

**A MANUAL OF
ETYMOLOGY; OR, FIRST
STEPS TO A KNOWLEDGE OF
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649452477

A Manual of Etymology; Or, First Steps to a Knowledge of the English Language by Robert Sullivan

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ROBERT SULLIVAN

**A MANUAL OF
ETYMOLOGY; OR, FIRST
STEPS TO A KNOWLEDGE OF
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

A
MANUAL OF ETYMOLOGY;
OR,
FIRST STEPS
TO A KNOWLEDGE OF
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

BY
ROBERT SULLIVAN, LL.D., T.C.D.

DUBLIN:
MARCUS AND JOHN SULLIVAN,
27, MARLBOROUGH-STREET.
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMANS, AND ROBERTS, LONDON;
JOHN MENZIES, EDINBURGH.

1860.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY ALAN THOM & SONS, 57 & 58, ABBEY-STREET.



PREFACE.

THE enlargement of the last edition of my English Dictionary obliged me to omit from the Introduction the large collection of LATIN and GREEK ROOTS, with their ENGLISH DERIVATIVES, which it formerly contained. But as these Roots are those by which the vocabulary of the English language has been most enriched, I intimated, in a note, that they would be reprinted in a separate form for the use of schools. This has now been done; and in order to make this little publication still more useful, I have made so many additions to it that it may now be regarded as *An Introduction to the Etymology of the English Language*.

As the *Etymology* of a language implies a correct knowledge of the origin and meanings of the words which compose it, the importance and necessity of such a branch of study must be obvious to every one. In fact, the correct meanings of words are among the first things that should be taught to children; and the only question is, What is the easiest and best method of doing this? Formerly children were obliged to undergo the drudgery of learning—or rather, of attempting to learn—the meanings of

words from the columns of their dictionaries, in regularly set lessons, beginning at the first word under A, and ending—should they continue so long at school—with the last word under Z. This was something like the labour of the Danaides, for the meanings of the words, as there was no principle of association to bind them, escaped from their memory almost as soon as they were committed to it. In a little work which I published about thirty years ago I drew attention to the absurdity of this practice; and I suggested a plan by which young persons might learn far more easily, and certainly far more effectually, the meanings of words, by deducing them from their **ROOTS** or **PRIMITIVES**, particularly from the Latin. I refer to a *Manual of Etymology** which was published by John Cumming, Dublin, in the year 1831. And in **THE SPELLING-BOOK SUPERSEDED**, which was published three years after, this plan is fully explained, and practically illustrated; and the following extracts from it will serve to show how this little book should be taught. In fact, as this Manual is, in some respects, *introductory* and in others, *supplementary* to *The Spelling-Book Superseded*, the best way of using it would be as a Text-book in connexion with it.

* This Manual was enlarged and republished two years after under the title of *The Dictionary of Derivations*. This is explained in the Introduction to *The Dictionary of Derivations*, page 6.

“But how, it may be inquired, are children, without dictionaries or spelling-books, to learn the MEANINGS of words? By being accustomed to give, in their own language, their own ideas of every unusual and important word which occurs in their READING LESSONS; the teacher, of course, correcting them when wrong, and explaining to them, when necessary, the proper meaning of the term in question; or referring them for this information to their dictionaries, which should always be at hand for this, their legitimate use.”—*Spelling-Book Superseded*, p. 11.

“Almost every word in our, and indeed in every language, has, in addition to its original and proper meaning, its consequential and figurative applications. And though in several instances the original or primitive meaning has been lost, or is no longer in use, yet, in general, it will be found to pervade and explain what are called the different meanings of the same word. In explaining the following class of words the author has kept this principle in view. In almost every case it will be seen that the primitive or original meaning naturally leads to all the others, though, at first view, some of them may appear to be quite different. And, besides the pleasure which even children take in tracing analogies, it is surely much easier, as well as much more philosophic, to learn the meanings of words in this way, than to get them by rote from the uninteresting and unconnected columns of a dictionary. For even if it were possible for a child to recollect the different meanings of every word in his dictionary (and unless he recollects all, there is little use in his knowing only a part), how is he to know, on the spur of the moment, which of the many meanings he is to attach to a word that he meets with in reading, or hears pronounced in conversation.”—*Ibid.*, p. 55.

“The easiest and most effectual method of acquiring a knowledge of what may be called the difficult words of our language, is to learn the comparatively

few ROOTS from which they are derived, and the PREFIXES and AFFIXES which vary and modify their meanings. In this way the pupils learn with greater ease, and recollect with greater certainty whole FAMILIES of words, in less time perhaps than it would take them to learn the meanings of an equal number of single and unconnected terms; which, as they are not connected by any principle of association, soon escape from the memory, even after the labour of much repetition. In short, under the old way, as it is called, the pupil fished with a hook, and drew in, at most, but one word at a time; but under the system here recommended, he uses a net, and at one cast draws in a whole multitude of words."—*Ibid.*, p. 143.

It should also be added that this Manual is intended to supersede, as a *Class-Book*, THE DICTIONARY OF DERIVATIONS, which should only be used as a *Book of Reference*, except in schools in which Latin and French are taught.

R. S.

Dublin, 2nd January, 1860.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Suggestions as to the way in which this Manual should be used,	4
Sketch of the History of the English Language,	9
Derivation, or the processes by which Derivative words are deduced from their Roots or Primitives,	13
English or Saxon Prefixes,	14
Latin Prefixes,	15
Greek Prefixes,	18
Affixes or Terminations,	20
Exercises on the Etymology of the English Language,	
English Roots or Primitives,	24
English Derivatives to be traced to their Primitives,	29
Latin Roots and English Derivatives,	31
Greek Roots and English Derivatives,	101
Latin and Greek Roots for Exercise,	119
Anglo-Saxon Roots, &c.,	125
Geographical Etymologies,	129