

# INTRODUCTION.

To begin is to come, or fall on; to thrust on. We have a familiar example in the Latin *incipio*, in *capto*; for *capio* is primarily to fall or rush on and seize. See *Begin* in the Dictionary.

Attempt is expressed by straining, stretching, as in Latin *tento*. See *Assay* and *Essay*.

Power, strength, and the corresponding verb, to be able, are usually expressed by *straining, stretching*, and this is the radical sense of *ruling* or *governing*. Of this the Latin *rego* is an example, which gives *rectus*, right, that is, *stretched, straight*.

Care, as has been stated, is usually from *straining*; that is, a *tension* of the mind.

Thinking is expressed by *setting*. To think is to set or fix or hold in the mind. It approaches to the sense of *suppose*, Lat. *suppono*.

And under this word, let us consider the various applications of the Latin *puto*. The simple verb *puto* is rendered to prune, or to dress, as vines, that is, according to Ainsworth, *putum*, i. e. *prunum* reddo, *purgo*, by which I understand him to mean, that *putum* is either a change of *prunum*, or used for it; a most improbable supposition, for the radical letters *t* and *r* are not commutable. *Puto* is rendered also, to make even, clear, adjust, or cast up accounts; also to think or consider; to suppose; to debate. Its compounds are *amputo*, to cut off, prune, amputate, to remove; *computo*, to compute, to reckon, to think or deem; *disputo*, to make clear, to adjust or settle, to dispute or debate, to reason; *imputo*, to impute, to ascribe or lay to, to place to account; *reputo*, to consider, to revolve, to reckon up, to impute. The Latin *deputo* signifies to think, judge or esteem, to account or reckon, and to prune; but the Italian *deputare*, Spanish *deputar*, and French *deputer*, from the Latin word, all signify, to send. How can the sense of *think*, and that of *top* or *prune*, be deduced from a common root or radical sense? We find the solution of this question in the verb *to depute*. The primary sense is to throw, thrust or send, or to set or lay, which is from throwing, driving. To prune is to separate, remove, or drive off; to force off; to *think* is a setting in the mind; to *compute* is to throw or put together, either in the mind or in numbers; to *dispute* is to throw against or apart, *he debate*, to beat from; to *impute*, is to throw or put to or on; and to *repute*, is to think or throw in the mind, repeatedly. To *amputate*, is to separate by cutting round. *Puto* then in Latin is from the same root probably, as the English *put*, or the same word differently applied; and also the Dutch *poeten*, to plant; *poot*, a paw, a twig or shoot, Gr. *ποτα*, &c.

In attempting to discover the primary sense of words, we are to carry our reflections back to the primitive state of mankind, and consider how rude men would effect their purposes, before the invention or use of the instruments which the moderns employ. The English verb *to cut*, signifies *to cut*, the chief and original sense. But if so, how can *cut*, the stroke of a whip, which is a legitimate sense of the word, be deduced from the act of severing by an edged tool? We have, in this popular use of the word, a clew to guide us to the primary sense, which is, to drive, urge, press, and applied to the arm, to strike. But we have better evidence. In the popular practice of speaking in New England, it is not uncommon to hear one person call to another when running, and say, *cut on*, *cut on*; that is, hurry, run faster, drive, press on; probably from striking a beast, which one rides on. This is the original sense of the word. Hence we see, that this verb is the Latin *cado*, to strike, to cut down, somewhat differently applied, and *cado*, to fall, is only a modified sense of the same root, and the compounds *incido*, to cut, and *incido*, to fall on, are of one family. To *cut*, is therefore primarily to strike, or drive, and to *cut off*, if applied to the severing of bodies, before edged tools were used, was to force off, or to strike off; hence the sense of separating in the phrase *to cut off* a retreat or communication.

So the Latin *carpo* is the English *carve*, originally to separate by plucking, pulling, seizing and tearing, afterwards, by cutting. We have a clear proof of this in the Latin *peto* and its compounds. This verb signifies primarily to rush, to drive at, to assault, and this sense, in Dictionaries, ought to stand first in the order of definitions. We have the force of the original in the words *impetus* and *impetuous*. So the Latin *rogo*, coincides in elements with *reach*.

The act of understanding is expressed by *reaching* or *taking, holding, sustaining*; the sense of *comprehend*, and of *understand*. We have a popular phrase which well expresses this sense, "I take your meaning or your idea." So in German, *begreifen*, to *begrippe*, to apprehend.

Knowing seems to have the same radical sense as understanding.

Pain, grief, distress, and the like affections, are usually expressed by *pressure* or *straining*. Affliction is from *striking*.

Joy, mirth, and the like affections, are from the sense of *rousing, exciting, lively action*.

Covering, and the like actions are from spreading over or cutting off, interference.

Hiding, is from covering or from withdrawing, departure; or concealment may be from withholding, restraining, suppressing, or making fast, as in the Latin *celo*.

Heat usually implies excitement; but as the effect of heat as well as of cold is sometimes to contract, I think both are sometimes from the same radical. Thus cold and the Lat. *caldo*, to be warm, and *calvus* and *calleo*, to be

hard, have all the same elementary letters, and I suppose them all to be from one root, the sense of which is, to draw, strain, shrink, contract. I am the more inclined to this opinion, for these words coincide with *calleo*, to be strong or able, to know; a sense that implies straining and holding.

Hope is probably from reaching forward. We express strong desire by *longing*, reaching towards.

Earnestness, boldness, daring, peril, promptness, readiness, willingness, love and favor, are expressed by *advancing* or *inclining*.

Light is often expressed by opening, or the shooting of rays, radiation; and probably in many cases, the original word was applied to the dawn of day in the morning. Whiteness is often connected in origin with light. We have an instance of this in the Latin *canes*, to shine and to be white.

And that the primary sense of this word, is to shoot, to radiate, that is, to throw out or off, we have evidence in the verb *cano*, to sing, whence *canto*, the sense of which is retained in our popular use of *cant*; to *cant* a stone; to *cant* over a cask; give the thing a *cant*; for all these words are from one stock.

The Latin *virtus*, the English *worth*, is from the root of *viro*, to grow, that is, to stretch forward, to shoot; hence the original sense is strength, a sense we retain in its application to the qualities of plants. Hence the Latin sense of *virtus*, is bravery, coinciding with the sense of *boldness*, a projecting forward.

Pride is from swelling or elevation, the primary sense of some other words nearly allied to it.

Fear is usually from *shrinking* or from *shaking, trembling*; or sometimes perhaps from *striking*, a being struck, as with surprise.

Holiness and sacredness are sometimes expressed by *separation*, as from common things. The Teutonic word *holy* however seems to be from the sense of *soundness, entireness*.

Faith and belief seem to imply a resting on, or a leaving. It is certain that the English *belief* is a compound of the prefix *be* and *leave*, leave, permission. To *believe* one then is to leave with him, to rest or suffer to rest with him, and hence not to dispute, contend or deny.

Color may be from spreading over or putting on; but in some instances, the primary sense is to dip. See *Dye* and *Tinge*.

Spots are from the sense of separating or from sprinkling dispersion.

The radical sense of *making* is to press, drive, or force. We use *make* in its true literal sense, in the phrases, *make your horse draw*, *make your servant do what you wish*.

Feeding is from the sense of pressing, crowding, stuffing, that is, from *driving, thrusting*. Eating seems to have a somewhat different sense.

Drinking is from *drawing*, or from wetting, plunging. Drench and drink are radically one word.

Anger, and the like violent passions imply excitement, or violent action. Hence their connection with *burning* or *inflammation*, the usual sense of which is *raging* or *violent commotion*.

Agreement, harmony, are usually from meeting, or union, or from extending, reaching to.

Dwelling, abiding, are from the sense of throwing or setting down, or resting, or from stretching; as we see by the Latin *continuo*, from *teneo*, Gr. *μενω*, to extend.

Guarding and defending, are from roots that signify to stop, or to cut off; or more generally from the sense of driving off, a repelling or striking back. In some cases perhaps from holding.

Opposition is usually expressed by meeting, and hence the prepositions which express opposition. Thus the Danish preposition *mod*, Swedish *mot* or *emot*, against, contrary, is the English word to meet.

Words which express spirit denote primarily *breath*, *air*, *wind*, the radical sense of which is to flow, move or rush. Hence the connection between *spirit* and *courage*, *animus*, *animosus*; hence passion, *animosity*. So in Greek *πνευμα*, frenzy, is from *πνοω*, the mind, or rather from its primary sense, a moving or rushing.

So in our mother-tongue, *mod* is mind or spirit; whence *mood*, in English, and Sax. *moode*, moody, angry. Hence *mind* in the sense of purpose, its primary signification, is a setting forward, as *intention* is from *intendo*, to stretch, to strain, the sense that ought to stand first in a Dictionary.

Reproach, chiding, rebuke, are from the sense of scolding, or throwing out words with violence.

Sin, is generally from the sense of deviating, wandering, as is the practice of lawlessness.

Right, justice, equity, are from the sense of stretching, making straight, or from laying, making smooth.

Falshood is from falling, failing, or from deviation, wandering, drawing aside.

The primary sense of *strange* and *foreign*, is distant, and from some verb signifying to depart. Wild and fierce are from a like sense.

Fain, faintly, wane, and kindred words, are from *exhausting, drawing out*, or from *departing, withdrawing, falling away*.

Paleness is usually from *failure*, a departure of color.

Glory is from opening, expanding, display, or making clear.

Binding, making fast or close, is from pressure, or straining.

Writing is from scratching, engraving, the sense of all primitive words which express this act.