

then into complete desuetude, in conformity with the universal rule, '*Cessante ratione, cessat ipsa res.*' This is merely stating the familiar truth as to all verbal expression; words come into being, do service, and pass away as really as bodies. For historic or literary purposes a few archaisms are retained, and, on rare occasions, made to perform some auxiliary service (generally with explanation of origin and meaning); but the masses are forgotten.

In the following extracts Mr. Anderson criticizes somewhat severely the works of lexicon-makers:—

Most of the earlier dictionaries, as far as they present material derived from law-books or supported by law, were mere lexicons or glossaries. Their chief function was to set out and very liberally to translate the many Saxon, Latin, and Norman phrases which, in the period of transition to English as the official language, composed a large portion of the text of antecedent and contemporaneous writers, many of them obsolete at the date of compilation. Useless as such matter was to those and to succeeding generations, notably to men born since 1750, it was nevertheless embodied word for word in later dictionaries. That the expressions here excepted to were never recognised as legal terms will appear at a glance. The majority of the men who originally incorporated them into their 'dictionaries,' 'lexicons,' and 'glossaries,' did not describe them as legal expressions. Why any compiler reproduced them is not apparent, unless for the reason that some former man had, and he was not to be outdone as a collector. No copyright protecting the matter in the old books, time and again have they given up their substance to the purveyor for antiquarians. So that to-day we see worthy gentlemen claiming the distinction of having collected more such dead things than any other compiler, forgetting that, practically, there is no limit to the heaps of disintegrating leaves anyone may gather in out-of-the-way places; and that, in view of the comparative uselessness of any such windrow, whether it be to one's credit that he has raked over a larger surface than some supposed rival may well be doubted.

The following is a list of the principal compilers of dictionaries:—

In 1527, John Rastell printed at London, in one volume, 16mo, '*Expositiones Terminorum Legum Anglorum et Naturæ Breuium,*' culled from the books of Littleton and others. In 1572,