive, along the lines of reform agreed upon almost unanimously by the leading philologists of America and England" [1]. Following this policy the editors have increased the 3500 simplified spelling-words to which the principles of spelling reform have been applied — of former editions to 5000 in this edition; the definitions, however, as before, will be found under the usual forms. As an assistance to those in doubt, all proper names, and their adjectival derivatives requiring capitalization, are printed with initial capital letter. "In the treatment of the vocabulary of the sciences the aim was to follow the system of spelling and capitalization recognized as authoritative in each science." [2]

In pronunciation the principles of preceding editions will be followed. Words of disputed pronunciation will be, as before, grouped in the appendix, and referred to by the arbitrary symbol. (XIII) placed after the words, the

[1] Introduction.

pronunciation of which varies." All pronunciations are indicated first by the Revised Scientific Alphabet and second by the so-called text-book Key". ① The employment of the two Keys is almost a matter of necessity in this period of transition from the old Key to the new one. A new and exclusive feature of this work will be the placing of the Key-words used to indicate the system of pronunciation employed in the text at the top of the page instead of at the bottom, as has heretofore been done.

In definition, "the plan of defining by definitive statement rather than by synonym, which was so extensively followed in the first edition of the Standard has been even more carefully carried out in the present book. The aim was to produce definitions that are clear, concise, and exact, and thus to improve upon the synonymic looseness which hitherto has characterized the definitions of many lexicographical works." ① To secure greater accuracy each class of words has been defined or approved by a representative of the science or art to which the respective terms belong. The editors have acted upon the belief that the people to whom a term belongs should have the right to say what they mean when they use that term. As before, so in this edition, present meanings will be given first, order of usage thus prevailing over the historical order. This desirable arrangement is contrary to that of other dictionaries.

① Introduction.

Illustrative citations, selected preferably from modern writers, will be given in the author's spelling, a practice sometimes disregarded by other dictionaries. Every quotation will be accurately located, "the volume, chapter, and page of the work, with the title, the names of the author and publisher, and the date of publication being generally given"①

The treatment of synonyms and antonyms, always a characteristic feature of the Standard, has been improved, and will be largely amplified in the new edition. The editors are not satisfied with giving mere lists of synonymous terms and examples illustrating them, but have included "dissertations on the correct uses of words in their various meanings and shades of meaning in their relations to others."① As examples of this amplification and improvement compare the treatment of accident, bank, revolve in this edition with that in former editions. Antonyms, an exclusive feature of the Standard dictionaries, will be increased to about five thousand.

Pictorial illustrations, the weakest part of former editions, will be increased in quantity, and, if we may judge from specimens, improved in quality. Among the scores of full-page illustrations, attention may be called in particular to those showing railroad equipment; typical warships of the United States navy; some of the world's famous diamonds, prepared under the direction of Dr. George F. Kunz, manager and gem expert of Tiffany's; astronomical

① Introduction.

phenomena; fire department apparatus; the history and development of aviation and detailed views of the latest models of aeroplanes, prepared under the direction of the Wright Brothers. All of these are clear, distinct, fascinating, and instructive. In number, the illustrations will exceed seven thousand.

In etymology, "the same general plan of concise treatment which characterized the work of this department in the first edition of the Standard is followed in the present work".[1] The etymologies, it is believed, will show less change than any other portion of the book.

Additional and exclusive features of the New Standard, to mention only a few of the many, will be: rules governing grammatical and rhetorical construction; efforts to correct the common errors of speech; rules governing the formation of the plurals of nouns, the correct forms of address, and a day-by-day history of the word.

In the preparation of this new edition of the Standard, the editors have directed their efforts toward: (1) "the supplementing of the deficiencies of other modern dictionaries; (2) the perfecting, as far as space limitations permitted, of groups of allied terms or of terms related to the same families; (3) the inclusion of those new words and new meanings of old words overlooked and therefore unrecorded by other lexicographers; (4) the systematic comparison of related or synonymous terms one with another; (5) the addition of modern illustrative quotations in order to throw light on the history of words or on the matter treated"[2]

1. Introduction.

To achieve these results in such a way that the maximum of information may be obtained with a minimum of time and inconvenience has been the principle upon which this work was grounded. A vast undertaking this is, but one which is now almost completed. Just how well it has been performed we cannot yet say; but if we may judge from the sample pages, the editors have not labored in vain. The New Standard will be the heir of all the ages; its publication will mark the highest point yet reached in the development of lexicography. And one may confidently predict that with its appearance the New International will have to yield to the New Standard its position at the head of single-volume Dictionaries, English or American.

Chap. VIII.

Conclusion.

The careful examination of nearly all of the unabridged American dictionaries has led to the formation of certain opinions concerning the present status of American lexicography. It may be safely said that no one dictionary possesses such pre-eminent merits as to lead to its exclusive use, and to the rejection of others. In certain departments one dictionary may be better than another; but to say that one dictionary as a whole is the best is misleading. The choice of one dictionary in preference to others is largely a matter of personal opinion; in so far as the dictionary conforms to the consulter's own belief, in so far will he deem it the best. As each individual has an unchangeable belief in the superior excellence of his own watch, so he has a similar belief in his choice of a dictionary.

So while I shall not champion any particular book as the best, recognizing that the need of the student will largely determine his choice, I may, in these concluding pages, compare the treatment accorded by the leading American dictionaries to particular departments, and while thus pointing out, by comparison, the general merits and defects of these books, I may take the opportunity of making a suggestion or two as to their improvement.

A matter of great importance is the form and arrangement of the dictionary. Ease of consultation and the convenience of the student should be the leading aim. Consequently the ideal dictionary should be a one-volume book similar in size to the New International or to the New Standard. Should the scope of the vocabulary render more than one volume necessary, the words should be so grouped that all those initially the same come in one volume. The latest edition of the Century devotes ten volumes to the vocabulary. Instead, however, of including all words beginning with the same letter in a single volume, the vocabulary under a single letter is frequently divided between two volumes. In this respect the Century falls short of the ideal dictionary.

The arrangement of terms should be a one-word alphabetical order throughout; ie, the proper names, foreign words and phrases, obsolete and archaic words if included, in general whatever single term finds place in the dictionary, should be given position in the main portion of the book. From this view-point, no dictionary is ideal which relegates new words to a supplement or which has a wealth of appendical material properly belonging to the main body of the work. By the adoption of this one-word order, the New Standard takes a step forward in the right direction. The New International adopts a two-story page system,

including all words of infrequent use in the lower section. In this way alphabetical order is preserved, and the present vocabulary is not clogged by the admission into it of obsolete and archaic words and of neologisms. The proper names are, however, still grouped in the Appendix. The Century is open to criticism by the inclusion of new words in the form of a supplement to each volume, and by its grouping of proper names in a separate volume. This latter criticism however is hardly valid, since this separate volume is intended as a Cyclopedia of names to be used independently of the Dictionary proper.

In the vocabulary of a living language the selection of words to be included in a Dictionary will always be a mooted question. The exact line between admission and exclusion, if there is to be such a line, is the lexicographical crux. The nature of the Dictionary will naturally determine the limits of the vocabulary and the principles of its selection. The New English Dictionary and the Century have aimed not so much at convenience of reference as at a full and accurate history of the origin, development, and present status of all words in the English language from the mingling of the English and the French in the eleventh and twelfth centuries down to the present day. Consequently they should include all words, whether sometimes by literary use or not, whether obsolete, archaic,

or current, whether native or of foreign derivation – in other words, every word that is or has been in the language within the limits set. From a linguistic point of view, these two dictionaries are invaluable and as near complete and perfect as it is possible for the limited knowledge and experience of man to make them; from a practical point of view their bulk and expensiveness will render them of little service to the general reader. The New International and New Standard, by attaching more importance to the living language and thereby increasing their usefulness for the average man, come nearer supplying the needs of the public.

If, then, we agree that ~~the~~ practical usefulness is the fundamental requisite of the ideal dictionary, and that, ~~therefore~~, some limitation must be placed upon the vocabulary, the question is, What words should be included? It is impossible to be dogmatic upon a subject in which there is a great diversity of opinion. Yet I may venture to express my opinion that a dictionary designed, like the New International and the New Standard, for popular use, should include:

(1) All words sanctioned by literary use from the beginning of the modern English period (cir. 1550) to the present. This would include Shakespeare and other Elizabethan writers. By students reading authors before Shakespeare, special glossaries may be obtained with little difficulty and at small cost.

(2) a minimum of scientific and technical vocabulary*. Just what constitutes a minimum it is difficult to say; by it I mean the least number of terms necessary for furnishing general information about various sciences not generally understood. This would include clear and concise definitions of scientific words which have to some extent lost their technical sense by passing into more or less general use, as apogee, zenith; and those which are the names of commercial or industrial objects, as benzine, cochineal.

(3) all slang expressions which have acquired sufficient vogue to be found frequently in literature of the press or in the speech of the middle classes. This would reject all obscene and ephemeral phrases. It would, on the other hand, admit baseball parlance and cant phraseology belonging to sports and industries of all kinds.

(4). Foreign words and phrases which are in general use by popular writers and speakers.

In general the vocabulary of an ideal popular dictionary should be determined by the present need and usage of the American of average education.

* "If the word belongs to a science with a special and artificial vocabulary like botany and chemistry, and no instance can be given of its use beyond the technicalities of its own science, it has no right to a place in a dictionary of English"
Edinburgh Review July 1868 Vol 128 p 32

In orthography and pronunciation the popular and ideal dictionary should seek not to advance theories of its own, but to record all variants in good use; at the same time the indication of a preference is desirable and proper. Consequently this ideal dictionary will include both the English and American forms of spelling and also the phonetic forms proposed by the American Philological Society and the Philological Society of London. The New International and the New Standard have already recognized and recorded most of these phonetic spellings, though The Century is somewhat cautious in this respect. In the indication of pronunciation all of the latest American dictionaries are highly satisfactory. But as recorders of present usage and tendencies they are not satisfactory. Thus the word peremptory is stressed by the Century and the Standard only on the first syllable, whereas the accentuation of the second syllable is the more usual even among careful speakers. The New International gives the stress on the second syllable as a secondary pronunciation; in all foreign dictionaries examined only the first syllable was accented. The Standard and The Century both stress octopus on only the second syllable, contrary to the usual custom of stressing it on the first, a pronunciation recorded by the New International as preferable. Both

The Century and the New International prefer stressing the penult in automobile, though usage is decidedly in favor of the ultimate. The Standard and the New International record only finance; the Century gives finance as second choice, though it is the more usual pronunciation. Again, the words exquisite and vehement are given in all dictionaries with accent only on the first syllable, while inquiry, resource, address and acclimate* are all accented on the second syllable only. Coop is recorded by all dictionaries only as cūp (oo as in loop), whereas cup (oo as in foot) is as frequent. In all of these cases as well as in many others the dictionary treatment is not satisfactory. The dictionary should record all variant pronunciations in good usage, and at the same time indicate its preference.

Since, therefore, there exists among reputable dictionaries a difference of opinion in so many words, and since, as we have seen, the recorded pronunciations are frequently at variance with those in actual use, how much authority are we to give to dictionaries? It may be said that dictionaries, like human beings, cannot be relied upon infallibly; yet they are, as a rule, a good guide to standard usage. Consequently, a pronunciation

* In the Concise Oxford Dictionary acclimate is given for the first time with stress on the first syllable

forms in the dictionary should never be considered as incorrect, though in many cases the dictionary pronunciation may not be that of a particular section. When dictionaries differ among themselves regarding words in a transitional stage, one should hold to that pronunciation to which he has been accustomed. And even when all dictionaries agree on a pronunciation which does not conform to that in actual use by educated people, the dictionary should not be considered as a binding authority. In all cases, then, the pronunciation of cultured society is to be preferred to that recorded in dictionaries.

In this question Dr. Krapp writes as follows: "The authority of dictionaries and other finite works rests upon somewhat the same basis as that of persons. Dictionaries and other guide books are the work of finite human beings, and tho, in general, the authors of them are men of exceptional weight and authority because of their greater information and extent of observation, they are nevertheless fallible and limited in experience. Consequently, when the statement of a dictionary differs from one's own observation, the sensible thing to do, after one has made sure that the observation is true, is to disregard the dictionary altogether and to follow the example of actual use" (1)

(1) Modern English - Charles Scribner's Sons 1909 - p162

The failure of dictionaries to record all variant pronunciations in good use may be due to one of two causes: first, wilful rejection upon the supposition that the variant is not sufficiently in vogue to warrant its inclusion; or, second, lack of acquaintance with the speech in different sections of the country. In either case this defect of present dictionaries might easily be remedied by their adoption of the plan used by Dr. William A. Read, the results of which he embodies in a very interesting pamphlet entitled "Some Variant Pronunciations in the New South".* Dr. Read requested professors in various Southern institutions to submit to their more mature students a list of words of disputed pronunciation. From the lists returned he was able to obtain a fairly accurate idea of the manner in which Southern students pronounced the words embraced in the circular. Dictionaries might well follow this plan on a larger scale, and submit a list of doubtful or disputed pronunciations to the students in the representative universities and colleges of the country. In this way the variant pronunciations in actual use in all sections of the United States could be easily secured. And until some such plan is adopted dictionaries are likely to be defective in reporting actual pronunciation.

*. University Bulletin. Louisiana State University - Baton Rouge, La.

In etymology it is not desirable that the popular dictionary should do more than exhibit established etymologies in a clear and concise manner. In native words it would be sufficient to trace the etymology through the M.E. back to the O.E. form; in words from foreign languages it would be sufficient to record the form of its first appearance in English and then to refer it to the foreign word from which it is immediately derived. The dictionary should seek to trace a word back to its primary meaning, directly, concisely and accurately, without introducing perplexing details and irrelevant discussion. Both the New International and the New Standard, though representing [illegible] scientific work, limit their etymologies to essentials.

As to the importance of etymologies, it may be of interest to note the protest raised against the unnecessary inclusion of cognate forms." But etymologies are not the most important part of a good working dictionary, the intention of which is not to inform readers and writers what a word may have meant before the Dispersion, but what it means now. The pedigree of an adjective or substantive is of little consequence to ninety-nine men in a hundred, and the writers who have wielded our mother-tongue with the greatest mastery have been men who knew what words had most meaning to their neighbors and acquaintances; and did not stay their pens to ask what ideas the radicals of those words may possibly have conveyed to the mind

nine thousand fifty years ago by James Russell Lowell

of a bricklayer going up from Padanaram to seek work on the Tower of Babel ..... Nor is it the primary object of a common Dictionary to trace the history of the Language. Of great interest and importance to scholars, it is of comparatively little to Smith and Brown and their children at the public school .... A Dictionary is not a drag-net to bring up for us the broken pots and dead Kittens, the sewerage of speech, as well as its living fishes." (1)

The accumulation of a great mass of definitions and illustrative extracts is neither necessary nor desirable in a popular Dictionary. Definitions, with an illustration when needed, of words from 1550 to the present day, will give all the meanings likely to be desired by the general reader. In arrangement my preference is the historical order; especially in the ideal Dictionary; for, since this is to contain only words in use from 1550, it would not then be crowded with obsolete meanings. Yet the plan adopted by the Standard of giving the definitions in order of usage is certainly as good. The Century and the New English Dictionary, however, could hardly adopt any other than the historical order

In definition, short definitive statements are the best. Whenever these are not, in the opinion of the editors, sufficiently clear, they should be supported by appropriate illustrative extracts, chosen preferably from modern writers. A Dictionary is not intended as an anthology

(1) Atlantic Monthly May 1860 Vol V pp 633-634.

and should not be crowded with citations; nor should quotations be selected from Shakespeare, Bacon, or Milton because they are from these writers. Accuracy of use of the word in question and appropriateness of illustration should be the determining factors in the selection. If quotations, meeting these requirements, can be gleaned from "the grand old masters", well and good; if not, let us reject them and seek others in our modern writers.

An indirect and negative, but most valuable, method of definition is the distinction between synonymous terms and the inclusion of antonyms. Synonyms should be clearly distinguished by discussion and by example. Antonyms define by contrast, and the grouping of them in juxtaposition with the synonyms aids the student greatly in expressing antithetical ideas.

Prepositions used in connection with other words should also be recorded. A dictionary, for instance, should tell us when to say differs from and when, differs with, whether averse to or averse from is the better usage, what distinction is to be made between compared to and compared with. As a rule, our present dictionaries do give such information.

Another method of defining is by the use of pictorial illustrations. This department of the dictionary, it seems to me, has been over done. The tendency seems to be to include too many rather than too few illustrations. The dictionary

should not be made a picture book. To a child, pictures - especially colored pictures - are attractive; but for the student and business man seeking compressed information they have little attraction. The space taken up by these illustrations could be put to better use. A pictorial illustration, like a quotation, is justified in an ideal dictionary designed for general reference, only when its inclusion will give a ~~clearer~~ not to conception of the object ~~than can~~ be obtained from a definition.

Encyclopedic material should be included to as great an extent as the size of the book will permit. American dictionaries are becoming more and more encyclopedic to meet the demands of the public for definite, condensed information upon a great variety of subjects. Whatever space may be gained from condensed etymological treatment, from the exclusion of archaic and obsolete words, and from the omission of unnecessary quotations and pictorial illustrations, may with profit be devoted to encyclopedic information.

To sum up, the ideal popular dictionary for general use will have as its controlling principles ease of consultation and convenience of the student. It will give within the limits of a single volume a maximum of easily accessible information. Its vocabulary will include all words which are, or have been since 1550, in general reputable use; its orthography and pronunciation will conform strictly to that of good current

usage; its etymologies and definitions will be clear, concise, and accurate; literary and pictorial illustrations will be included only when necessary to elucidate a definition; it will devote adequate treatment to synonyms and antonyms; and it will include as much encyclopedic material as possible.*

It may be said, by way of summary, that the ideal popular dictionary has not yet been published. There are many good dictionaries of the English language; some are better than others; there is no one which may be, in all respects, considered as the best. For the historical development of the English language the New English Dictionary will be superior to any other; of complete works the Century leads in this respect, as well as in extent of vocabulary. In spelling and pronunciation there is little choice; we in America would naturally prefer the New International, the Standard, or the Century. For definition of scientific terms The Century is the best; for words in general use I should choose the Standard or the New International. In both quantity and quality of

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"He [the average Englishman] should be provided with a concise dictionary in a single volume, neither too heavy nor too costly, clear of superfluous detail and speculative fancy, registering compact precise information from the best sources, and always ready to keep him straight and firm in handling the most copious, versatile, and most powerful language of the modern world"
Littell's Living Age. Dec 13, 1873, Vol 119 p 662

illustrative extracts, pictorial illustrations, and encyclopedic material, The Century is far ahead of other American works. In the treatment of synonyms and antonyms Stormonth prefers the Standard. But the dictionary, ideal in all respects, is not yet and may never be. However the publication of the New Standard will, I believe, mark the nearest approach to that ideal yet reached in the history of American lexicography.

Though an American dictionary may not yet have come up to the ideal, this country has made rapid and remarkable progress in lexicography. American lexicographical history, covering a period of a little over one hundred years, has been brief but brilliant. The American dictionaries of today are much better than the English works: The Century is, on the whole, the best completed ~~English~~ dictionary of the English language; the New International and the New Standard are far superior to any one-volume English book.

To lexicography America has contributed much. Webster introduced more thorough and more complete etymologies and expressed his definitions with greater clearness, conciseness, and accuracy than any preceding English dictionary. Worcester was the first to introduce synonyms; The Century has almost perfected the treatment of homonyms; The Standard has added antonyms. The pictorial and literary illustrations

of American dictionaries are superior in quality and greater in number than those in English works. The inclusion of encyclopedic material on a large scale is chiefly an American development. The extension by the New Standard of the Appendixes to include rules governing the formation of plurals of nouns, the correct forms of address, and grammatical and rhetorical construction, thereby combining in one volume the functions of dictionary and grammar, is a new feature of lexicography and an American contribution. In general attractiveness of printing and binding, in completeness of vocabulary and encyclopedic information, in the treatment of synonyms, homonyms, and antonyms, in the completeness and accuracy of the etymologies, in the conciseness and precision of the definitions, in the quantity and quality of pictorial and literary illustrations, in the amount of useful appendical information, in general utility and excellence, there are no dictionaries of the English language superior to the New Standard, the New International, and the Century — all American dictionaries.

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1828	1840	1847	1864	1890	1909.
...bor	—	—	—	—	arbor, arbour
Color	—	—	—	—	color, colour
...enter	—	center centre	—	—	center, centre
...eter	—	meter metre	—	—	meter, metre.
...eater ...eatre	—	—	—	—	Theater, theatre.
	massacer massacre	massacre	—	—	—
...atomize	—	—	—	—	—
...thodize	—	—	—	—	—
...ertise	—	—	—	—	advertise, advertize.
...lection ...lexion	—	—	—	—	—
...ection ...exion	—	—	—	—	—
...nection	—	connection connexion	—	—	—
...eie	—	—	—	—	—
...sic	—	—	—	—	—
...lock	—	—	—	—	—
...ack	—	—	—	—	—
...dgment	—	—	—	—	—
...cement	—	—	—	—	—
...gment	—	—	—	—	—
...alogue	—	—	—	—	catalogue, catalog
...ogue	—	—	—	—	dialogue, dialog
Discipline	—	—	—	—	—
Domicil	—	—	domicile	—	domicile, domicil
gelatin	—	—	gelatine	gelatin gelatine	gelatin, gelatine
...tom ...tom	—	phantom fantom	—	—	phantom
...tasm ...tasm	—	phantasm [illegible]	—	—	[illegible]

1828	1840	1847	1864	1890	1909
oquet / quette fn	—	coquette	—	—	coquette / coquet (rare)
epaulet	—	—	epaulet / Epaulette	—	Epaulet, epaulette.
melet	—	—	—	—	omelet, melette.
yly / ily	—	—	—	—	—
yety	—	gayety / gaiety	—	—	—
psey / psey / psy	gipsy / gypsey / gypsy	—	gypsy / gipsy / gypsey	—	gypsy, gipsy.
gmy / gmy	—	—	—	pygmy / pigmy	pygmy, pigmy
isky	—	—	whisky / whiskey	whiskey / whisky	whisky, whiskey.
fill	—	—	—	—	fulfill, fulfil
llful	—	—	—	skillful / skilful	skillful, skilful
un / n	—	bun / bunn	—	—	bun, bunn.
ul	woeful	woeful / woful	—	—	woeful, woful.
ther / the	—	leather	—	—	—
and	island [iland] / island	island / island	island	—	—
sance	nuisance / nusance	nuisance	—	—	—
ptic	skeptic	—	skeptic / sceptic	—	skeptic, sceptic
veled	—	—	traveled / travelled	traveled / travelled	—
shiped	—	—	—	worshiped / worshipped	—
useled	—	—	—	counseled / counselled	—
veled	—	—	marveled / marvelled	—	—
itter	—	—	—	—	—
ersed	—	—	—	—	—

1828	1840	1847	1864	1890	1909
ax	—	—	ox / axe	—	—
Controller	—	—	controller / comptroller	—	—
Defense	—	defense / defence	—	—	—
...bassador	—	ambassador / embassador	embassador / ambassador	embassador / embassador	—
...ntlet / ...ntlet	—	gauntlet / gantlet	—	—	—
...th	—	drought / drouth	—	drought	drought, drouth
...ight / ...ghth / ...ght	height / heighth / hight	height / hight	—	height	—
...euver	—	maneuver / manoeuvre	—	—	—
...lasses	melasses / molasses	molasses / melasses	—	—	molasses
...old	mold / mould	—	—	—	—
...low	plow / plough	—	—	—	—
wo	woe	—	—	—	woe, wo
...rum	crum	crumb / crum	crumb	—	—
...ke / ...e	—	[sheet missing]	ache / ake	ache	ache, ake
...aiz	—	maize	—	—	—
...ilet	quinlet	—	—	quinlet / quinblet	quinlet
...osk	—	mosque / mosk	mosque	mosque / mosk	mosque, mosk
...bin	—	ribbon / riband	ribbon / ribant	ribbon / riband / ribband	—
...tlas	—	cutlass	—	—	cutlass, cutlas
...ain	—	skain / skein	—	skein	—
...if	sherif / sheriff	sheriff	—	—	—
...pess	—	porpoise	—	—	—

Spellings.

Worcester - all editions the same. 1860 - 1881 - 1890 (reprint of 1886 edition)	Standard 1898	The Century 1911.
arbor	arbor / arbour	arbor / arbour
color	color / colour	color / colour
centre	center / centre	center / centre
metre	meter / metre	meter / metre
theatre	theater / theatre	theater / theatre
anatomize	anatomize / anatomise	anatomize
methodize	methodize / methodise	methodize
advertise	advertise / advertize [Phil. Soc.]	advertise
inflection	inflection / inflexion	inflection / inflexion
reflection	reflection	reflection / reflexion
connection / connexion	connection / connexion	connection / connexion
public	public	public
music	music	music
hillock	hillock	hillock
arrack	arrack	arrack
abridgment	abridgment / abridgement	abridgment
achievement	achievement / achievement [Phil. Soc.]	achievement
judgment	judgment / judgement	judgment / judgement
Cataloque	Cataloque / Catalog [Phil Soc.]	Cataloque
Dialoque	Dialoque / Dialog [Phil. Soc.]	Dialoque
Discipline	Discipline	Discipline
Domicile	Domicil / Domicile	Domicile / Domicil
gelatine	gelatin / gelatine	gelatin / gelatine
phantom / fantom	fantom / phantom	phantom / fantom
phantasm / fantasm	phantasm / fantasm	phantasm / fantasm
mediæval / medieval	mediæval / medieval	mediæval / medieval
encyclopædia	encyclopedia / Encyclopædia	encyclopedia / Encyclopædia

Worcester - all editions the same. 1860 - 1881 - 1890 (reprint from 1886 edition)	Standard 1898	The Century 1911.
coquette	coquette	coquette
epaulet epaulette	epaulet epaulette	epaulet epaulette
omelet	omelet omelette	omelet
gayly gaily	gaily gayly	gaily gayly
gayety gaiety	gaiety gayety	gaiety gayety
gypsy gipsy	gipsy gypsy	gipsy gypsy
pygmy pigmy	pygmy pigmy	pygmy pigmy
whiskey (very often written whisky)	whisky whiskey	whisky whiskey
fulfil	fulfil fulfill	fulfil fulfill
skilful	skilful skillful	skilful skillful
bunn bun	bun bunn	bun bunn
woful	woful woeful	woeful woful
leather	leather aether [Phil. Soc].	leather
island	island iland [Phil. Soc].	island iland (a former & more correct orthography)
nuisance	nuisance	nuisance
sceptic skeptic	skeptic sceptic	skeptic sceptic
travelled	travelled traveled	travelled traveled
worshipped	worshiped worshipped	worshiped worshipped
counselled	counseled counselled	counseled counselled
marvelled	marveled marvelled	marveled marvelled
admitted	admitted	admitted
occurred	occurred	occurred
idyl	idyl idyll	idyl (also idyll)
rhyme rime	rime rhyme	rime rhyme
woollen	woolen woollen	woolen woollen

Webster's – all editions the same 1860 – 1881 – 1890 (reprint of 1886 edition).	Standard 1898	The Century 1911.
axe	ax axe	ax axe
controller comptroller	controller comptroller	controller comptroller
defence	defence defence	defence defence
embassador embassador	embassador embassador	embassador embassador
gauntlet gantlet	gauntlet gantlet	gauntlet gantlet
drought drouth	drought drouth	drought drouth
height highth	height hight	height hight
manoeuvre	maneuver manoeuvre	maneuver maneuvre manoeuver manoeuvre
molasses melasses	molasses	molasses
mould	mold mould	mold mould
plough plow	plow plough	plow plough
woe (written also wo)	wo woe	woe (also wo)
crum crumb	crum crumb	crumb
acke ake	acke ake	acke ake
maize	maize maiz [Phil. Soc.]	maize
gimlet	gimlet	gimlet (also formerly or dial. gumlet)
mosque (sometimes written mosk)	mosque mosk	mosque mosk
ribbon ribaud ribbaud	ribbon	ribbon
skein skain	skein skain	skein (also skain)
cutlass	cutlas cutlass	cutlas cutlass
Sheriff	sheriff sherif [Phil. Soc.]	Sheriff
porpoise porpess porpus	porpoise	porpoise
graw	graw gramme	graw gramme
diagraw	diagraw	diagraw
programme prograw	prograw programme	prograw programme

Accentuation in various Editions of Webster.

	1828	1840	1847	1864	1890	1909.
exquisite	éx	—	—	—	—	—
galaxy	gál	—	—	—	—	—
vagary	gá	—	—	—	—	—
discipline	dís	—	—	—	—	—
vehement	vé	—	—	—	—	—
Construe	cón	—	—	—	—	cón, strúe
zoology	zō-ól	—	—	—	—	—
address	dréss	—	—	—	—	—
acumen	cú	—	—	—	—	—
adult	dúlt	—	—	—	—	—
advertisement	vér	—	—	vér, ad tíse	—	—
abdomen	áb, dó	—	dó, áb	—	—	—
inquiry	quí	—	—	—	—	—
museum	sé	—	—	—	—	—
resource	sóurce	—	—	—	—	—
detail	táil	—	—	dé, táil	—	táil, dé
lyceum	cé	—	—	—	—	—
envelope (N)			en	—	—	—
envelop (N)	vél	—	—	—	—	—
mischievous	mís	—	—	—	—	—
aggrandize	ág	—	—	—	—	—
finance	nánce	—	—	—	—	—
peremptory	pér	—	—	—	—	pér, émp

	1828	1840	1847	1864	1890	1909.
octopus					óc	óc, tó
oasis	o	—	—	ó, á,	—	á, ó
automobile						mó, bíl
recondite	rec	—	—	reé, cón	—	—
cement (N)	cé	cem	—	cém, ment	mént, cé	—
acclimate	clí	—	—	—	—	—
alternate	ál	—	—	tér	ál, tér	al
contemplate	cón	—	tém, cón	cón, tém	—	—
consummate	cón	—	súm, cón	cón, súm	—	—
confiscate	cón	—	fís, cón	cón, fís	—	—
concentrate	cén	—	—	cón, cén	cén, cón	cón, cén
compensate	cóm	—	pén, cóm	cóm, pén	—	—
demonstrate	dém	—	món, dém	dém, món	—	—
deflagrate	déf	—	—	—	—	—
desiccate	dés	dés	síc, dés	dés, síc	—	—
enervate	én	—	nér	—	nér, én	én, nér
extirpate	éx	—	tír	éx, tír	—	—
excavate	éx	—	—	—	—	—
illustrate	lús	—	—	—	—	lús, il

Accentuations

	Worcester.	Standard 1898	The Century 1911.
exquisite	éx	éx	éx
galaxy	gál	gál	gál
vagary	gá	gá	gá
discipline	dís	dĭs	dís
vehement	vé	vé	vé
construe	cón	cón	cón, strúe
zoology	zō-ŏl	zo-ŏl	zo-ŏl
address	drés	drés	drés
acumen	cú	cú	cú
duet	duét	duét	duét
advertisement	vér, tíse	tíse	vér, tíse
abdomen	dó	dó	dó, áb
inquiry	qui	qui	qui.
museum	sé	sé	Sé
resource	source	source	source
detail	táil, dé	táil	táil, dé
eyeum	cé	cé	cé
envelope (n)	lope, én	én, vél	én
envelop (v)	vél	vél	vél
mischievous	mís	mís	mís
aggrandize	ág	ág	ág
finance	nance	nance	nance, fí
peremptory	pér	pér	pér

	Worcester.	Standard 1898.	The Century 1911.
octopus	oé	tó	tó
oasis	ó	ó	á
automobile			mō
recondite	ré, cón	ré	cón, ré
cement (N)	cén	ment	ment, cé
reclinate	clí	clí	clí
alternate	té, á	ál	ál (formerly té)
contemplate	tém	tém	tém, cón
consummate	sum	sum	sum, cón
confiscate	fis	cón	fis, cón.
concentrate	cén	cón	cén, cón.
compensate	pén	cón	pén, cón.
demonstrate	món	món	món, dém
deflagrate	déf	déf	déf
desiccate	sic	dés	dés
enervate	nér	nér, én	nér, én.
extirpate	tír	ét	tír, ét.
excavate	ét, cá	ét	ét.
illustrate.	lus	lus	lus, il.

Pronunciation in various editions of Webster

	1828	1840	1847	1864	1890	1909.
ath	pâþ	—	—	—	pâþ	—
past	pâst	—	—	pâst	—	—
answer	ânsər	—	ænsər	—	—	ânsər
mmand	kəmmând	—	—	kəmmând	—	—
og	eag	—	—	—	—	—
og	dag	—	—	—	—	dog
og	hag	—	—	—	—	—
og	fag	—	—	—	—	—
ot	fut	—	—	—	—	—
oot	rut	—	rût	—	—	—
oot	sut	—	—	sut, sût	—	sut, sût [archaic and dialectic sut]
oof	hûf	—	—	—	—	—
oof	rûf	—	—	—	—	—
oop	cûp	—	—	—	—	—
oop	hup	—	—	hûp, hup	—	hûp
ube	tûb	—	tiub	—	—	—
uke	dûk	—	diuk	—	—	—
ue	dû	—	diu	—	—	—
new	nû	—	niu	—	—	—
esday	tûsde	—	tiusde	—	—	—
uty	dûti	—	diuti	—	—	—
stitution	kanstitûʃən	—	kanstitiuʃən	—	—	—
duce	ædûs	—	ǣddius	—	—	—

iu = u in tune

Pronunciations in various editions of Webster.

	1828	1840	1847	1864	1890	1909
af	dîf	—	dîf in America dɛf in England	δɛf, dîf.	—	δɛf [dialectic or archaic dîf]
ther	îðər	—	îðər, aiðər.	—	—	—
mato	tomâto	—	tomêto, tomâto.	—	—	—
earth	hârþ	—	—	—	—	—
gain	êqen	—	—	—	âqen	—
ama	δrâmə	—	δrâmə, drêmə.	—	—	drâmə
egend	lîjənδ	—	lîjənδ, lejənδ	—	lejənδ, lîjənδ	—
udeville	vô'δəvil	—	—	vôδvil	—	—
tron	pætrən	—	pêtrən, pætrən.	pêtrən	—	—
upon			kûpon	—	—	—

â as in father	iu as in tube
â .. .. ask	î .. .. marine
a .. .. not	i .. .. thin
æ̂ .. .. care	ô .. .. note
æ .. .. hat	o .. .. (au)tumnal
ê .. .. mate	þ .. .. (th)in
e .. .. met	ð .. .. (th)at
u .. .. push	ai .. .. ride
ū .. .. mood	
v .. .. hut	
ə .. .. (a)bout	

Pronunciations

	Worcester	Standard 1898	The Century 1911
path	pâp	pâp	pâp
past	pâst	pâst	pâst
answer	ânsər	ânsər	ânsər
command	kəmmând	kəmmând	kəmmând
log	ɑɑg	ɑɑg	ɑɑg
dog	dɑg	dɑg	dɑg, dɒg
hog	hɑg	hɑg	hɑg
fog	fɑg	fɑg.	fɑg
foot	fut	fut	fut
root	rût	rût	rût, rut
soot	sût, sut	sut, sût	sut, sût
hoof	hûf	hûf	hûf
roof	rûf	rûf	rûf
coop	cûp	cûp	cûp
hoop	hûp, hup.	hûp	hûp, hup.
tube	tiub	tiub	tiub
duke	diuk	diuk	diuk
due	diu	diu	diu
new	niu	niu	niu
tuesday	tiusde	tiusde	tiusde
duty	diuti	diuti	diuti
Constitution	kanstitiuʃən	kanstitiuʃən	kanstitiuʃən
Judge	æddius	æddius	æddius

Pronunciation

	Worcester	Standard 1898	The Century 1911
deaf	dɛf	dɛf	dɛf, dīf
either	îðər	îðər	îðər, aiðər,
tomato	tomêto, tomâto.	tomâto	tomâto, tomêto.
hearth	hârþ	hârþ	hârþ, hurþ
again	əgen	əgen	əgen, əgên
drama	drêmə, dræmə	drâmə.	drâmə
legend	lîjənd, lejənd.	lejənd	lejənd, lîjənd
vaudeville	vôd vil	vôd vil	vôd vil
patron	pêtrən	pêtrən, pætrən.	pêtrən, pætrən
coupon	kûpɔn	kûpɔn	kûpɔn.