PREFACE TO VOLUME I.

The story of the origin and progress of the New English Dictionary has been told at length in various literary journals and magazines, and is familiar to most persons interested in the study of the English language. The scheme originated in a resolution of the Philological Society, passed in 1857, at the suggestion of the late Archbishop Trench, when Dean of Westminster. It was proposed that materials should be collected for a Dictionary which, by the completeness of its vocabulary, and by the application of the historical method to the life and use of words, might be worthy of the English language and of English scholarship. With this view, it was resolved to begin at the beginning, and extract anew typical quotations for the use of words, from all the great English writers of all ages, and from all the writers on special subjects whose works might illustrate the history of words employed in special senses, from all writers whatever before the 16th century, and from as many as possible of the more important writers of later times. Several hundred readers accordingly entered on the task of selecting and transcribing such quotations, and many eminent scholars undertook to arrange the materials thus gathered. Among those who, in various capacities, lent their services to the work, may be mentioned:—Dr. Trench himself; the late Mr. Herbert Coleridge, the first general editor (who died while arranging for the press specimens of his proposed treatment of some early words); Mr. F. J. Furnivall, M.A., his joint-editor and successor; the late Dr. Guest; Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood, M.A.; the late Professor Malden; the late Professor T. H. Key; the late Lord Lyttelton; the late Mr. Thomas Watts, of the British Museum; Mr. Fitzedward Hall, D.C.L.; Miss C. M. Yonge; Professor E. Dowden, M.A.; Mr. Henry Hucks Gibbs, M.A.; the Rev. Professor W. W. Skeat, M.A.; the late Sir John Richardson, K.C.B.; Mr. W. M. Rossetti; the late Miss Harriet Martineau; the late Hon. G. P. Marsh; the late Mr. R. Grant White. The time requisite to complete even this preliminary labour of reading books and collecting quotations proved so long, that several promoters of the undertaking died, and many became absorbed in other duties, before it was possible to take in hand the actual preparation of the intended Dictionary; but the materials continued to accumulate, till upwards of two million quotations had been amassed, portions of which were also provisionally arranged, and made more or less ready for use.

For several years no further steps were taken; but, in 1878, specimens which had been prepared from some of these materials by the present Editor, on behalf of the Council of the Philological Society, were submitted to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press. The Delegates consented, upon certain conditions, to bear the expense of printing and publishing a Dictionary to be founded on these materials, the preparation of which in its present form was commenced in 1879. Careful examination of the quotations, then for the first time collected in one place, and arranged in a continuous alphabetical series, showed that much work still remained to be done, in order to render the material adequate for the purpose. Accordingly, a new appeal was made to volunteers to collect additional quotations from specified books, of which lists were from time to time issued. More than 800 readers responded to this appeal, the majority of
them being in Great Britain, but also a large number in the United States (of whose work Prof. F. A. March, of Lafayette College, Pennsylvania, most kindly undertook the organization and superintendence), and not a few in various British Colonies and Foreign Countries. In the course of three years a million additional quotations were furnished, raising the total number to about 3½ millions, selected by about 1300 readers, from the works of more than 5000 authors of all periods. About thirty sub-editors (including a few who had never ceased to work for the Dictionary) offered their gratuitous services in arranging quotations, preparing definitions, and otherwise contributing to the execution of the work. Without the generous aid of these various contributors and fellow-labourers, so great a task could never have been undertaken. The names of the Sub-Editors are given at the end of this Preface; and their respective contributions towards the preparation of parts of the work will be indicated as these are reached: the Reference-List of Books read, to be given hereafter, will also commemorate the names of the Readers; but a list of those who have most largely contributed to the work is appended to this Preface.

The aim of this Dictionary is to furnish an adequate account of the meaning, origin, and history of English words now in general use, or known to have been in use at any time during the last seven hundred years. It endeavours (1) to show, with regard to each individual word, when, how, in what shape, and with what signification, it became English; what development of form and meaning it has since received; which of its uses have, in the course of time, become obsolete, and which still survive; what new uses have since arisen, by what processes, and when: (2) to illustrate these facts by a series of quotations ranging from the first known occurrence of the word to the latest, or down to the present day; the word being thus made to exhibit its own history and meaning: and (3) to treat the etymology of each word strictly on the basis of historical fact, and in accordance with the methods and results of modern philological science.

In order to facilitate reference, great pains have been taken to make the page eloquent to the eye, by the employment of different sizes and styles of type, by the arrangement of the paragraphs, and by the prominence given to the dates of quotations. Since the original scheme of the Philological Society was projected, the great French Dictionary of M. Littré has been given to the world, and has been made use of in determining some of the features of the present work. The size of page adopted is the same as that of Littré; but the breaking up of the articles into paragraphs, the typographical distinction between explanations and quotations, and other differences, will, it is hoped, be recognized as improvements.

The compass of the Vocabulary, and the general features of the work, are described in the General Explanations which follow. The Vocabulary will be found to be, even in its modern words, much more extensive than that of any existing Dictionary. And it will be observed that this fullness is not due to a large inclusion of words strictly foreign, or of the Latin or Latinized generic names of Natural History, which are here inserted only when found to be used, more or less, as English words. In connexion with this, it has to be borne in mind, that a Dictionary of the English Language is not a Cyclopædia: the Cyclopædia describes things; the Dictionary explains words, and deals with the description of things only so far as is necessary in order to fix the exact significations and uses of words. Their vocabularies are only to a limited extent identical: that of a Cyclopædia consists mostly of nouns,—names of things and processes,—but without restriction as regards the language to which they belong; that of an English Dictionary consists of words belonging to all the parts of speech; but they ought to be English words, or currently used as such. We do not look in a Cyclopædia for the explanation and history of anon, perhaps, or busy; we do not expect, in an English Dictionary, information about Book-binding, Photography, the Aniline Dyes, or the Bridgewater Treatises, or mention of Abyssinia, Argynnis, Alopecurus, Adenia, or Blennenteritis.

The present volume contains the words beginning with the letters A and B. The total number of these—including the Main words, treated each in a separate article (e.g. Air), the subordinate entries of distinct forms of words (e.g. Aimont), which appear also in their alphabetical place, with a reference to the main form under which they are treated, and the special combinations or compounds (such as air-line), explained under the Main words—amounts to 31,254. This, however, does not include the simple combinations of obvious meaning (such as air-breathing, air-built, air-current, air-passage), which are mentioned and
illustrated under the Main words. The number of these combinations is practically unlimited, since they can be formed at will; if the examples of the more important of them here given and illustrated by quotations are also reckoned in, the number of words dealt with in this volume exceeds 40,000. But, confining our attention to the 31,254 words, we find them thus distributed, in the two letters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main words</th>
<th>Special combinations</th>
<th>Subordinate words</th>
<th>Total.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>12,183</td>
<td>1,112</td>
<td>1,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>10,049</td>
<td>3,180</td>
<td>2,902</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<th>Total.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31,254</td>
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The Main words, considered as to their status, are approximately divided into those still current, those which are obsolete, and those which are imperfectly naturalized or alien. The distribution of these, in the two letters, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8,184</td>
<td>3,449</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>7,196</td>
<td>2,533</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<th>Total.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22,232</td>
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The Main words are, it is seen, less numerous in B than in A. In most dictionaries, accordingly, the A and B words occupy less space than A. Thus, in Bailey (8vo, 1721), A occupies 75 pages, B 45; in Johnson (Folio, 1773), A 69, B 58; in Webster (4to, 1864), A 99, B 81; in Ogilvie's Imperial (8vo, 1885), A 196, B 166. In this Dictionary, on the other hand, A fills 603; B, 637 pages. This difference arises from the diversity in the historical character of the words under the two letters respectively, and the effect which this has upon the relative space required by them in a dictionary which deals with the language historically. A has a very small proportion of native English or Teutonic words, and a very large proportion of words from Latin (directly or through French), and from Greek; B has a much smaller number of words from these sources, and a very large proportion of native Teutonic words. Thus, A contains the words formed with the Latin ab-, ad- (ac-, ag-, al-, an-, ap-, as-, at-), ante-, and the Greek α-, ἄνα-, ἀπό-, ἀνατο-; also the words beginning with x-, au-, av-, which are almost exclusively from these languages; but it has few radical words of Old English origin, of the type of A, After, Again, Ale, and, Answer, As, At. B, on the other hand, contains many of the most important native radical verbs, as Bake, Be, Beat, Bend, Bid, Bide, Bite, Blaze, Bless, Blow, Bow, Braid, Break, Breed, Bring, Brook, Burn, Burst, Buy; an immense number of substantives of the same character, as Bale, Bank, Bank, Bark, Barn, Bath, Bead, Beam, Bed, Bell, Bench, Bill, Bird, Bit, Blade, Blood, Bloom, Board, Boat, Body, Bond, Bone, Book, Borough, Bow, Bowl, Bread, Breast, Breath, Bride, Bridge, Brood, Brother, Bow, Bull, Burden; such adjectives as Bad, Bald, Bare, Best, Better, Big, Bitter, Black, Bleak, Blind, Blunt, Bold, Both, Bright, Broad, Brown, Busy; the important relational words But, By, Before, Behind, Between, Beyond, etc. Words such as these, which have been in the language since the beginning, with their long history, great variety of form, and many ramifications of meaning to be illustrated, having also many compounds with special meanings to be explained, necessarily take up much more space than words that came into the language only in the 15th, 16th, or 17th century, and have since received but little development of meaning, and scarcely any of form. The Old English words are reinforced, moreover, by an array of words from Old French, many of which, as Battle, Beast, Beauty, Beef, Bill, Blue, Bonnet, Border, Boss, Bound, Bowl, Brace, Brave, Bride, Brushe, Brush, Butt, Button, are now no less 'native', and no less important constituents of our vocabulary, than the Teutonic words. Hence, the average length of the articles in B is greater than that of those in A, and the space occupied by B, as a whole, is greater than that occupied by A.

It is worth noticing that the obsolete words in B (25.2%) do not attain to the proportion of those in A (28.3%): fewer of the Old English and Norman words have dropped out of use, than of the much more recent learned importations of the Renascence, which, after a short literary life, perished before the end of the 17th century. It is also worthy of note that, of the whole English Vocabulary on record since the 12th
The letters A and B differ in another respect. While the former contains only some half-dozen words of which the derivation presents any points of doubt or difficulty, the words in B are full of etymological problems which have taxed the efforts of all investigators. Every one of these problems has here received a fresh and independent investigation, in the light of the latest philological knowledge, and with the assistance of the ablest living philologists; and the result has been the discovery of fresh facts, or the elimination of old errors, in regard to many words. But many of these problems are insoluble: the historical evidence necessary for their solution is either insufficient or entirely absent. Many of these words have no kin in other languages, but stand quite alone in English, and, it cannot be doubted, are more or less recent creations of English itself—instances of *onomatopoeia* in its true etymological sense of ‘name-creation’. For B contains many illustrations of the fact, which has of late years powerfully impressed itself upon philological students, that the creative period of language, the epoch of ‘roots’, has never come to an end. The ‘origin of language’ is not to be sought merely in a far-off Indo-European antiquity, or in a still earlier pre-Aryan time; it is still in perennial process around us. A literary language, with its more accessible store of words already in use and sufficient for all ordinary requirements, its more permanent memories and traditions, its constant appeals to an authoritative precedent—Where did you find that word? Can you cite it from any of the masters of English Prose? Is it in the Dictionary? Is it English at all?—is hostile to word-creation. The new word is apt to die almost as soon as born, ashamed of its own newness, ashamed of the italics or inverted commas which apologize for its very existence, or question its legitimacy. But such is not the case with language in its natural state, where words are estimated simply as they serve their purpose of communicating the thought or feeling of the moment, and where memory, and tradition, and precedent are only contributories to the fulfilment of this function. The unwritten dialects, and, to some extent, even slang, and colloquial speech, approach in character to language in its natural state, aiming only at being expressive, and treating memory and precedent as ministers, not as masters. In the local dialects, then, in slang, and in colloquial use, the new vocabularies are at any time be abruptly brought forth to serve the needs of the moment, in accordance with feelings of inherent natural fitness, of imperative suggestiveness, or of subtle instinctive analogy with groups of words or parts of words already familiar. Some of these, sooner or later, pass from conversational, into epistolary, journalistic, and finally into general literary use, or from the colloquy of the novel into the literary composition of the novelist, and are registered in the dictionary as ‘new words’, the origin of which is searched for as vainly in the ‘word-hoard’ of Old English speech, or even the fullest vocabulary of Indo-European roots, as in a school manual of Latin and Greek roots and affixes. The dialect Glossaries abound in words of this kind; and, among those to be found in these pages, *bans*, *banboosle*, *bang*, *bash*, *bilk*, *binge*, *birl*, *birstle*, *birl*, *blab*, *blabber*, *blad*, *blare*, *blash*, *blatter*, *blur*, *bleh*, *bleight*, *blizzard*, *blob*, *blore*, *blot*, *blotch*, *blowse*, *blub*, *blubber*, *bluff*, *blunder*, *blunt*, *blur*, *bluster*, *blather*, *blatter*, *bob* (in some senses), *bodge*, *bogus*, *boom* (in some senses), *bore*, *bosh*, *bother*, *bounce*, *box* (a blow), *brash*, *brunt*, *bub*, *bum*, *bumble*, *bump*, *bunch*, *bungle*, *burr*, *bustle*, *buzz*, are words which so far as we know, cannot be traced to any ancient ‘roots’, but are, for the most part at least, examples of more or less recent word-creation.

The necessity of compression, in order to keep the Dictionary within reasonable bounds, has been continually present to the Editor, and has led to the employment of a condensed arrangement in groups of related technical terms of Natural History or other sciences, as in *Aniso-*, *Arsen-*, *Bromo-*, *Broncho-*, (where it is hoped that brevity has been attained without any sacrifice of clearness), and to the method employed in the articles *Anti-*, and *Be-*. The combinations of *Anti-* are more than 500, those of *Be-* (current and obsolete) nearly 1500 in number, both with indefinite capabilities of extension in the direction of combinations like *anti-slavery*, *anti-vaccination*, *anti-coercionist*, *anti-Lacrosse*, *bebooted*, *bemuslined*, *beperi-

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1 Here, the *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache* of F. Klinge, and the *Etymologisch Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* of Johannes Franck, which have been published, in whole or part, since this work was begun, have been of great use, as presenting the latest results attained in German and Dutch etymology.
PREFACE.

wigged, be-uncled, be-bishop, beduchess, becobweb; and, if every such combination had been separately set forth in its alphabetical place among the Main words, the size of this volume would have been seriously increased. It has seemed sufficient, therefore, in each case, that all those words (about 300 in ANTI-, and 850 in BE-) which appear to demand separate treatment, whether by virtue of their meaning, their long history, or frequent modern use, should be treated in their alphabetical order among other words; the remainder, of rare or unique occurrence, trivial importance, or obvious meaning, being arranged in groups under the various meanings or uses of the prefix, where each can be studied in connexion with words of similar formation. Each is, in general, provided also with at least one quotation, so as to show by whom and in what connexion, it has been used.

In dealing with so vast a body of words, some inconsistencies, real or apparent, are, from the nature of the subject, inevitable. Thus, in deciding whether a word or near the frontier line in any direction shall or shall not be included, it is not easy always to be consistent with what has been done in analogous cases; and it is impossible to anticipate what may have been done in other cases which may yet arise. For example, the word African was one of the earliest instances in which the question of admission or exclusion arose with regard to an important adjective derived from a geographical proper name. After much careful consideration, and consultation with advisers, it was decided (perhaps by a too rigid application of first principles) to omit the word, as having really no more claims to inclusion than Algerian, Austrian, or Bulgarian. But, when American was reached, some months afterwards, it was seen that Americanize and Americanism must of necessity be included, and that these (with ‘the Americanizing of our institutions’) could not be explained without treating American, and explaining its restricted application to the United States. American was accordingly admitted. Then the question arose, whether the exclusion of African was consistent with the inclusion of American: but the question came too late; African had been actually omitted, on its own merits. And the inconsistency is only on the surface; American is included, not on its own account, but to help to the better explanation of derived words; and, in every analogous case, it will be found that a proper noun, or adjective thence formed, is included, not for its own sake and as a proper noun, etc., but because it either has other uses, or has derivatives for the explanation of which it is of importance. Every such word must, in fact, be looked upon as exceptionally included, and not as forming a precedent for the inclusion of other words of the same class.

Similar remarks might be made concerning other classes of words lying on the various diverging lines in which the vocabulary extends: on each of these there is a wide fringe of words as to which it is difficult to say whether they ought or ought not to be treated in an English Dictionary. Nearly every day this question has had to be decided for some word for which a quotation or quotations lay before us, or which actually appears in some modern dictionaries. Every such doubtful case has had to be settled on its own merits; with careful consideration of the evidence as to its use, and of the critical opinion of literary advisers. And in such cases it has not always been possible to establish or follow precedents, or to avoid apparent inconsistencies.

Many of the words here treated are, in current use, spelt in more ways than one. This diversity of words of unsettled spelling, naturally existed in the case of nearly all the words that became obsolete before the prevalence of the modern tendency to uniformity of spelling, which followed upon the introduction of Printing, and has become more and more marked as the influence of the printing-press has extended. Hence it still continues with archaic words which are no longer in ordinary use, but are maintained in a kind of artificial life in ballads, historical novels, and other compositions that affect the phraseology of former times; also, with names of things, customs, actions, etc., which are actually obsolete, but are frequently mentioned in historical and antiquarian treatises: in such cases, modern writers reflect the variety of spelling which they find in the authors who wrote when the words were still part of the living speech. Examples of such words are to aby, acton, alfin, almoign, arbalest, arquebus, auncel, baldric, balinger, barrat, battel, baudkin, borrel, brigandine, brunie, broch, bard, by-coket, bylawe, byrthynsak (for other spellings of which see the articles themselves). The same diversity prevails in the spelling of words that either have arisen in Lowland Scotch, and English local dialects, or have lived on there when they became obsolete elsewhere, and now often appear, in various circumstances, in general literature, or are actually passing back into the common language: the
dialects have no standard orthography; and the words belonging to them appear in many diverse forms. To this class belong such words as ablings, ambury, bargham, barghest, bauchle, baudrons, to beek, beestings, bever, bield, to big, bigg, to birse, blue, bletherskate, bogie, bogy, bonally, bonny, boosy, brecham, brimse, brough, buirdly, bullfrog, byre, and many others. Still more is uniformity of spelling wanting in words belonging to foreign languages, especially to those which do not use the Roman alphabet. Here the forms in use are the result of a multitude of imperfect, conflicting, and even contradictory modes of transliteration or phonetic representation. Among words of this class are alcoran, aga, alchitran, alkekengi, anatta, archil, assagai, attar, baksheesh, barbecue, bashaw, Bengali, besnio, bang, bidri, bilander, bilong, Brahmin, brinjal, buccan, bungalow, burnous, etc., etc. But there are also many words fully naturalized, or even native, which, from having belonged to one or other of these classes, or from other causes, are still spelt in more than one way. Among those in this volume are abbot (abbat), acre (acry, cyrie, etc.), alias (align), embassage (empassage), ambry (ambrury), awless (awless), ay (aye), aye (ay), balk (balk), bourn (bourne), brier (briar), browse (browse), etc., etc. And there are whole series of words in -able (e.g. blamable, blameable), in -eer, -ier (e.g. bandoleer, -ier), in -ise (-ise), and other endings, as to which current usage varies.

The first aim of the Dictionary, in all such words, is to exhibit the actual variety of usage, as a part of their current history: this is done by means of the quotations, in which the diversity is faithfully represented. But, since it is also the plan of the work to treat each word, as far as possible, once for all, under the Main form (or at least under one form), while the various forms just referred to come more or less far apart in alphabetical order, e.g. beaver bever, ambry ambrury, arquebus arquebus, coran koran qoran, it is necessary to choose some one form as that under which the word, as a whole, shall be treated. In making this choice, regard is had chiefly to the preponderance of modern usage, when this is distinctly marked; when usage is more or less equally divided, considerations of etymological or phonetic propriety, of general analogy with similar words, or of practical convenience, are taken into account; but, in many cases, it is not implied that the form actually chosen is intrinsically better than others which are appended to it, and which also occur in their alphabetical places with cross-references. Where a decided reason of any kind exists for giving a preference to a particular spelling, this is briefly stated at the end of the etymology; especially is this done in the few cases where the spelling preferred (e.g. ax, connexion, rime) is not that at present favoured by the preponderance of usage, but is intrinsically the best, and therefore is recommended. The spelling of particular endings, as -ble (-able, -able, -ible), -eer, -ier, -ize, is discussed under these suffixes. In this work -ize, whenever it represents, historically or analogically, the Greek -izew, late Latin -izare, is, on etymological as well as phonetic grounds, uniformly used, to the exclusion of -ise, which is only the French spelling of the same Greek ending, as in anatomiser, baptiser, barbariser, cathériser. As the French always represent the Greek -izew by -iser, they are, of course, quite consistent in using the same form for new verbs, as civiliser, carboniser: equally consistent and appropriate is it for us, in English, to write civilize, after barbarize; Calvinise and lionise after Hellenize, Judaize, and idolize.

From the composite character of the English Vocabulary, the pronunciation, also, of many words is in a very unsettled state. This is the fact not merely with words from other modern languages, the pronunciation of which depends largely upon the linguistic knowledge and taste of the person who uses them, but also with derivatives from Latin or Greek, for which there exist two or more analogies, one perhaps supplied by the treatment which historical words of the type have normally received when derived through Old French, another supplied by classical Latin quantity. Examples of this occur in words in -ary, -ery, such as accessory, catenary, centenary, millenary, pronontory, secretary, sublunary, where stress upon the 4th syllable from the end is the preponderating custom, and obtains with the longer-established words; but, in newer words, many put the stress upon the third syllable from the end; and, when a word is merely scholarly, this is apt to remain the usual pronunciation, as in catenary as opposed to pulmonary, where the Latin forms calciarius, pulmonarius, are, in every respect, upon the same level. This conflict of analogies, or the absence of any analogy, appears still more in purely scientific words, in which there may be said to be no general standard of pronunciation. The Editor was once present at a meeting of a learned society, where, in the course of discussion, he heard the word gaseous systematically pronounced in six different ways by as many eminent physicists. If this was possible with a word which, though comparatively new, was even then
sufficiently popular to have attained to some standard pronunciation, how much more it is so with words such as acetamine, which have no popular currency, and which indeed were made, not primarily to be spoken, but to be used in books, and as to the pronunciation of which, or the question whether they are pronounceable, no thought was given by their makers? On several occasions, the Editor has applied directly to the introducer of a word, to know how he pronounces it, or means it to be pronounced, and has received the answer, that he has never thought of its pronunciation, does not presume to say how it ought to be pronounced, and leaves it to people to pronounce as they like, or to the DICTIONARY to say what is the right pronunciation. This, of course, reverses the natural order of language, in which speech comes first, and writing is only its symbolization; for here the first thing is the written symbol addressed to the eye (and reminding the reader perhaps more or less distinctly of other written symbols which are to be found in the Greek Lexicon), while, for 'pronunciation', anything passes muster which suffices to recall the written symbol in question; just as any reading of a mathematical formula passes muster, if it enables an auditor to write down the formula again. In dealing with words in which two or more pronunciations are current, these pronunciations are given in the Dictionary; in the case of those in which no standard exists, an attempt has been made to follow analogies so far as they go, and at least to mark the place of the stress; but sometimes it has not been possible to do even this.

The preparation of this volume has taken a much longer time than any of the promoters of the work anticipated. The time has been consumed chiefly in two directions: first, with the larger articles, as those on AT, BY, BUT, BE, BEAR, BREAK, the construction of which has occupied many days, sometimes even weeks. The mere study of the result, arranged in some degree of order, gives little idea of the toil and difficulties encountered in bringing into this condition what was at first a shapeless mass of many thousand quotations. And in this part of the work there was practically no assistance to be got from the labours of our predecessors; the attempt has never been made before to exhibit such a combined logical and historical view of the sense-development of English words. Our own attempts lay no claim to perfection; but they represent the most that could be done in the time and with the data at our command. The other direction in which much time has been consumed is the elucidation of the meaning of obscure terms, sometimes obsolete, sometimes current, belonging to matters of history, customs, fashions, trade, or manufactures. In many cases, the only thing known about these was contained in the quotations, often merely allusive, which had been collected by the diligence of our readers. They were to be found in no dictionary, or, if mentioned in some, were explained in a way which our quotations evidently showed to be erroneous. The difficulty of obtaining first-hand and authoritative information about these has often been immense, and sometimes insurmountable. Ten, twenty, or thirty letters have sometimes been written to persons who, it was thought, might possibly know, or succeed in finding out, something definite on the subject; and often weeks have passed, and 'copy' advanced into the state of 'proof', 'proof' into 'revised', and 'revised' even into 'final', before any results could be obtained. It is incredible what labour has had to be expended, sometimes, to find out the facts for an article which occupies not more than five or six lines; or even to be able to write the words 'Derivation unknown', as the net outcome of hours of research and of testing the statements put forth without hesitation in other works. These experiences have often called to mind the classical words in which Dr. Johnson recounts in his Preface his similar difficulties: "When first I engaged in this work, I resolved to leave neither words nor things unexamined, and pleased myself with a prospect of the hours which I should revel away in feasts of literature, with the obscure recesses of northern learning which I should enter and ransack; the treasures with which I expected every search into those neglected mines to reward my labour, and the triumph with which I should display my acquisitions to mankind. When I had thus enquired into the original of words, I resolved to show likewise my attention to things; to pierce deep into every science, to enquire the nature of every substance of which I inserted the name, to limit every idea by a definition strictly logical, and exhibit every production of art or nature in an accurate description, that my book might be in place of all other dictionaries whether appellative or technical. But these were the dreams of a poet doomed at last to wake a lexicographer. I soon found that it is too late to look for instruments, when the work calls for execution, and that whatever abilities I had brought to my task, with those I must finally perform it. To deliberate whenever I doubted, to enquire whenever I was ignorant, would have protracted the undertaking without end, and, perhaps, without much improvement; for I did not find by my first experiments, that what I had not of my own was easily to
be obtained: I saw that one enquiry only gave occasion to another, that book referred to book, that to search
was not always to find, and to find was not always to be informed; and that thus to pursue perfection, was,
like the first inhabitants of Arcadia, to chase the sun, which, when they had reached the hill where he seemed
to rest, was still beheld at the same distance from them. I then contracted my design, determining to
confide in myself, and no longer to solicit auxiliaries, which produced more incumbrance than assistance: by
this I obtained at least one advantage, that I set limits to my work, which would in time be ended, though
not completed."

If the present writer has been more successful than Dr. Johnson in finding what he searched for, it has
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NEW ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

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At . . . . Mr. G. A. Schrumph, B.A., London.
Atabal — Athy- } . . . . Mr. E. Gunthorpe, Sheffield.
Att- — Attenuate } . . . .
Aü — Az } . . . . Mr. A. Erlebach, B.A., Woodford.
Ba — Balse } . . . . Dr. Brackebusch, London.
Bar and derivatives } . . . . Mr. W. J. Ashley, M.A., Oxford.
Baron — Batful } . . . . Mr. Gunthorpe.
Beb — Becatch } . . . . Mr. W. M. Rossetti, London.
Because — Bedw- } . . . . Mr. G. L. Apperson, Wimbledon.
Bee — Behymn } . . . . Dr. Brackebusch.
Bel — Betrust- } . . . . Miss J. E. A. Brown, Further Barton, Cirencester.
Bic — Big } . . . . Mr. Gunthorpe.
Biga — Birt } . . . . The Rev. C. B. Mount.
Birth — Bitten } . . . . Mr. Apperson.
Bla — Blame } . . . . The Rev. C. B. Mount.
Bo — Bolster } . . . . Miss J. E. A. Brown.
Boo (all) } . . . . Mr. Apperson.
Bow — Bowingness } . . . .
Bri — Brio } . . . . Mr. T. Henderson, M.A., Bedford County School.
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Brinie — Bristly } . . . .
Brist — Britz- } . . . . Mr. T. Henderson.
Brossch — Broadness } . . . . Mr. W. N. Woods.
Broil — Bronchus } . . . .
Broth — Brother } . . . . Mr. T. Henderson.
Bus — Byz- } . . . .

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After all the help which has been received, and which has contributed so much to the completeness of the Dictionary, the element of time still remains inexorable; it is still, as in the days of Dr. Johnson, imperative that limits be set to research, in order that the work may 'in time be ended, though not completed'. Accordingly, since the close of Volume I, it has been the aim of the Editor and his staff to maintain such a regular rate of progress as will ensure the production of one Part a year. As Mr. Henry Bradley (whose co-operation in the present volume is mentioned above) is now at work independently, with a staff of assistants, on a third volume, there is reasonable ground to expect that the production of the work henceforth will be twice as rapid as it has been hitherto.

JAMES A. H. MURRAY.

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