ing popularized a science before having studied it as a science. The criticism was not unjust. Popular works on the English language were numerous, and some of them not without decided merits; but the greater part of the results set forth in these works in a popular form were due to the investigations of German scholars. Within the last few years a change for the better has taken place. Although the only two periodicals devoted exclusively to the study of the philology and literature of the English language are still published in Germany, although the best historical grammars of English are still those written by German scholars, although it was reserved for a German to write the Shakespeare Lexicon, there are unmistakable signs that the English and American people are gradually waking up to the fact that the historical study of their mother tongue and of its literature is one of the most important tasks of their higher institutions of learning.

The study of Anglo-Saxon, first introduced in this country at the University of Virginia, by none other than Thomas Jefferson, and then confined for many years to a few colleges, is now carried on in nearly every progressive college and university in the land; and the work of Francis A. March and the few other men who had courage enough to stand up for the study of their mother tongue, as against the claims of the classicists, has been continued and its scope widened by a host of scholars, who, trained in the accurate methods of the German philological seminaries, have brought to their work the enthusiasm incident to their occupation with a subject so dear to the heart of every truly educated man—his mother tongue. Much has been done by them in a few years; texts have been edited, older grammars and vocabularies revised and new ones written, investigations on special topics in the history of the language and literature have been carried on, numerous monographs have been published, in short, a most hopeful revival of the scientific study of English has been initiated. No doubt this revival will result before long in the production of a popular manual of the English language that will combine the good features of the earlier, once quite excellent works of Trench, Marsh, Earle, and others, with the accuracy of modern scholarship; a work that will not only be based on modern theories concerning the general nature and the life of a language, but will in every detail represent the present state of investigation, in short, a work that will be a credit to the subject.

The book before us certainly does not meet these requirements. We record this with regret, since it is evidently a work of love and of much patient toil. The task which the author set for himself is one of immense

Origins of the English People and of the English Language.*

Not many years ago, a professor of the English language in a prominent Eastern university said, in a public address, that in regard to English philology the English and American people were in th. anomalous position of hav-

* Origins of the English People and of the English Language. Compiled from the best and latest authorities by Jean Roemer, LL.D., Professor of the French Language and Literature and Vice-President of the College of the City of New York. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

difficulty. It is one thing to popularize a subject of comparatively narrow range, as Prof. Rhys has done in his "Celtic Britain" and Prof. Earle in his "Anglo-Saxon Literature"; it is quite another thing to popularize a subject which, as the writer himself states, "involves, first of all, a critical inquiry into the origin, character, and distribution of the various races of men—Celts, Romans, Saxons, Danes, Normans—who at various epochs have found their way into the British islands—their idioms and forms of religion, their social and political differences, their relative progress in the arts of civilized life." In other words, in addition to being a historian in the widest sense of the word, the writer should be a philologian of no mean attainments.

Under these circumstances we would gladly excuse the author from the Herculean task of original investigation; we should be satisfied if, by judicious compilation from the "best and latest authorities," he had produced a book which, while giving a correct general idea of the origins of the English people and the English language, should be faithful and trustworthy in every particular. We shall not venture to criticize the author's knowledge of history nor his methods of investigation on that side of his work; but as far as the philological part of the work is concerned, we feel compelled to say that Dr. Roemer has neither made use of all the "best and latest" authorities on the subject, nor has he used to the best advantage those which he claims to have consulted. The list of his authorities is long, and many wrong ideas are no doubt due to them; yet we venture to say that certain of Dr. Roemer's propositions are entirely original with him. And here lies the danger of such a book; the public is told that it is compiled from the "best and latest authorities," and all through it we find cropping out the compiler's own hobbies. It reminds us of the remarks which the mediæval scribes occasionally wrote on the margin of a manuscript they were copying, which the next scribe in his ignorance embodied in the text, causing no end of mischief for readers of a later generation.

Many passages might be cited in which Dr. Roemer is evidently his own authority, or is, to say the least, totally at variance with what are commonly regarded as the best authorities. We must content ourselves with a few examples. Our author states that the name of the *Jutes* is nothing but a corruption, by the British, of the word *Teut* or *Deut*, which, with its suffix *ish*, *sch*, *ch*, has produced the forms *Deutsch* and *Dutch*. It is casually remarked, as though it were a well-known fact, that this word *Teut* or *Deut* itself, is "after all of remote Celtic origin." Now the facts in the case are simply these: For the section of country and the period in question, the word is not *deut* or *teut*, but *theod*, an old Germanic word meaning "people," common in Low-German and Anglo-Saxon. This word could never "have changed in British mouths into *Jutes*"; the author's argument of the mispronunciations *jew* for *dew* and *ajew* for *adieu* is of no avail, since the word began with *th*, not with *d*, and the pronunciation of *th* at that time is supposed to have been the same as in the modern English *thin*. This old Germanic *theod* became *diot* in High-German, and is, indeed, preserved in the word *deutsch;* but the earliest traces of this adjective, in the latinized forms *theodiscus* and *diutiscus*, do not go back farther than the beginning of the ninth century, long after the time when Dr. Roemer supposes the word to have been used in the British isles (p. 67). The author's assertion that the word is, after all, of remote Celtic origin, is absolutely without foundation; we cannot explain it otherwise than on the supposition that he must have been thinking of the word *German*, which was the ancient Celtic word for "neighbor" and was used by the inhabitants of Gaul to denote their neighbors in the East. This mistake is the more remarkable since the author, almost throughout the rest of the book, uses the term *Dutch* instead of *German*. He uses a terminology certainly not found in the "best and latest authorities," when he speaks of "Old High Dutch" and "Old Low Dutch," terms as obsolete in modern philological literature as the author's "Gothic stock of languages," and terms which become ridiculously misleading when used in the same connection in their modern signification, a kind of anachronism of which the author is frequently guilty. In many points Dr. Roemer goes directly against his own "best authorities"; he derives *smith* from *smite*, while Skeat's "Etymological Dictionary" tells him that he might as soon connect *kith* with *kite* (or *sooth* with *soot*), as far as phonetic laws are concerned; he has no conscientious scruples about a proposed etymology of *cockney*, while specialists in etymology modestly confess their ignorance; he derives *Doomsday* (in Doomsday-Book) from *domus dei*, while etymologists have no doubt of its derivation from *doom* and *day*, although they admit that the reason of the name is obscure, etc.

One of the prominent features of the book is the author's contempt for Anglo-Saxon, "an idiom from which English literature has derived but little if any value" (p. 455). This cannot surprise us in a writer who omits from the list of his authorities the names of all the men most prominently connected with the study of that language and its literature—viz., those of Ellis, March, Sweet, Sievers, Corson, Ten Brink, Earle, and others. Indeed there is reason to believe that Dr. Roemer is

ignorant of the very elements of a language, a thorough knowledge of which constitutes a prime requisite in the author of such a work. On p. 354 he says: "But so irregular and capricious were the principles of this government (viz., that of the Anglo-Saxon prepositions) that in the same sentence the same preposition throws its connected substantives into four different cases," and he illustrates this startling proposition by the phrase: *mid ealre thinre heortan and mid eallum mode*, (with all thine heart and with all thy soul). The author evidently thinks that the terminations *-re*, *-an*, *-um*, and *-e* are signs of different cases, while every beginner in Anglo-Saxon who has mastered the declensions knows that the words are all in the dative case, the different endings being due to the fact that *heorte* and *mod* are nouns of different genders and belong to different declensions. It would be about as reasonable to conclude from the Vulgate version of the above passage, *ex toto corde tuo et ex tota anima tua*, that in Latin the preposition *ex* could be followed by three different cases in the same sentence. It goes without saying that, with such ignorance of a language, an author is not qualified to express an opinion as to its value as a means of expressing thought or as to the general character of its literature.

About the same amount of space is allotted to the account of the English conquest and its bearing upon the English language as to the history of the Norman conquest and its effects on the language; but then there is an appendix of nearly two hundred pages especially devoted to the French sources of the English language, containing a historical sketch of the French language, a chapter on French etymology, introduced by remarks on the first principles of philology taken from the standard authority of twenty-five years ago, August Schleicher, and a chapter containing specimens of early French. Much of the matter contained in the appendix is foreign to the author's subject. Indeed it is one of the chief faults of the whole book that the reader is perfectly bewildered by the amount of miscellaneous information which it contains, often very interesting in itself, but such as one would never expect to find in a book on the origins of the English people and of the English language. Thus, on pp. 330 ff., we find an account of the rise of universities with the question as to the priority of Oxford or Cambridge duly considered; on pp. 524 ff., we find a history of the degree of Bachelor of Arts with remarks on the requirements of the mediæval curriculum; on p. 488, we learn that in the Middle Ages "in a letter of importance the following order was always strictly observed, viz.: Salutatio, Captatio, Benevolentia, (sic!) Narratio, Petitio, Conclusio," etc. On the other hand we fail to find many explanations for which the general reader would have been grateful; for instance, when the author mentions (p. 265) that "*oyez*, generally pronounced *o yes*, is still the introductory cry of the official connected with the court, inviting silence and attention to the court's proceedings," he states something which is known to everybody, while the explanation of *oyez* as the imperative plural of the Old French verb *oïr*, to hear, might have been news to some at least.

For school-use the work is too unsystematic, unreliable, and too bulky; the scholar will prefer to consult the best authorities at first hand; the general reader will find in it many interesting bits of information, but he must not expect to find the account of the origins of his mother-tongue accurate in outline or in detail.

HANS C. G. VON JAGEMANN.