

A NEW ENGLISH DICTIONARY ON HISTORICAL PRINCIPLES.

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WHISKING—WILFULNESS.

BY

C. T. ONIONS, M.A. OXON., M.A. LOND.

PREFATORY NOTE.

IN this section of the Dictionary there are 582 Main words, 317 Special Combinations explained under these, 433 Obvious Combinations, and 546 Subordinate entries of obsolete or variant forms; in all 1878 words. Of the Main words 134 are marked † as obsolete, and 1 is marked || as alien or not fully naturalized.

Comparison with Johnson's and some other large dictionaries gives the following figures:—

	Johnson. 1755.	Cassell's 'Encyclopædic' and Suppl.	'Century' Dict. and Suppl.	Here.
Words recorded, <i>Whisking—Wilfulness</i>	119	737	1097	1878
Words illustrated by quotations	110	238	267	1366
Number of quotations	414	398	792	8156

In the corresponding portion of Richardson the quotations number 388.

This section is almost equally divided between *wh* and *wi* words. The former are somewhat in the preponderance and, as should be expected, comprise a number of the echoic, imitative, or onomatopœic formations characteristic of this part of the vocabulary, as *whisper*, *whiss*, *whist*, *whister*, *whistle*, *whither* vb., *whitter*, *whizz*, *whoo*, *whoop*, *whoosh*, *whrine*, *whurl*, *whutter*. But in both parts the chief articles deal with words that go back to the Old English period, viz. the interrogative words *whither*, *who* (*whom*, *whose*), *why*, and *white* (with its compounds making 40 columns), *whole* (14 columns), *whore*, *wide* (12 columns), *widow*, *wield*, *wife*, *wight* sb., *wild* (18 columns). Among these, beside the interrogatives, *white*, *whole*, *whore*, *widow*, and *wild* have interesting Indo-European relationships that can be established with greater or less certainty.

In the sphere of etymology, the words in respect of which a greater wealth of evidence can be shown than hitherto, or upon which fresh views are presented, are *whiting*, *whitlow*, *Whit Sunday*, *whitten*, *wholly*, *whorl*, *whort*, *whortle*(berry), *wich* (*wyck*), the several words *wick*, *wicked*, *wicker*, *wicket*, *width*, *wilder*, *wilderness*, *wile*. Among other articles of etymological interest, but concerned with words now mainly obsolete or dialectal, are *whit*, *wholve*, *whowball*, *whrine*, *wi*, *widdendream*, *widge*, *wifte*, *wig* sb.¹ and ², *wight* adj., *wike*, *wild bred*. *Whole*, *wide*, *wield*, and *wild* are conspicuous for the history of their sense-development. Of historical or antiquarian importance are several compounds of *white*, as *whitebait*, *whiteboy*, *whitecoat*, *whitefoot*, *white friar*, *White House*, *white rose*, *white staff*, *whitewash* (in bankruptcy); to these may be added *whist* sb.³, *whistling-shop*, *wickner*, *wild goose chase*.

Proper names are the source of *Whitechapel*, *Whitefieldian*, *Whitehead*² (torpedo), *Whitesmith*² (gooseberry), the two last being homographs of ordinary compounds of *white* with a common noun. There are a few aliens, e.g. *whiskyjohn*, *wickyup*, *wicopy*, and *wigwam* of North American origin.

ADDENDUM.

Whistle *v.* sense 9. *To go whistle*. Earlier instance:—1453-4 | anentis þe persoon of crist þat he lackid þe passioun of angir, he may
PECOCK *Folewer to Donet* 106 If eny man pretende so greet a curiosite | go whistle til he leerne bettir.