

GENERAL EXPLANATIONS

THE VOCABULARY

THE vocabulary of a widely diffused and highly cultivated living language is not a fixed quantity circumscribed by definite limits. That vast aggregate of words and phrases which constitutes the vocabulary of English-speaking people presents, to the mind that endeavours to grasp it as a definite whole, the aspect of one of those nebulous masses familiar to the astronomer, in which a clear and unmistakable nucleus shades off on all sides, through zones of decreasing brightness, to a dim marginal film that seems to end nowhere, but to lose itself imperceptibly in the surrounding darkness. In its constitution it may be compared to one of those natural groups of the zoologist or botanist, wherein typical species forming the characteristic nucleus of the order, are linked on every side to other species, in which the typical character is less and less distinctly apparent, till it fades away in an outer fringe of aberrant forms, which merge imperceptibly in various surrounding orders, and whose own position is ambiguous and uncertain. For the convenience of classification, the naturalist may draw the line which bounds a class or order outside or inside of a particular form; but Nature has drawn it nowhere. So the English vocabulary contains a nucleus or central mass of many thousand words whose 'Anglicity' is unquestioned; some of them only literary, some of them only colloquial, the great majority at once literary and colloquial—they are the *common words* of the language. But they are linked on every side with other words which are less and less entitled to this appellation, and which pertain ever more and more distinctly

to the domain of local dialect, of the slang and cant of 'sets' and classes, of the peculiar technicalities of trades and processes, of the scientific terminology common to all civilized nations, and of the actual languages of other lands and peoples. And there is absolutely no defining line in any direction: the circle of the English language has a well-defined centre but no discernible circumference.¹ Yet practical utility has some bounds, and a dictionary has definite limits: lexicographers must, like naturalists, 'draw the line somewhere', in each diverging direction. They must include all the 'common words' of literature and conversation, and such of the scientific, technical, slang, dialectal, and foreign words as are passing into common use and approach the position or standing of 'common words', well knowing that the line which they draw will not satisfy all their critics. For the domain of 'common words' widens out in the direction of one's own reading, research, business, provincial or foreign residence, and contracts in the direction with which one has no practical connection: no one's English is *all* English. The lexicographer must be satisfied to exhibit the greater part of the vocabulary of *each* one, which will be immensely more than the whole vocabulary of *any* one.

In addition to, and behind, the common vocabulary, in all its diverging lines, lies an infinite number of *proper* or merely *denotative* names, outside the province of lexicography, yet touching it in thousands of points, at which these names, and still more the adjectives and verbs formed upon them, acquire more or less of connotative value. Here also limits more or less arbitrary must be assumed.

The language presents yet another undefined frontier, when it is viewed in relation to *time*. The living vocabulary is no more permanent in its constitution than definite in its extent. It is not today what it was a century ago, still less what it will be a century hence. Its constituent elements are in a state of slow but incessant dissolution and renovation. 'Old words' are ever becoming obsolete and dying out; 'new words' are continually pressing in. And the death of a word is not an event of which the date can be readily determined. It is a vanishing process, extending over a lengthened period, of which contemporaries never see the end. Our own words never become obsolete: it is always the words of our grandfathers that have died with them. Even after we cease to use a word, the memory of it survives, and the word itself survives as a possibility;

touches on one side the technical terminology of trades and occupations, as in 'nautical slang', 'Public School slang', 'the slang of the Stock Exchange', and on another passes into true dialect. Dialects similarly pass into foreign languages. Scientific terminology passes on one side into purely foreign words, on another it blends with the technical vocabulary of art and manufactures. It is not possible to fix the point at which the 'English language' stops, along any of these diverging lines.



¹ The above diagram will explain itself, as an attempt to express to the eye the aspect in which the vocabulary is here presented, and also some of the relations of its elements typical and aberrant. The centre is occupied by the 'common' words, in which literary and colloquial usage meet. 'Scientific' and 'foreign' words enter the common language mainly through literature; 'slang' words ascend through colloquial use; the 'technical' terms of crafts and processes, and the 'dialect' words, blend with the common language both in speech and literature. Slang also

it is only when no one is left to whom its use is still possible, that the word is wholly dead. Hence, there are many words of which it is doubtful whether they are still to be considered as part of the living language; they are alive to some speakers, and dead to others. And, on the other hand, there are many claimants to admission into the recognized vocabulary (where some of them will certainly one day be received), that are already current coin with some speakers and writers, and not yet 'good English', or even not English at all, to others.

If we treat the division of words into current and obsolete as a subordinate one, and extend our idea of the language so as to include all that has been English from the beginning, or from any particular epoch, we enter upon a department of the subject of which, from the nature of the case, our exhibition must be imperfect. For the vocabulary of past times is known to us solely from its preservation in written records; the extent of our knowledge of it depends entirely upon the completeness of the records, and the completeness of our acquaintance with them. And the farther back we go, the more imperfect are the records, the smaller is the fragment of the actual vocabulary that we can recover.

Subject to the conditions which thus encompass every attempt to construct a complete English Dictionary, the present work aims at exhibiting the history and signification of the English words now in use, or known to have been in use since the middle of the twelfth century. This date has been adopted as the only natural halting-place, short of going back to the beginning, so as to include the entire Old English or 'Anglo-Saxon' vocabulary. To do this would have involved the inclusion of an immense number of words, not merely long obsolete but also having obsolete inflexions, and thus requiring, if dealt with at all, a treatment different from that adapted to the words which survived the twelfth century. For not only was the stream of English literature then reduced to the tiniest thread (the slender annals of the Old English or Anglo-Saxon Chronicle being for nearly a century its sole representative), but the vast majority of the ancient words that were destined not to live into modern English, comprising the entire scientific, philosophical, and poetical vocabulary of Old English, had already disappeared, and the old inflexional and grammatical system had been levelled to one so essentially modern as to require no special treatment in the Dictionary. Hence, we exclude all words that had become obsolete by 1150. But to words actually included this date has no application; their history is exhibited from their first appearance, however early.

Within these chronological limits, it is the aim of the Dictionary to deal with all the common words of speech and literature, and with all words which approach these in character; the limits being extended farther in the domain of science and philosophy, which naturally passes into that of literature, than in that of slang or cant, which touches the colloquial. In scientific and technical terminology, the aim of the first edition was to include *all words English in form*, except those of which an explanation would be unintelligible to any but the specialist; and such words, not English in form, as either were in general use, like *hippopotamus*, *geranium*, *aluminium*, *focus*, *stratum*, *bronchitis*, or belonged to the

more familiar language of science, as *Mammalia*, *Lepidoptera*, *Invertebrata*. The policy governing the selection of the scientific terms included in the *Supplement* and added to this edition is considerably broader:

Lexicographers are now confronted with the problem of treating the vocabularies of subjects that are changing at a rate and on a scale not hitherto known. The complexity of many scientific subjects is such too that it is no longer possible to define all the terms in a manner that is comprehensible to the educated layman.²

The inclusion of Latin generic names of plants or animals depends on the quantity of evidence found for the use of the word in an English context as the name of an individual and not as the name of a genus. Names of groups above generic level are included only in their anglicized forms, when sufficient evidence for these forms could be traced: thus *dytiscid* has an entry but *Dytiscidae* has not.

Down to the fifteenth century the language existed only in dialects, all of which had a literary standing: during this period, therefore, words and forms of all dialects are admitted on an equal footing into the Dictionary. Dialectal words and forms which occur since 1500 are not admitted, except when they continue the history of a word or sense once in general use, illustrate the history of a literary word, or have themselves a certain literary currency, as is the case with many modern Scottish words.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE VOCABULARY

For the purposes of treatment in this Dictionary, words and phrases are classed as: (1) main words, (2) subordinate words, (3) combinations, (4) derivatives. **Main words** comprise (1) single words, radical or derivative (e.g. *an*, *amphitheatrically*), (2) all those compound words (and phrases) which, from their meaning, history, or importance claim to be treated in separate articles (e.g. *afternoon*, *almighty*, *almsman*, *air-pump*, *aitch-bone*, *ale-house*, *forget-me-not*, *Adam's apple*, *all fours*), (3) important prefixes, suffixes, and combining forms which may give rise to large numbers of derivatives and compound words. The articles in which these are treated constitute the *main articles*. **Subordinate words** include variant and obsolete forms of main words, and such words of bad formation, doubtful existence, or alleged use, as it is deemed proper, on any ground, to record. The *main* and *subordinate* words are arranged in a single alphabetic series, distinguished simply by the treatment accorded them within the article; but articles dealing with spurious words are enclosed within square brackets. **Combinations**, when so simple as either to require no explanation, or to be capable of being briefly explained in connection with their cognates, are dealt with under the main words which form their first element, their treatment forming the concluding part of the main article. Similarly, such **derivatives** of a main word as do not by their frequency or complexity warrant a separate article are normally treated in an unnumbered paragraph following all the numbered sense sections of the main word, introduced by 'Hence', 'So', or 'Also'. Occasionally these will be found appended to an individual, num-

² 'Scientific terms', *Supplement*, Volume I, p. xix.

bered sense section and treated as part of that section for the purposes of exemplification.

MAIN WORDS

Every main word is treated, once for all, under its modern current or most usual spelling; or, if obsolete, under the most typical of its latest spellings; the form or spelling thus chosen being considered the *main form* of the word.

Occasionally a form or spelling of an obsolete word has been assumed, which is not actually found in the quotations adduced, but is in accordance with the usual analogies of the language, as seen in kindred words. Thus *annoyously* is given as the main form, on the analogy of *annoy*, *annoyous*, although only *anoyously* has actually been found.

Other important forms of each word, current or obsolete, are entered in their alphabetical order, as *subordinate words*, and are there concisely referred to the *main form* under which they are treated.

When a word which is historically one has different grammatical relations, it is treated as one word only, and the different relations are indicated by the division of the article into sections (marked **A**, **B**, **C**). This refers especially to substantives used also *attributively* (or *adjectivally*), as in 'an ounce of *gold*, a *gold* watch, *gold*-coloured scales'; to adjectives used *substantively* or *pronominally*, as in 'the *catholic* church, a good *catholic*; *that* book, *that* is mine, the words *that* he spoke'; to adjectives used adverbially, as in 'the *according* voice of national wisdom', 'he acted *according* to orders'; to adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions, originally the same word, as ABOUT, AFTER, SINCE, AS; and of course *a fortiori* to verbs used *transitively* and *intransitively*, as 'to abide battle, to abide at home', which, in some dictionaries, are reckoned as two distinct words.

In this Dictionary, *transitive* and *intransitive* seldom appear even as leading divisions of a verb, but, in accordance with the actual history of the word, in most cases only as varying and often temporary constructions, subordinate to the different senses, and liable to pass one into the other in the development of the language. Thus a verb at one time intransitive finally takes a simple object, through the phonetic decay of a dative or genitive ending, or the elision of a preposition, and is accounted transitive, without any change either in form or meaning (e.g. ANSWER); and a verb used transitively, likewise without change of meaning and form, at length becomes intransitive, through the regular modern English suppression of the reflexive pronoun (e.g. Ezek. 20:22 I *withdrew* mine hand; Mark 3:7 Jesus *withdrew* himself to the sea; *Revised Version*, Jesus *withdrew* to the sea). The history of ANSWER or WITHDRAW would be misrepresented by splitting them each into two words, or even by classifying their senses in a manner which would conceal these historical relations.

But verbs uniform in their stems with substantives or adjectives, as LAND, TO LAND, DRY, TO DRY, ABSTRACT, TO ABSTRACT, are, of course, distinct words; as are adjectives and adverbs which, through 'levelling' of terminations, have become identical in form, though originally distinct, as ALIKE *a.*, ALIKE *adv.*; and substantives and adjectives which have always been identical in form,

but were of separate introduction into the language, and have separate histories, as ANIMAL *sb.*, ANIMAL *a.* Where a word originally one has been, in the course of its history, split into two, whether with distinction of sense, as ALSO, AS, or merely as synonyms, as ANT, EMMET; APPRENTICE, PRENTICE, both modern forms are treated as separate words, and there is a reference from one article to the other. Where two original words of identical or similar form have coalesced into one, the modern word is treated as one or two, according to practical utility. When they are treated as two words, these come, of course, immediately together: see ALLAY, ALLOW, AMICE.

The treatment of a Main Word comprises:

I. The **identification**, II. The **etymology**, III. The **signification**, IV. The **illustrative quotations**.

I. The **identification** includes:

1. The *main form*, i.e. the usual or typical spelling, as already described. (In certain cases where two spellings are in current use, both are given in the main form, as ANALYSE -YZE, COLOUR COLOR, INFLECTION INFLEXION.) Words believed to be *obsolete* are distinguished by prefixing †; *non-naturalized* or *partially naturalized* words, by ||.

In the case of rare words, especially those adopted or formed from Latin equivalents, it is often difficult to say whether they are or are not obsolete. They are permanent possibilities, rarely needed, but capable of being used whenever they are needed, rather than actually discarded terms. To these and other words, of which the obsolescence is doubtful, the † is not prefixed.

As to their citizenship in the language, words may be classed as *naturals*, *denizens*, *aliens*, and *casuals*. NATURALS include all *native* words like *father*, and all fully *naturalized* words like *street*, *rose*, *knapsack*, *gas*, *parasol*. DENIZENS are words fully naturalized as to use, but not as to *form*, *inflection*, or *pronunciation*, as *aide-de-camp*, *locus*, *carte-de-visite*, *table d'hôte*. ALIENS are names of foreign objects, titles, etc., which we require often to use, and for which we have no native equivalents, as *shah*, *geyser*, *cicerone*, *targum*, *backsheesh*, *se-poy*. CASUALS are foreign words of the same class, not in habitual use, which for special and temporary purposes occur in books of foreign travel, letters of foreign correspondents, and the like. There are no fixed limits between these classes, and the constant tendency is for words to pass upwards from the last to the first. But, while casuals and aliens from unfamiliar languages are readily and quickly naturalized, words from French and the learned languages, especially Latin, which are assumed to be known to all the polite, are often kept in the position of denizens for centuries: we still treat *phenomenon* as Greek, *genus* as Latin, *aide-de-camp* as French. The words marked with || in the Dictionary comprise *denizens* and *aliens*, and such *casuals* as approach, or formerly approached, the position of these. Opinions will differ as to the claims of some that are included and some that are excluded, and also as to the line dividing *denizens* from *naturals*, and the position assigned to some words on either side of it. If we are to distinguish these classes at all, a line must be drawn somewhere.

2. (Within parentheses) the *pronunciation* or symbolization of the actual existing form of the word, as explained below. A recognized difference of pronunciation is also shown, with occasional notes on the diversity. Of obsolete words usually no pronunciation is given, but the place of the stress or accent, when ascertained, is indicated by a stress mark (') before the stressed syllable, as *al'feres*, *'anredly*. In partially naturalized words two pronunciations are often given, viz. the native (or what passes for the native), and one conformed more or less to English analogies; in actual use many intermediate varieties may be heard, cf. *rendezvous*, *envelope*, *environs*, *prestige*, *chignon*, *recitative*, *Koran*, *caviare*, and the like.

Being the delimiters both of phonetic notation and of notes about usage and variation, the parentheses are not strictly equivalent to the pairs of oblique strokes conventionally used in technical works to mark off phonetic transcriptions.

3. The *grammatical designation*, i.e. the part of speech, or subdivision of the same, as *pers. pron.*, *vbl. sb.* See the list of abbreviations. Words having no grammatical designation are normally *substantives*: the letters *sb.* are employed only where required to avoid ambiguity.

4. (a) In words of more or less specific use, the *specification* or subject label, as *Mus.* (in Music), *Bot.* (in Botany), etc.

(b) The *variety* of English, when the word is not current in the standard English of Great Britain, as *U.S.*, *N. Amer.*, *Austral.*, etc.

(c) The *status*, where there is any peculiarity, as *Obs.* (obsolete), *arch.* (archaic or obsolescent), *colloq.* (colloquial), *dial.* Here also is added, when applicable, the epithet *rare*, with ⁻¹, or ⁻⁰, indicating that only *one*, or *no* actual instance of the use of the word in context is known to us. Words apparently employed only *for the nonce*, are, when inserted in the Dictionary, marked *nonce-wd.*

5. (a) The principal earlier *forms* or spellings, with their chronological range indicated by the unit figure of the century, thus 3-6 = 13th to 16th cent.; 1 standing for all centuries down to 1100.

These figures also correspond broadly to distinct periods of the language; viz. 1 *Old English* or 'Anglo-Saxon'; 2 (12th c.) *Old English Transition* ('semi-Saxon'); 3 (13th c.) *Early Middle English*; 4 (14th c.) *Late Middle English*; 5 (15th c.) *Middle English Transition*; 6 (16th c.) *Early Modern* or *Tudor English*; 7 (17th c.) *Middle Modern English*; 8, 9, 20 (18th, 19th, and 20th c.) *Recent English*.

(b) The *inflections*, i.e. plural of substantives, and principal parts of verbs, when other than the ordinary *-s*, *-ed*.

II. The *etymology* and *form-history* [within heavy square brackets] includes: 1. The *derivation*, showing

the actual origin of the word, when ascertained. In some cases, this section also contains: 2. The *subsequent form-history* in English, when this presents special features, as phonetic change, contraction, corruption, perversion by popular etymology or erroneous association. 3. *Miscellaneous facts* as to the history of the word, its age, obsolescence, revival, refashioning, change of pronunciation, confusion with other words.

In the light of *historical etymology*, an English word is (1) the extant formal representative, or direct phonetic descendant, of an earlier word; that is to say, it is the earlier word itself, in a later or more recent form, as it has been unconsciously changed in the mouths of the successive generations that have used it. For example, ACRE (now really 'eikə(r)), formerly *aker*, is the extant form of Old English *æcer*, this the later form of prehistoric *æcr*, the special English form of *acr*, *akr*, this of West Germanic *akra*, this, through earlier *akra-z*, or Original Germanic *akro-z*, this of original Aryan or Indo-European *agro-s*; and *agros*, *akroz*, *akraz*, *akra*, *akr*, *æcr*, *æcer*, *aker*, *āker*, *acre* ('eikə(r)), are all merely successive and temporary forms of one and the same word, as employed during successive periods. The word has never died; no year, no day probably, has passed without its being uttered by many: but this constant use has so worn it down and modified its form, that we commonly look upon *acre* as a distinct word from *agros*, with which it is connected by many intermediate forms, of which only a few have been discriminated in writing, while the finer and more intimately connecting links have never been written. This *phonetic descent* is symbolized by (:—); thus ACRE:—OE. *æcer*.

If not the extant formal representative of an original Germanic word, an English word has been (2) *adopted* (a.), or (3) *adapted* (ad.), from some foreign language; i.e. it is a word once foreign, but now, without or with intentional change of form, used as English; or it has been (4) *formed* on or from (f.) native or foreign elements, or from a combination of them. *Adoption* is essentially a popular process, at work whenever the speakers of one language come into contact with the speakers of another, from whom they acquire foreign things, or foreign ideas, with their foreign names. It has prevailed in English at all periods from the earliest to the latest times: *inch*, *pound*, *street*, *rose*, *cat*, *prison*, *algebra*, *antic*, *orange*, *tobacco*, *tea*, *canoe*, *focus*, *meerschaum*, are adopted words. *Adaptation* is essentially a learned or literary process; it consists in adapting a foreign word to the 'analogies of the language', and so depriving it of its foreign termination. Examples are Latin or Greek words reduced to their stem form, or receiving recognized English endings. Latin words which lived on in Gaul there underwent regular phonetic changes, whereby they at length became 'French'; in this living French form they were adopted in Middle English; but in more recent times numerous Latin words have been taken into English directly, yet modified, in their terminations, in the same way as if they had lived on in French and been thence adopted into English.³ Such

... Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
For Frenssh of Parys was to hire vnknowe:

for the Anglo-French dialect of the fourteenth century was

³ The French words adopted before 1400 were generally taken from the Anglo-French, or French spoken for several centuries in England, where they had undergone further phonetic change. It was in strict conformity with linguistic facts that Chaucer told of his *Prioress*:

English words originate in an *adaptation* of the Latin original, not in an adoption of its French (or other Romance) extant representative. *Formation* consists in the combination of existing words or parts of words with each other, or with *living formatives*, i.e. syllables which no longer exist as separate words, but yet have an appreciable *signification* which they impart to the new product. Formation is the chief natural process by which the vocabulary of a language is increased. It is both popular and learned: in its popular application, it gives such words as *black-bird*, *shep-herd*, *work-er*, *high-ness*, *grand-ly*, *a-swim*, *be-moan*, *after-noon*; in learned application, such as *con-caten-ation*, *mono-petal-ous*, *chloro-phyl*, *tele-phone*; in a mixture of the two, such as *acknowledge-ment*, *lion-ize*, *starv-ation*, *betroth-al*.

Much of the terminology of modern science is identical, or as nearly so as the forms of the languages permit, in English and French, in English, French, and German, or sometimes even in most of the European languages. It would often be as difficult as useless to ascertain in which language a particular scientific term first appeared in print, this being, linguistically, a mere accident: the word was accepted as common property from the beginning. In such cases, *modern formation* (mod. f.) is frequently employed to intimate that it is uncertain in what modern language, English or continental, the word was first used; it may indeed have occurred first in some modern Latin work, either of English or foreign authorship. In the supplementary scientific articles added to this edition, the first use has been ascertained whenever possible and appears as the first example in the set of illustrative quotations. If a word was first coined in some other language before being adopted into English, details of the foreign coinage (when traceable) are provided in the etymology. All such foreign coinages have been verified at source since it sometimes happens that the details provided in specialized bibliographies and reference works are inaccurate. Details of the coinages of plant and animal names are provided in the normal way. When, however, the first use of a term preceded the date accepted as the starting-point for the valid nomenclature of the group involved, a reference to the first valid use is added in the etymology.

Phonetic descent (:—), *adoption* (a.), *adaptation* (ad.), *word-formation* (f.) are usually combined under the term *derivation*; but, until we know in which of them, singly or in combination, a word has originated, we do not know its etymology.

In this Dictionary, words originally native are traced

not only from Parisian, but from all dialects of continental French. In its origin a mixture of various Norman and other Northern French dialects, afterwards mixed with and greatly modified by Angevin, Parisian, Poitevin, and other elements, and more and more exposed to the overpowering influence of literary French, it had yet received, on this side of the Channel, a distinct and independent development, following, in its phonology especially, English and not continental tendencies. As the natural speech of the higher and educated classes, it died out in the fourteenth century; but it maintained a kind of artificial existence for a longer period, and was used (in an increasingly debased form) for writing law-reports down to the seventeenth century, in which stage it still influenced the spelling of

to their earliest known English, and, when possible, to their earliest Germanic form, authenticated and illustrated by the cognate words in other Germanic languages and dialects; those of foreign origin are referred to the foreign word or elements whence they were immediately adopted or formed. In certain cases these foreign words, especially the French, are themselves traced to their antecedent forms or component elements; but these antecedents are considered only with a view to the clearer comprehension of the history and use of the word in English. To trace the remoter history of these words, and determine their Indo-European or other 'roots', is no part of their English history.

Of many words it has to be stated that their origin is either doubtful or altogether unknown. In such cases the historical facts are given, as far as they go, and their bearing occasionally indicated. But *conjectural etymologies* are rarely referred to, except to point out their agreement or disagreement with the historical facts; for these, and the full discussion which they require, the reader is referred to special treatises on etymology.

III. The **signification**, or *senses*. Some words have only one invariable signification; but most words that have been used for any length of time in a language have acquired a long and sometimes intricate series of significations, as the primitive sense has been gradually extended to include allied or associated ideas, or transferred boldly to figurative and analogical uses. This happens to a greater extent with *relational* words, as prepositions (cf. *about*, *after*, *against*, *and*, *anent*) than with *notional* words, as verbs and nouns; of these, also, it affects verbs and adjectives more than substantives; of substantives, it influences those which express actions, qualities, and mental conceptions (cf. *account*), more than those which name, and are, as it were, fixed to material objects. Yet even these latter have often acquired many different senses. Thus, *board* names a material object; yet compare: a thin *board*, a frugal *board*, a card-*board*, *board* and lodgings, passengers on *board*, to fall over *board*, to sit at the council *board*, a *board* school, the *Board* of Trade, to tread the *boards*, a sea-*board* parish.

The order in which these senses were developed is one of the most important facts in the history of the word; to discover and exhibit it are among the most difficult duties of a dictionary which aims at giving this history. If the historical record were complete, that is, if we possessed written examples of all the uses of each word from the beginning, the simple exhibition of these would display a rational or logical development. The

English words. Its forms survive in many of our terminations: *armour*, *colour*, *glorious*, *gracious*, *envious*, *perilous*, *arrival*, *espousal*, *language*, *enjoy*, *benefit*, *gaoler*, *caitiff*, are the actual Anglo-French forms, as distinct from those of continental Old and Modern French. As a rule, it may be assumed that the original form of every Middle English word of French origin was *identical* with the Anglo-French form; and that, where a gap appears between the earliest known English form of a word and its Old French equivalent, that gap would be filled up by the recovery of the Anglo-French and earliest English form. It was not until the fifteenth century, and chiefly at the hands of Caxton, that continental French forms and spellings began directly to influence our language.

historical record is not complete enough to do this, but it is usually sufficient to enable us to infer the actual order. In exhibiting this in the Dictionary, that sense is placed first which was actually the earliest in the language: the others follow in the order in which they appear to have arisen. As, however, the development often proceeded in *many* branching lines, sometimes parallel, often divergent, it is evident that it cannot be adequately represented in a single linear series. Hence, while the senses are numbered straight on 1, 2, 3, etc., they are also grouped under branches marked I, II, III, etc., in each of which the historical order begins afresh. Subdivisions of the senses, varieties of construction, etc., are marked a, b, c, etc.; subdivisions of these, used especially for sense-divisions under combinations and derivatives, (a), (b), (c), or (i), (ii), (iii), etc.

So far for words of which the senses have been developed in English itself. But in adopted or adapted words which had already acquired various significations in the language (e.g. Latin) from which they were taken, it often happens that the order in which the senses appeared in English does not agree with the natural order in which they were developed in the original language. The English order is in fact accidental. For it was not in the primary sense that the word was first taken into English, but in a figurative, transferred, or specialized use, as an ecclesiastical, legal, grammatical, or medical term, which perhaps took root in our language, and here received a development of its own. Subsequently, however, familiarity with the Latin language and literature sometimes led to a fresh adoption of the word in the primary sense, or to a sudden extension of English usage, so as to include the primary sense, which thus appears as of quite late origin in English. In such a case it is not possible to make the historical order of the senses in English agree with the logical order in which they arose in Latin or other previous language; and every such word must be treated in the way which seems best suited to exhibit the facts of its own history and use. Instances of such words are afforded by ADVENT, AGONY, ANNUNCIATION, APPEND.

Obsolete senses, like obsolete words, have † prefixed, so as to be at once distinguished from those now in use. Under ¶ are included *cataphrestic* and erroneous uses, confusions, and the like.

To a great extent the *explanations* of the meanings, or definitions, have been framed anew upon a study of all the quotations for each word collected for this work, of which those printed form only a small part. But the labours of other scholars in this, the most successfully cultivated department of English lexicography, have not been neglected. In particular, the explanations of Dr Johnson and of his editor Archdeacon Todd have often been adopted unchanged (within inverted commas and marked J. or T.), as have those of N. Bailey, and other early lexicographers, to whom it is only right to give credit for original work which has become the common property of all their successors.

IV. The **quotations** illustrate the forms and uses of the word, showing the age of the word generally, and of its various senses particularly; the earliest and, in obsolete words or senses, the latest, known instances of its

occurrence being always quoted. Except in special cases, where the letters of the Greek alphabet, α , β , γ , etc. are used to separate parallel forms, the illustration of the *forms* is subordinated to that of the *senses*: the quotations illustrating each sense immediately follow the explanation. They are arranged chronologically so as to give about one for each century, though various considerations often render a larger number necessary. The original spelling is retained, as an essential part of the history of the language. But merely graphical or typographical devices, such as contractions, erratic presence of capitals, and (in seventeenth-century books) employment of italics to emphasize words, phrases, or whole passages, are not reproduced; and simple blunders, which would mislead the reader, are tacitly corrected. The recent use of italics, to indicate a doubt about the status of a word, is retained as being often of historical importance.

As to letter, the Old and Middle English 'thorn' (θ = *th*) and Old English 'divided *d*' or 'edh' (δ ; usually only a variant of 'p', though sometimes distinguished) are retained; also ME. 'open-tailed *g*', or 'yogh' (\mathfrak{g} = *y* initially, *gh* finally). In Old English, the letter *g* had the form 'ȝ, ȝ' (a peculiar British development of the Roman G). Besides the original sound in *go*, *gild*, this letter had also (at least in later Old English) a fricative sound as in Dutch *dag*, or Irish *lough*, (or both), and a palatalized sound, approximately = *y* in *ye*, *yes*. After the Norman Conquest the modern forms 'g, g', were introduced (from French) for the sound in *go*, and the new sound in *ginger*; but the OE. form (in process of time slightly modified) was retained for the sounds in *lough*, *yes*, till the introduction of printing. In printing Old English modern scholars sometimes reproduce the contemporary 'ȝ, ȝ' (as is done by Sievers, in his *Angelsächsische Grammatik*), but more commonly substitute modern 'g, g'. The adoption of either course exclusively in this work would have broken the historical continuity of the forms; in the one case, we should have had the same word appearing in the eleventh century as 'ȝold', and in the twelfth century as 'gold'; in the other, the same word written in the eleventh century 'ge' and in twelfth century 'ȝe'. To avoid this, both forms are here used in Old English, in accordance with the Middle English distinction in their use; thus, 'gold', 'ȝe', 'dæg'. The reader will understand that 'g' and 'ȝ' represent the same Old English letter, and that the distinction made between them is purely editorial (though certainly corresponding to a distinction of sound in OE.). For ME. the form 'ȝ' commonly used in reprints is employed, so that OE. 'ȝe' becomes ME. 'ȝe', modern 'ye'; OE. 'ȝenoȝ, ȝenoh', ME. 'ynoȝ, inouȝ', mod. 'enough'.

It is to be distinctly borne in mind that the quotations are not merely examples of the fully developed use of the word or special sense under which they are cited: they have also to illustrate its origin, its gradual separation from allied words or senses, or even, by negative evidence, its non-existence at the given date. It would often have been desirable to annotate the quotations, explaining the purpose for which they are adduced; but the exigencies of space render this impossible, and they are therefore left to speak for themselves. Some help has been offered by enclosing within [...] quotations given for what may be called subsidiary purposes.

The need to keep the Dictionary within practicable limits has also rendered it necessary to give only a minimum of quotations selected from the material available, and to make those given as brief as possible. It is to be observed that in their abridged form they simply illustrate the word, phrase, or construction, for which they are given, and do not necessarily express the sentiments of their authors, though in no case have they been intentionally curtailed in such a way as to misrepresent their original meaning. This, however, may always be ascertained, and the full context recovered, by help of the *exact reference* to author, work, and passage, which it is a special feature of this work to give. Here also the utmost conciseness has been indispensable; the exact date renders the surnames only of authors in many cases sufficient; the titles of books are so abbreviated as to be recognizable by those who know them, or to be adequate for the purpose of reference to a library or bibliographical catalogue. The reader is referred to the List of Abbreviations (p. lxvi) for the expansion of those most commonly used in citing book titles; details of many of the works cited may be found in the Select Bibliography at the end of the Dictionary.

In order to allow consistent reference to cited works, an approximately uniform value has been given to different forms of numerals. Thus, in all works, roman capitals (IV.) stand for *volume*; small capitals (iv.) for *book, part*, or other larger division; lower-case letters (iv.) for *chapter* or its equivalent; and arabic numerals (42/1) for *page* and, where relevant, column. Other divisions, as *marginal section*—the most useful of references, since it is not dependent on the paging of a particular edition—are indicated by special marks. In the Essayists of the eighteenth century (*Spectator*, etc.), of which the editions are innumerable, the reference is to the paragraphs of each essay or number, counted for this purpose. In *poetry*, the reference iv. iv. 42 means *act, scene, line*; or *canto, stanza, line*, (rarely *book, canto, stanza*), as the work may be divided. In *Shakespeare* (where the reading is that of the First Folio, 1623) the lines of the Globe edition are referred to. In dramatic works, or other long poems, of which the lines are not numbered, the arabic numerals mean the *page* of the edition quoted. Single poems are, whenever possible, cited by *name and line*; in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, every edition of which has its own order and numbering, the only useful mode of reference was to number the lines of each piece, tale, or prologue, separately. As neither manuscripts nor editions agree as to the junction of the *Canon's Yeoman's Prologue and Tale*, the two have been reckoned as one piece. *Melibæus* and the *Parson's Tale* are referred to by the versicles as divided in the Six-text edition, but numbered separately. In many works, both prose and verse, the only available reference has been to the *volume and page of a specified edition*, which is thus indicated, 'Wks. 1802, III. 178'.

Whenever practicable, a work is dated and quoted from its first edition: if the reference is to a later edition (as has been often unavoidable), the date of this is added (within parentheses) to the reference.⁴ It is necessary to be precise on this point, for later editions often change

the spelling: hence, a quotation from them is valid for the use of the word, but not for its spelling, at the date assigned. In the first edition of this Dictionary, reasonable accuracy was attained in dates and references: in the former, absolute accuracy was in many cases impossible, and, for the purposes of this work, was not considered essential; in the latter, errors were inevitable in the work of so many years and so many readers.

The policy governing the supplementary quotations added to this edition is more rigorous with regard to the dating and verification of quotations; the bibliographical conventions stated here may stand for the ideal principles of the Dictionary as a whole. Quotations are normally taken from the earliest available printing of a work; where a later text has been used its date is given in parentheses after the title. Intentional exceptions can be found in often-quoted works whose first editions are rare; fuller details are shown in the Bibliography. Unverified quotations from secondary sources have an attribution in parentheses after the citation (e.g. Morris, Pettman, etc.).

The bold-face *date* is the date of first printing except for posthumous works. It is sometimes qualified by *c* (*circa*) or *a* (*ante* = before, not later than). The date of delivery of a lecture or production of a play is not normally accepted: the spoken word is dated by its first appearance in print. The date of composition is accepted, however, for dated letters, journals, and the like (of those which have not been written up for publication), but only exceptionally in other cases and only when there is good evidence for the date. Items in collections (e.g. of short stories) which were published earlier elsewhere are given this earlier date when it is known. It should be noted that these criteria are more severe and produce more conservative datings than those of many other reference works.

Author and title. This part of the citation is used first to identify the user of the quoted word, and secondly to identify the work from which a quotation is taken. Usually there is no conflict, but where there is the identification of the work takes precedence. Monographs are cited either by author and title or by title alone. Corporate authorship is not recognized: the names of institutions, business firms, etc., are not used in place of a personal name, but are added in parentheses at the end of titles. Periodicals and serials are cited by title (usually in abbreviated form); the authors of articles in periodicals are not usually named unless the quotation contains the first use of a word. The information given should be enough to identify the work, but occasionally it is not possible to give an unambiguous indication in the space available; in these cases the Bibliography gives a fuller account.

Form of name. Some frequently quoted authors are cited by surname alone; for most others the title-page of each work is the main authority, with deviations to allow for the standardization of initials where an author's own practice varies or for the purpose of avoiding ambiguity. Pseudonyms are indicated by single quotation marks (except that a few well-known pseudonyms like Geo. Eliot stand without the quotation marks), and authors who have changed their names are cited by the

⁴ In the case of some well-known and often-quoted works, where the reference is always to a standard edition or modern literal reprint, it was not thought necessary by the first edition's

editors to insert the date of it. Owing to the continual growth of literary and historical scholarship during and after their time, many of these are now no longer the most recent standard edition.

appropriate name for each work. Anonymous works are cited by title, but by author where the authorship has been established and is recognized in common practice. Small capitals usually denote the author of the quotation. The name of an editor of a work, who is not also the author of the actual quotation given, is normally printed in lower case. But quotations from many composite works have been attributed to the editors alone. Illustrative examples embodying typical recent usage of a word or sense, but not attributable to any exterior source, are introduced by the abbreviation 'Mod.', preceded, where necessary, by a date, which is that of the fascicle of the first edition in which they were first printed.

SUBORDINATE WORDS

Under this head are here included: 1. (and mainly) *Obsolete* and *variant forms* of words, when these are so far removed in spelling as not to come closely before or after the regular forms, or readily to suggest them. These words are concisely referred to the main form to which they belong, with an explanatory synonym when the latter is itself obsolete; as **almacantar**, **-urie**, obs. ff. (= obsolete forms of) **ALMUCANTAR**; **abugge**, obs. w. and s.w.f. (= obsolete western and south-western form of) **ABYE** *v.*; **almoise**, **-moyse**, var. (= variant of) **ALMOISE**, *Obs.*, alms. To economize space, variant forms which differ from the regular form only in the doubling of a single consonant or the converse, as *appert* for **APERT**, *apple* for **APPLE**, or in the interchange of *u, v* or *i, j*, are not usually inserted. 2. *Irregular* or *peculiar inflexions* of Main Words. 3. Spurious or erroneous forms found in Dictionaries, or cited from single passages in authors, but having little or no claim to recognition as genuine constituents of the English vocabulary: their character is pointed, and their history briefly given. Entries for spurious words are enclosed in square brackets.

COMBINATIONS

Under this term are included all collocations of simple words in which the separate spelling of each word is retained, whether they are formally connected by the hyphen, or virtually by the unity of their signification. The formal union and the actual by no means coincide: not only is the use of the hyphen a matter of indifference in an immense number of cases, but in many where it is habitually used, the combination implies no unity of signification; while others, in which there is a distinct unity or specialization of meaning, are not hyphenated. The primary use of the hyphen is *grammatical*: it implies either that the syntactic relation between two words is closer than if they stood side by side without it, or that the relation is a *less usual* one than that which would at first sight suggest itself to us, if we saw the two words standing unconnected. Thus, in the three sentences, '*After consideration* had been given to the proposal, it was duly accepted', '*After consideration* the proposal was accepted', '*After-consideration* had shown him his mistake', we have *first* no immediate syntactic relation between *after* (conjunctive adverb) and *consideration*; *secondly*, the relation of preposition and object; *thirdly*, the relation of attribute and substantive,

closer than the first, less usual than the second (since *after* is more commonly a preposition than an adjective). But *after-consideration* is not really a single word, any more than *subsequent consideration*, *fuller consideration*; the hyphen being merely a convenient help to the sense, which would be clearly expressed in speech by the different phrase-accentuation of *after consider'ation* and *'after consid'e,ration*. And as this 'help to the sense' is not always equally necessary, nor its need equally appreciated in the same place, it is impossible that its use should be uniform. Nevertheless *after-consideration*, as used above, is on the way to becoming a single word, which *reconsideration* (chiefly because *re-* is not a separate word, but also because we have *reconsider*) is reckoned to be; and indeed *close grammatical relation* constantly accompanies close union of sense, so that in many combinations the hyphen becomes an expression of this unification of sense. When this unification and specialization has proceeded so far that we no longer analyse the combination into its elements, but take it in as a whole, as in *blackberry*, *postman*, *newspaper*, pronouncing it in speech with a single accent, the hyphen is usually omitted, and the fully developed compound is written as a single word. But as this also is a question of degree, there are necessarily many compounds as to which usage has not yet determined whether they are to be written with the hyphen or as single words. Many specialized combinations, indeed, are often not even hyphenated: especially is this the case with *descriptive names*, formed of a substantive preceded by an adjective or possessive case, or followed by a phrase, as *Aaron's rod*, *all fours*, *Black Jack*, *Jack of all trades*, *Jew's harp*, *sea anemone*.

There is thus considerable difficulty in determining to what extent combinations are matters for the lexicographer, and to what extent they are merely grammatical. While no attempt is made fully to solve this difficulty, combinations formal and virtual are, for practical purposes, divided into three classes: *First*: those in which each word retains its full meaning, the relation between them falling under one or other of the ordinary grammatical categories. Of these, specimens merely are given, at the end of each article, which are printed in heavy italics, and illustrated collectively by a few quotations. *Second*: Combinations of which the signification is somewhat specialized, but still capable of being briefly explained in a few words, in connection with their cognates. These also are concisely treated at the end of the main article, where they are printed in small, dark bold type in an alphabetical series, and illustrated by quotations arranged in the same order. When these are very numerous the first usage of the word illustrated is typically distinguished in the quotation by prefixing *, in order that it may catch the eye more readily. *Third*: Combinations which attain in specialization of sense to the position of full compounds or which are used in various senses, or have a long history, and thus require to be dealt with more at large. These are often enumerated (in SMALL CAPITALS) at the end of the main article, and thence referred to their alphabetical place, where they are treated in all respects as main words.

All compounds and combinations of interest or importance will thus be found either in their alphabetical

order, or under the word which constitutes their first element. But phrases are treated under their leading word, as *on account of*, under ACCOUNT; and specific names, like *sea anemone*, *black alder*, under their generic names ANEMONE, ALDER, etc. *Sea anemone* is considered (linguistically) as a kind of *anemone*, but *Adam's needle* not as a kind of *needle*, nor *mouse-ear* as a kind of *ear*.

DERIVATIVES

This term is used for any word which has been formed by the addition of a suffix to a main word also treated in this Dictionary (also, more rarely, by the alteration or removal of the suffix of a main word). Derivatives may be regarded as occupying a half-way position between, on the one hand, combinations (arising out of syntactical relationships between words determined chiefly by their semantic reference) and, on the other, inflected forms (whose existence and form, with the exception in English of a limited set of irregular inflexions, are predetermined by the system of grammar). In other words, a very considerable number of the derivatives recorded are predictable and transparent: as, for example, the many adverbs formed by the addition of *-ly* from adjectives, the similarly derived abstract nouns in *-ness*, and the agent-nouns in *-er*, most of which are thrown up by syntactic transformations. So 'he is insufficiently motivated', 'a fashioner of sonnets', 'the coolness of our reception' are closely linked with 'his motivation is insufficient', 'to fashion sonnets', 'we had a cool reception'. On the very borderline with the inflexional system lie the verbal substantives and participial adjectives, ending in *-ing* and *-ed*, which are indistinguishable in form, and often in function also, from the corresponding gerunds and participles. At the other end of the scale there are small groups of derivatives incorporating uncommon suffixes, which have emerged or have been coined in much the same way as combinations (with which, indeed, they may be interchangeable). At the extreme, we find slang and journalistic formations such as those ending in *-ville* (*Squaresville*) or *-aholic* (*workaholic*), which resemble combinations in their *raison d'être*.

The necessity for the separate treatment of those derivatives which are actually homomorphic with regular inflected forms, such as the verbal substantives and participial adjectives, or whose incidence is so regular and natural as to amount almost to the status of inflexion, such as the adverbs formed with *-ly* or agent-nouns in *-er*, might almost be denied, on the grounds that the senses of the derivative are deducible from those of the parent word. But in fact the occurrence of even the obviously formed derivatives, and the relationships of their senses with the root words, is very often unpredictable and complex; and the suffixes by which they are formed cannot be tidily separated into two groups, according to whether their application is transparent and regular or not. It is, therefore, the practice of the Dictionary to register every recorded derivative, and to accord it such treatment as its own meaning and use necessitate. The majority of derivatives entered in the Dictionary will be found as main words in their own right, but linked through the cross-references employed in their etymologies, and frequently also in

their definitions, to the main words on which they are formed.

Derivatives which are of infrequent occurrence, or which have only one sense, or only a few senses straightforwardly related to those of the root word, are usually treated in a separate paragraph at the end of the article for the parent word. They are printed in the same small, dark bold type as combinations, and are usually introduced by 'Hence' (signifying formation on, and chronological succession to, the root word), 'So' (implying derivation but not posteriority), or 'Also' (occasionally used to connect parallel derivatives when no parent word has been traced). This arrangement has the great merit that whatever information about the pronunciation, variations in form, and etymology is common to the derivative and its parent word need not be repeated. Further conciseness is sometimes achieved by the appending of derivatives at the end of the definition of the root word in an article that has only one sense-division. From time to time, a derivative that has arisen in only one sense of a complex main word is treated under that sense-division.

ORDERING OF ENTRIES

Entries are arranged in the Dictionary in the alphabetical order of their headwords. Alphabetization is based strictly upon the twenty-six letters of the standard English alphabet. An initial capital letter is treated as in no way distinct from a small one. The spacing within a headword consisting of two or more written words is disregarded. Hence, for example, the sequence of headwords *all-rounder*, *All Saints*, *allseed*, *All Souls*, *allspice*.

In a similar way, all characters and symbols that are not among the twenty-six letters are either disregarded, or treated like the alphabetical letters or combinations to which they are most nearly equivalent. Apostrophes, full points, hyphens, and spaces occurring anywhere within the headword are disregarded: hence, for the sake of ordering, *p'an* is equivalent to *pan*, *met*, to *met*, and *co-op* to *coop*. Diacritical accents are also ignored: so *cañon* is equivalent to *canon*, *korin* to *kōrin*. The ligatures *æ* and *œ*, naturally enough, are alphabetized as if written *ae*, *oe*; *ø* as simple *o*; 'thorn' (*þ*) and 'edh' (*ð*) are treated as equivalent to *th*; and 'yogh' (*ȝ*) as equivalent to *gh*.

Pairs of parentheses, enclosing optional letters, are ignored. A single opening parenthesis, marking off the last letter or letters of a word, functions in a way that is counter to the general rule: the letters following the opening parenthesis are disregarded for the purpose of ordering. So *anachoret(e)* precedes *anachoretal*. The most typical function of this convention is to mark off a final silent *-e* that has little historical significance.

Headwords with the same spelling (*homographs*), including those rendered equivalent by the conventions just described, are normally ordered according to grammatical category. Prefixes and suffixes are labelled as such and treated as separate grammatical categories. Combining forms, though lacking a special label, are similarly treated. Variant and obsolete forms (subordinate words), and written or spoken abbreviations entered as main words, have likewise no special label, but are commonly treated as members of separate grammatical categories.

There is no absolutely fixed order in which grammatical categories are arranged. All other things being equal, the major grammatical categories of noun (*substantive* in the Dictionary's terminology), adjective, verb, and adverb, precede, in that order, the minor ones; but the ordering very frequently departs from this general principle, especially where a group of etymologically related homographs is arranged in an order that reflects the historical development.

Identically spelt headwords that also belong to the same grammatical category are distinguished by following superior numbers ('*homonym numbers*') and are usually arranged in the order of their earliest occurrence. Entries that are not explicitly labelled with a part of speech, but are treated as distinct grammatical categories (such as variant forms and abbreviations), are distinguished by superior numbering from others of the same kind, and not necessarily from unlabelled entries of other kinds.

ORDERING OF SENSES

Eight kinds of serial symbol are employed to mark the sense-divisions of an entry, and less commonly, to classify the written variants of the headword, and each is, generally speaking, identified with particular functions. At the highest level, bold capital letters (**A**, **B**, **C**, etc.) divide into sections an entry treating a word that is used in more than one grammatical relation. The main senses of a word are identified by bold arabic numerals (**1**, **2**, **3**). Important subdivisions of these, reflecting either semantic, grammatical, or phraseological extensions of the sense, are identified by bold small letters (**a**, **b**, **c**). Italic letters within parentheses (*a*), (*b*), (*c*), are employed either to subdivide the last level of sense-distinction still more finely, or to categorize the senses of combinations, derivatives, and phrases. Very occasionally it is necessary to subdivide a definition introduced by an italic letter, and then lower-case roman numerals in parentheses (i), (ii), (iii), are introduced.

The main sense-divisions, and any subdivisions they may have, proceed in a single sequence within the entry, or one grammatical section of it; so the appearance of **B** will start a new sequence **1**, **2**, **3** or **a**, **b**, **c**. But senses which have developed along several different and parallel branches are arranged into groups headed by bold capital roman numerals (**I**, **II**, **III**) and these do not interrupt the numerical sequence of the main sense-divisions. If a lower level of branching needs to be recognized (in the arrangement of a particularly large and complicated word, for example), an increasing series of asterisks (*, **, ***) is used. These sometimes also occur as a means of grouping the uses of phrasal verbs.

Greek letters (α , β , γ) are used primarily to classify variant forms at the head of an entry. Sometimes the illustrative quotations are grouped according to the variant forms they illustrate, and in this case each group of quotations is introduced by the corresponding Greek letter. Certain words with an exceptionally complicated form-history are divided into sections, of which the first, headed **A**, illustrates the forms. This section has the usual framework, but with the numeral and lower-case roman letter sequences indicating the major and minor grammatical divisions and the Greek letters

indicating the main form-variations within each of them. If the word also has more than one grammatical relation, the signification (headed **B**) is divided into sections, headed (the capital letter series having already been appropriated) by bold capital roman numerals, each containing separate series of main senses introduced by arabic numerals.

PRONUNCIATION

The pronunciation is the actual living form or forms of a word, that is, *the word itself*, of which the current spelling is only a symbolization—generally, indeed, only the traditionally-preserved symbolization of an earlier form, sometimes imperfect to begin with, still oftener corrupted in its passage to our time. This living form is the *latest fact* in the form-history of the word, the starting-point of all investigations into its previous history, the only fact in its form-history to which the lexicographer can personally witness. For all his statements as to its previous history are only reproductions of the evidence of former witnesses, or deductions drawn from earlier modes of symbolizing the forms of the word then current, checked and regulated by the ascertained laws and principles of phonology. To register the current pronunciation is therefore essential, in a dictionary which deals with the language on historical principles. It would be manifestly absurd, for example, to trace the form-history of the first numeral from the Old Germanic *ain*, through the Old English *án*, to the Middle English *oan*, *on*, *oon*, *one*, and to stop short at the last of these, without recognizing the modern English (*wʌn*), which represents a greater change within the last three and a half centuries than had previously taken place in 1500 years. The fact that the *written* history, as embodied in the spelling, accidentally stops short at the Middle English *one*, makes it all the more necessary to give the modern history and current form of the living word, since of these no hint is otherwise conveyed.

The system of transcription employed in this edition is the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). It follows, in the main, the principles for transcribing English pronunciation used in other Oxford Dictionaries. The minor differences in style have been adopted in order to accommodate the phonetic representation of unassimilated foreign words, dialect and regional forms, and the reconstructed pronunciation of earlier English.

A list of the symbols employed in the transcription is provided in the Key to the Pronunciation (below, p. lxxv). The following features deserve special notice:

Consonants. The breathed (voiceless) pronunciation of the combination *wh*, used by many speakers of English, is represented by (hw). The possibility that 'linking *r*' may occur at the end of a word in which a final *r* is written, when the following word begins with a vowel-sound, is symbolized by ((r)), e.g. *her* (hɜ:(r)). Parentheses around other consonants, for example (j) in words like *suit*, (p) in words like *impromptu*, or (t) in words like *bench*, indicate that the enclosed sounds may or may not be heard in the context. A hyphen is used between (t) and (ʃ) belonging to separate word elements

(e.g. in *courtship*) in contradistinction to the affricative group (tʃ) that is usually written *ch*. Double consonants are shown by the doubling of the symbol.

Vowels and Diphthongs. The symbolization of the vowels of the principal foreign languages cited generally corresponds to the system of so-called 'cardinal vowels'. English 'short e' (as in *bet*) is treated as approximately equivalent to cardinal no. 3, and therefore symbolized by (ɛ). Following the first edition, the long open vowel (ɔ:) (as in *border*) is distinguished from the centring diphthong (ɔə) (as in *boarder*) which is of a different origin but has become identical with it in most varieties of southern British pronunciation. Length (symbolized by (:)) is shown in English words, in accordance with general present-day custom, even though most 'long' and 'short' vowels are identified and distinguished more by their place of articulation than by their duration, which varies in accordance with context. The distinction observed in this Dictionary between the 'long' close vowels (i:) and (u:) and the 'short' open vowels (ɪ) and (ʊ) in syllables with low stress should be understood in the light of this. Length is marked in words from foreign languages in which this is conventional. It is occasionally marked in French words (in which it is not strictly necessary) when these are felt to have become somewhat Anglicized. Nasalization is shown by the tilde (~). Parenthesized 'schwa' (ə) preceding the consonants (l), (m), or (n) indicates that these are, or may be pronounced as, syllabic consonants. Parentheses around any other vowel symbol indicate that it may or may not be heard in that context.

Alternative pronunciations. Alternative pronunciations

for a word are listed, set off by commas, and where necessary labelled. Parallels (||) indicate the non-naturalized pronunciation of the word. Older pronunciations are sometimes distinguished by 'formerly'; but no exhaustive analysis of the currency, frequency, or distribution of alternative pronunciations is implied by their ordering. An alternative pronunciation may be indicated simply by a transcription of that part of the word which is phonetically different, indicated by leading or following hyphens. The existence of a variant pronunciation with (æ) in many words which contain *a* (pronounced ɑ:) is indicated by adding -æ- (or æ-) after the main transcription. The (now fairly rare) variant pronunciation of *o* (usually ɒ) as (ɔ:) is indicated by a parallel convention.

Stress. The main stress is shown by a superior stress mark (ˈ) preceding the stressed syllable. Secondary stress is shown by an inferior stress mark (ˌ). Syllables can begin with a vowel, a single consonant, or as large a consonant group as would be articulable at the beginning of a word, but in certain words speakers actually make a syllable-division at a later point. Where stress is marked in ordinary graphic forms, the same general principles are observed, with certain allowances for English spelling. Any consonant combinations that make up only a single sound are treated as unbreakable (so *o'ccur*, *para'psychic* but *ac'cede*, *resig'nation*); single letters symbolizing consonant combinations are perforce unbreakable (so *e'xistence*). Sometimes the function of the stress-mark is to show that a word is a disyllable rather than the monosyllable it might otherwise appear to be, e.g. *higher* ('haɪə(r)) but *hire* (haɪə(r)); *'creat* but *treat*.