

**OUTLINES OF ENGLISH  
AND AMERICAN  
LITERATURE**

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Outlines of English and American Literature by J. H. Gilmore

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# OUTLINES

OF

## English and American Literature

BY

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"THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ITS EARLY LITERATURE,"

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M. S. M.

## PREFACE.

Before taking up the study of the masterpieces of English Literature, the student should have some knowledge of the history of that literature. This little manual is intended as a guide to the acquisition of that knowledge. In compiling it the author has endeavored to trace the organic development of the literature that has found expression in our mother tongue, emphasize its salient features and most prominent authors, and refer the student to such sources of information as are likely to aid one in giving to the skeleton here presented substance and vitality.

Of the names included in such a thesaurus as Chambers's "Cyclopædia of English Literature," the author has recognized only those concerning which a student whose vernacular is English should be ashamed to be ignorant. The authorities to which reference is made are, also, comparatively few; but such as the author considers especially trustworthy and helpful.

The very meagreness of the book has given it, as privately printed, considerable currency both for class-room use and as a book of reference. In the hope that it may prove more generally useful, it has been carefully revised, and is now given to the public.

It has been the author's custom to make these outlines the basis of class-room talks, somewhat after the University Extension method. It is believed, however, that they will be found useful where preference is given to the laboratory method of literary study.

University of Rochester.

April, 1905.



## I. THE ORIGIN AND AFFINITIES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

*Why we should study English literary history.* Because it is of interest to know who our ancestors were, what they thought, and how they expressed their thoughts. Because familiarity with such books as have survived the winnowing processes of time tends to enrich the mind. Because there is such continuity in national life that we cannot fully appreciate the English literature and the English language of today, without studying them in their germinal forms, and tracing their progressive development. Illustrate by Shakspeare's indebtedness to the pre-Shakspearean drama; or Tennyson's indebtedness to those who have handled the Arthurian legends before him.

See the author's "English Language and its Early Literature," pp. 3-5; Henry Reed's "Lectures on English Literature," p. 58; Thomson's "Laws of Thought," § 21.

It is necessary, first of all, without going into the niceties of modern philological investigation, to *place our mother-tongue* in a general way. Three great ethnic and linguistic families must be recognized—the Semitic, the Indo-European, and the Allophylian (or Turanian.) The third of these is a mere aggregation of such races and languages as are neither Semitic nor Indo-European.

For a scientific classification of the languages formerly grouped as Allophylian, see Morris's "Outlines of English Accidence."

Within the Indo-European family of languages, and also within the Semitic family, we note:—

1. Similarity of roots. E. G. Sanscrit, *matri*; Latin, *mater*; English, *mother*. Contrast the Hebrew, *Eym*; Arabic, *umm*.

2. Similarity of inflections. E. G. Sanscrit. *bhrâtaras*;





Latin, *fratres*; English, *brothers*. Contrast the Hebrew plural in *im*, e. g. *cherubim*.

3. Similarity of construction.

*The Semitic Family* of languages (name derived from Shem, or Sem, Gen. 9:18, 19), is typified by the Hebrew. It is characterized by a trilateral system of roots, and by great simplicity of construction. It affects English slightly, through travel, commerce, and especially through the Hebrew Scriptures, E. G. *amen*, *jubilee*, *alkali*, *alchemy*, *bazaar*, *cotton*.

*The Allophylian* (or, *Turanian*), affects English even less; but to an appreciable extent. See Morris's "Outlines of English Accidence," p. 32 sq. *Squaw*, *wigwam*, *tobacco* are familiar Allophylian words.

Despite its borrowings from Semitic and Allophylian sources, the *English* language is *distinctively Indo-European*. The similarity of roots and inflections, already noted, is largely due to the fact that the Indo-European languages are *descended from* a common parent-language, known as *the Aryan*.

It was formerly thought that *the primitive abode of the Indo-European* (or *Aryan*) *race* was on the head-waters of the *Indus*; and that, in prehistoric times, successive waves of migration planted descendants of this ancient race and language in different parts of Europe (see Emerson's "Brief History of the English Language," p. 2); though many of them remained in their Asian home. It is now claimed that the original abode of the Indo-European peoples was in Europe—possibly in the Scandinavian peninsula. See Sweet's "History of Language," pp. 103, 117, 138.

On the characteristics of the *Aryan race and language*, see Morris's "Outlines of English Accidence," pp. 9-11. Cf. Max Müller's "Biographies of Words, and Home of the Aryans."

