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Development of English Literature and Language. By ALFRED H. WELSH, M.A., Member of Victoria Institute, the Philosophical Society of Great Britain. Chicago: S. C. Griggs and Company. 1883.

The history of the language and literature of a people is necessarily a history of the people themselves. No one can understand the development of English literature and language without a profound study of the history of the English people. The same influences which have been at work from time to time, and those which have been continuous in their operation in forming the character and life of the people, have determined the character of their language as well as of the thought and feeling which have found expression in their literature. Both, in order to be studied intelligently, must be studied together. The composite character of our language, for example, can only be adequately explained by tracing back the English people to the

several branches of the common stock of man from which it is descended. Nor are these alone sufficient to adequately explain it, unless geographical conditions, such as soil, climate, and continuity to the ocean be taken into the account—in a word, all that tends to determine the habits and pursuits of the people. And even then our understanding of the archæology of our language and literature, and of the causes which have made them what they are, will be radically defective, unless the intellectual activity of the people, especially of the educated classes, and the specific direction which it took at different periods, be taken into the account.

These facts have been fully recognized by the author of these goodly volumes, and they have determined the character and scope of the work. It is thought, by competent scholars, to be the best work of the kind which has ever been produced on this Continent. Without attempting the impossible of being exhaustive, it is comprehensive and complete for all general purposes. The attention which is given, in the closing volume, to American literature, which is very properly treated in its organic relation to English literature, adds materially to its value.

We present our cordial and hearty congratulations to both the Editors and the Publisher of the *Christian Guardian* on its greatly improved appearance. We are glad to observe that the character of the paper is quite in harmony with its improved form and dress. Evidently no cost or pains are being spared to make it all that can be desired as a religious and family newspaper. And it is pleasing to know that enterprise which is being displayed in its management is duly appreciated, as is evinced by the increasing number of its subscribers. This is as it should be; nothing will so effectually aid the conductors of the paper in their laudable efforts to make it all that it should be as the hearty sympathy and co-operation of its agents and patrons.