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THE REVISED WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY.*

WE owe an apology to the publishers and to our readers for delay in noticing, with some degree of critical minuteness, this important work. Sheer inability to bring within the narrow compass of a book-notice its many and various merits, and the fear of detracting from these merits by an imperfect and hurried notice of them, have combined to postpone our testimony to the value of what happily at this hour of the day can need but little commendation. Webster's Dictionary, in some form or other, has been before the English-speaking public for upwards of seventy years, and to praise it in its latest form is like praising America itself. The magnificent development and

greatness of both are not now matters of question, but of surprise; and in the magnitude and growth of the Dictionary the intelligent observer may trace, not merely materially but typically, the greatness and growth of the American people. The Dictionary is in another aspect one of the finest instances of typical development and survival of the fittest in books that can be found in literature. It has passed through many stages of evolution, and has now but little resemblance to its primitive form; but every stage has exhibited a surprising change of form, structure, and function, and, to continue the language of science, such a rapid course of progressive differentiation that in two generations of speech-dividing men, it is already so noble in appearance, so complex in organization, so exalted in habitat, so robust, so useful, so beautiful, that we cannot without wonder await the developments of continued metamorphosis.

It is unnecessary to trace the growth and development of the germ

* New Edition, with Supplement; an American Dictionary of the English Language, by Noah Webster, LL.D., thoroughly revised and greatly enlarged and improved by Chauncey A. Goodrich, late Professor in Yale College, and Noah Porter, D.D., LL.D., President of Yale College, with an Appendix of Useful Tables, to which is added a Supplement of nearly five thousand new words, with their definitions, etc.; also, a new Pronouncing Biographical Dictionary and three thousand Pictorial Illustrations. pp. 1928. Springfield, Mass.: Published by G. & C. Merriam, State Street, 1880.