A NEW ENGLISH DICTIONARY
ON HISTORICAL PRINCIPLES.

(VOLUME IX. FIRST HALF. St.—St.)

SLEEP—SNIGGLE.

BY

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PREATORY NOTE.

This double section contains 1678 Main words, 278 Combinations explained under these, and 222 Subordinate entries of obsolete or variant forms, in all 2178. The obvious Combinations, recorded and illustrated by quotations, but not requiring to be explained, number 1025 more, and bring up the total to 3203. Of the Main words, 311 are marked + as obsolete, and 8 are marked § as alien or not fully naturalized.

The following figures exhibit the result of comparison with Johnson’s and some recent Dictionaries:—

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words recorded</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>997</td>
<td>1404</td>
<td>1163</td>
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<tr>
<td>Words illustrated by quotations</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>395</td>
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<td>131</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of quotations</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>1488</td>
<td>189</td>
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The number of quotations in the corresponding portion of Richardson is 702.

The words contained in this portion of the Dictionary comprise about two-thirds of those beginning with St-., the whole of Sm-, and fully half of Sw-. Among the words with initial St- and Sm-, which occupy about five-sixths of the space, those which are clearly or presumably of native origin are by far the most numerous and important, and include many in common use, such as sleep, sleeve, slide, slime, sink, slow, small, smart, smear, smile, smith, smooth, etc., together with many derivative forms. The relationship between variant forms of the same word, or different formations from the same root, is often interesting, as in the cases of sleuth and sloth, sleu and slough, smack and sneck, smear and smock, smoke and smulk, smooth and smooth, etc. It is curious that smell, occurring very early in OE., is not recorded in OE., and not found in any of the cognate languages. The close connexion between English and Frisian is illustrated by their common use of sleeve, for which all the remaining Teutonic languages have other designations.

A considerable number of words in St- and Sm- are apparently of Flem., Du., or LG. origin, the proportion being larger than usual. Clear instances are sleigh, slim (recently re-adopted in a special sense), sloop, slot sb.1, slamp sb.1; those in Sm- are more uncertain, but the probabilities are in favour of this source for smack sb.4 and v., smell v., smile, smuggle, and smut.

Words of Scand. origin are chiefly prominent in St-., where they include the related sleight, slough, and sly, sleuth (mainly surviving in sleuth-hound), slight, sling v.1, and slug. In Sm- the only important instance is smithy, a northern word rarely used by southern writers before the 19th century.

Most of the important words not clearly assignable to one or other of the above classes have some obscurity attaching to their origin. The majority are old, as slender, slosh, slough (skin, etc.), slaven, slur sb.2, slut, smatter, smoulder (once almost extinct, but revived by Scott), smudge, and snug. A few are more recent, as the nautical slew or sluie, and the (originally) slang or colloquial slog, slum, smash.

From other sources there are very few notable words. OF. has contributed slice, slot sb.8 and sb.4, sluice, and small. Greek is represented by smaragd, smectic, smegma, and some related forms. Slogan is from Sc. Gaelic, and one of its early forms has given rise to a poetic misunderstanding (see slug-horn).

In Sm- the number of important native words is much smaller, the chief being snail, snake, and snese (an alteration of the earlier fnes). Of Scand. origin are snag, snare, snap, and snib v.1. The most interesting adoptions from Du., etc., are snaffle and snickersnee; the origin of the latter is now made clear by the evidence of the early forms. The proportion of words not clearly represented in other languages (some of them obviously imitative) is fairly large, as snaffle, snatch, sneak, sneck, sneer, sniff, snigger, etc.