

A MANUAL OF ETYMOLOGY; containing Latin and Greek Derivatives. By A. C. Webb. Philadelphia: Eldredge & Bro., 1879.

In its mechanical preparation this work seems to be all that could be desired, and if a book of Greek and Latin derivatives could be called a "Manual of Etymology," we would perhaps have comparatively little to complain of. Of course there would still remain the fact that the quotations, illustrating the use of the words, are almost exclusively taken from American authors, and not always from the masters of expression in the language; moreover, we may presumably be pardoned for objecting to a running fire of sentences which illustrate quite as fully the hostility of a certain section of the American people towards Britain, as they do the just employment of words. Nor are the examples selected always models of propriety. In the work before us the historical development of the English language is ignored altogether. All we have even of the Anglo-Saxon element is a short, inaccurate list of Anglo-Saxon pre-

fixes, and a few suffixes introduced among the Latin ones, no hint being given as to which are Latin and which Anglo-Saxon. The "Manual" was "entered according to Act of Congress" in the year 1879, and yet *publish* and *finish* are considered to have the same suffix as *blackish* and *boyish*. The book has some good features; in the classical words the stress is indicated by an accent or with marks of quantity, an advantage for those who know but little of the Classics; the idea, too, of giving examples of the employment of words is good, though we may have our own opinion of the quotations themselves. The work would be useful in supplying lists of words derived from Latin and Greek, but it must be used with caution, and verified in every doubtful case. Like so many others, the book betrays an almost total lack of special preparation for the work, which an Etymologist requires. A good knowledge of the Classical languages, and a superficial study of Anglo-Saxon, will not suffice to illustrate the niceties of words or to explain their origin.