

In arguing from a theoretic standpoint against the doctrine of a primitive oligo- or monosyllabic stage of development in the Indo-European family of languages, the late M. Renan follows the same line of argument that Dr. Lieber adopted in support of holophrasis. M. Renan says (Origin of Language, seventh chapter):

"Another characteristic which the progress of comparative philology authorizes us to attribute to primitive language, as in general to creations of the primitive human mind, is the synthesis and exuberance of its forms. It is too often imagined that simplicity, which, relative to our analytic processes is anterior to complexity, is also anterior in the order of time. This is a vestige of the old usages of the scholastics and of the artificial method which logicians employ in psychology. \* \* \* Far from this beginning by analysis, the first act which it (the mind) proposes is, on the contrary, complex, obscure, synthetic; all is heaped together and indistinct. \* \* \* The idea is expressed at first with its entire *cortège* of determinatives and in a perfect unity. \* \* \*

"The history of different systems of conjugation gives place for analogous considerations. In our modern languages the subject, the verb, and the several relations of time, mode, and voice, are expressed by isolated and independent words. In ancient languages, on the contrary, these ideas are most often comprised in one single word; *amabor* contains the idea of *to love*, the indication of the first person, that of the future, and that of the passive. \* \* \*

"Agglutination must have been the dominant process of the language of primitive men, as synthesis, or rather syncretism, was the characteristic of their thought."

The criticism of these views by the distinguished linguist, Prof. W. D. Whitney, is cogent and effective; and since the argument of Professor Whitney embodies the writer's views on the subject of holophrasis as defined by Dr. Lieber, it will be given here entire. Professor Whitney says:

"The synthetic forms which we are asked to regard as original have not the character of something indistinctly heaped together; they contain the clear and express designation of the radical idea and of its important relations; they represent by a linguistic synthesis the results of a mental analysis. The idea is, indeed, *conceived* in unity, involving all its aspects and relations; but these cannot be separately *expressed* until the mind has separated them, until practice in the use of language has enabled it to distinguish them, and to mark each by an appropriate sign. In *amabor*, the (Latin) word cited as an example of synthesis, are contained precisely the same designations as in the equivalent English analytic phrase, "I shall be loved;" *ama* expresses "loving;" *bo* unites future-sign and ending designating the first person; and the *r* is