

**AN ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OR ANALYSIS
OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: CONTAINING THE
RADICALS AND DEFINITIONS OF WORDS DERIVED
FROM THE GREEK, LATIN, AND FRENCH
LANGUAGES; AND ALL THE GENERALLY USED
TECHNICAL AND POLITE PHRASES ADOPTED FROM
THE FRENCH AND LATIN**

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An Etymological Dictionary or Analysis of the English Language: Containing the Radicals and Definitions of Words Derived from the Greek, Latin, and French Languages; And All the Generally Used Technical and Polite Phrases Adopted from the French and Latin by William Grimshaw

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WILLIAM GRIMSHAW

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AN *W. H. Hensley*
ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY

OR

ANALYSIS

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BY WILLIAM GRIMSHAW,

AUTHOR OF A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, HISTORY OF
ENGLAND, &c.

—————" Ut possem curvo dignoscere rectum,
" Atque inter silvas Academi quærere verum."

PHILADELPHIA:

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1821.

Dicot

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BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-sixth day (L. S.) of July, in the forty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1821, WILLIAM GRIMSHAW, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the Title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as Author, in the words following, *to wit :*

"An Etymological Dictionary or Analysis of the English Language: containing the radicals and definitions of words derived from the Greek, Latin, and French, languages; and all the generally used technical and polite phrases, adopted from the French and Latin. By William Grimshaw, author of a history of the United States, history of England, &c.

—————¹ Ut possem curvo dignoscere rectum,
Atque inter silvas Academi quærere verum.²"

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, intitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned." And also to the Act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, 'An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL, *Clerk of the
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PREFACE.

FEW sciences are more worthy of acquirement than Etymology. Next to the being endowed by nature with a mind of acute perception, large capacity, and correct judgment, there is no more powerful aid, to philosophical inquiries, than a precise understanding of the language in which knowledge is conveyed. If the terms of scientific instruction be not clearly understood by the pupil, his perceptions will at first be imperfect, and in the end abortive: if not fully comprehended by the teacher, his manner will betray his ignorance; and, in place of developing his subject, he will involve it; instead of delighting, he will fatigue.

The English language, of the present day, with the exception of transitional and conjunctive words, is twofold. It consists of a dialect, emanated, without any material change, through the Saxon, from the Gothic or Teutonic; and of another, derived immediately from the French, Latin, and Greek. The former is used by the common people and by children, and, occasionally, in familiar discourse, by the higher classes: the latter, by the learned and polite, the philosopher and historian, the orator and statesman. The first has descended to us from the various northern tribes, who, in the fifth century, expelled the Britains into Wales and Cornwall. The second, is of more recent birth. Additions from the French tongue commenced in the eleventh century, on the accession of Edward the Confessor to the English throne. This prince having been educated in Normandy, where he had contracted many intimacies with the natives, as well as a partiality for their manners, the court of England was soon filled with Normans; who, being distinguished by the royal favour, and a superior degree of urbanity, rendered not only their language, but their laws and customs, fashionable in the kingdom. The

French tongue was very generally studied, and was used in their different writings by the lawyers. The subjection of the British people, by the duke of Normandy, almost immediately after the death of Edward, served still more to intermingle the continental language. William endeavoured to abolish the English tongue. He ordered that the youth should be instructed in French, that the pleadings in the supreme court should be in that language, the laws written in the same, and that no other should be spoken at the royal court.

Nearly five centuries before, the Latin had been used in England, in the service of the Roman church; but, as few of the clergy, even in the time of Alfred, (who ascended the throne in 871,) could interpret what they were repeating, the English language could not then have been rendered more copious, by the introduction of Latin words. Its history is involved in much obscurity. Even the additions, which had undoubtedly been made to the colloquial tongue by the use of the Norman amongst the higher orders, are not easily discovered or reduced to a certain date. The nobility were unlettered; their discourse was, therefore, not committed to writing; the poets composed their rude verses in the homely dialect of the lower classes, and the historians their chronicles in Latin. Even so recently as the beginning of the last century, theological disputations as well as philosophical inquiries were frequently written in Latin. The national tongue was not yet sufficiently dignified, nor sufficiently copious, to gratify the pride or express the ideas of the learned; nor were the readers, in any country, numerous enough to repay the expense of translating, and of printing works of that kind in their own tongue. A reciprocal means of communication was therefore adopted, which rendered the original writings of the learned in one country intelligible to those in every other.

Each succeeding year enlarges our verbal store. Every new invention or discovery, every new modification or combination, requires a new word. On these occasions, the elementary parts are seldom drawn from the national stock. The scientific terms, adopted by all modern nations, are almost exclusively constructed from the Greek or Latin. These are happily adapted to such a purpose.

The elliptical form required to express *multum in parvo*, much in a small compass, would be repugnant to the mind and unpleasant to the ear, if compounded from the native tongue; because the ellipsis would appear too violent; a harshness which is entirely avoided by the use of foreign words.

There is little danger (though there is some,) of our mistaking the true signification of our *vernacular* dialect,—the Anglo-Saxon. That which we have been accustomed to do from our childhood, we will do, almost instinctively, right. Words, in the use of which we have had so early and long continued experience, will be thoroughly understood. Their various powers will be known without a glossary. But this cannot be said of the modern portion of our language. Not having been required in youth, it has been neglected; and we are hurried from the society who speak the other, into a maturer and more refined, whose discourse is, in a great measure, unintelligible to us.

Many years will elapse, before we are enlightened; much arduous application will be used, much painful degradation suffered. Even when we conceive that we have dispelled the obstructing clouds, we are encompassed by a remaining mist,—by an opacity, more dangerous than complete darkness, because more deceitful. Without a previous classical education, (which is attained by few males, and scarcely by any females,) we are seriously perplexed: we know not which is the literal, which the figurative import of a word; how far the former may be extended,—within what bounds the latter should be confined. We have derived our knowledge of ideal sounds from those who are not competent to teach, or willing to instruct; who may mislead us through ignorance, or deceive us through design. We resemble a vessel without a pilot, which is subject to the variable directions of her crew, and, in tracing the windings of the channel, is wrecked upon its banks.

The best verbal pilot is Etymology. But, except to the classical scholar, this guide has hitherto been wanting. This is the first Etymological dictionary that has ever appeared, of any language, founded on a minute and regular system of analysis. Each word is here re-

solved into its original elements. In words composed of a Preposition and a Verb, the appropriate meaning of the former, out of its multifarious significations, has been chosen, to suit its particular application; and the latter has been displayed, either in its primitive shape or the inflexion used in its combination. The same mode has been adopted with regard to foreign Nouns. These generally come to us through their genitive case, whilst the Verbs very frequently reach us in their participial form.

The present tense of the indicative mood, I consider as the root of Greek and Latin verbs; to which part, I have therefore referred, as the fountain head: though, in accordance with academical usage, I have affixed to it the translation of the infinitive. Thus, I write *metreo*, "to measure," whilst the real meaning is "I measure;" and *facio*, "to make," instead of "I make." I have also substituted the Roman Letters for the Greek, as the best suited to the simplicity of my design; enabling the mere English scholar to produce the sound indicated by the Greek characters with sufficient accuracy; whilst the radicals are, notwithstanding, exhibited in such a form, that a Greek scholar may easily find them in a lexicon.

The most philosophical treatise on the derivation of English words is the *Επεικ Πηγωνα*, or Diversions of Purley, by Horne Tooke. Had his plan embraced words derived from the learned languages, no occasion had offered for so inferior a philologist as the author of the present work to undertake this task. My labour would have been only manual. There would have been required only a judicious selection and alphabetical arrangement. But he has confined his researches, with some desultory exceptions, to that portion of the language which is derived from the Saxon, and other barbarous dialects of the north. Several inquiring minds had previously explored the remote sources of the English tongue. Junius, in the sixteenth, and Skinner in the seventeenth century, had exercised no small degree of ingenuity in ascending the intricate windings of the etymological stream; but their various deductions of the same word excite scepticism and perplexity; and their

quaint subtleties, characteristic of the age in which they lived, instead of now promoting admiration, excite contempt.

The dictionary of Dr. Johnson is, by many, thought to combine etymology with definition. But, this opinion, if the work be rightly examined, will be found erroneous. Except in occasional instances, the foreign words are neither analysed nor translated; nor is the mode shown by which the mind has compounded or deduced them. A mere English scholar, therefore, never acquires more than the exchange of one sound for another; but not always so much: for, as the Greek letters cannot be pronounced by him, they afford no intelligence, more lucid, than would be experienced by a Greek scholar, when staring, with stupid vacuity, at Arabic. He is informed, that *cession* is derived from *cedo*, *accede*, from *accedo*, geometry from *γεωμετρία*; information that confers no benefit on the learned or on the unlearned. The latter has not, by this exhibition, received a single new idea; the former, none, of which he was not possessed before.

The derivations have, in many instances, not been attempted by Dr. Johnson; and the haste in which his voluminous work was compiled, has prevented a uniformity of system.

A considerable number of phrases, wholly French or Latin, are now interspersed throughout our language. They have not been admitted into any English dictionary; yet, it is not less essential to know their meaning, than the signification of any words that we have fully naturalized. These have not been excluded from the present work. There is no essay of the scientific, nor interchange of sentiment amongst the polite, that does not require them. Every newspaper exhibits them: the lawyer employs them to elucidate his argument, the senator to adorn his oration, and the ambassador to unfold, in technical phraseology, the intention of his government.

Much more might be adduced on this subject. But the author refers, for practical illustration, to the work itself. The design, he is little fearful, will be approved, —though he is less confident of the execution. A liberal