



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The eleventh contribution (beginning on page 31 of the pamphlet, and extending to page 41, inclusive) is written in the iambic pentameter couplet characteristic of the eighteenth century. The fulsome compliments to the sovereign we may pass over, pausing at one verse (on page 35) which reads

Here he restrain'd the Indian's thirst of gore,
And bid the murd'rous tomox drink no more;

Among the ms. notes of Mr. Eliot is a footnote on this page 35 to "tomax." The word is, he observes, "compounded of Tomahawk and ax." It is a portmanteau word, which must have been as clear to the average reader in the England of 1761—as clear to George III himself—as *brillig* or *slithy* would have been to us, had not Humpty Dumpty kindly explained them.

ROBERT WITHINGTON.

Smith College.

HENRY MORE'S *Psychozoia*

Miss Marjorie H. Nicolson, in her article on Henry More's *Psychozoia* in the March issue of *Modern Language Notes*, states that this poem was first published in 1648. After the first publication of his "Platonick Song of the Soul," of which *Psychozoia* forms the first part, More revised and enlarged his book. He 'licked' the poems, as he fondly thought, "into some more tolerable form and smoothnesse," and published the result under the general title, *Philosophical Poems*. This is the book to which Miss Nicolson refers in her statement above mentioned; but this was the second edition of *Psychozoia*, and it was published in 1647, not 1648. The first edition was published under the general title, *Psychozoia Platonica: or a Platonick Song of the Soul*, in 1642.

ROBERT SHAFER.

Wells College.

BRIEF MENTION

Language: its Nature, Development, and Origin. By Otto Jespersen (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1922. 448 pp.). Many a thoughtful reader will probably be surprised at the order in which the divisions of the subject are arranged in the sub-title of this treatise, because his sense of logical sequence would require 'Origin' to be placed first. To discover that Dr. Jespersen has in this been strictly logical is to discover the most distinctive feature of his linguistic speculation, for which one turns at once to page 418. That important page is preceded by paragraphs in which the *a priori* methods of reasoning about the origin of speech

(resulting in the *bow-wow*, the *pooh-pooh*, the *ding-dong* and other theories) are shown to be inadequate. These theories have been based on the untenable assumption of "a speechless mankind" and have yielded the most meagre results. What may be conjectured concerning the origin of language must, however, be disclosed by reversing the direction of the investigator's path. He must not move forward from the assumed speechless man, but backward from the developed into the most undeveloped state of linguistic phenomena, and from what is thus verifiable he must infer the still less and ultimately the least developed state of primitive expression. The basis of this method of reasoning must be the investigation of "(1) the language of children; (2) the language of primitive races; and (3) the history of languages." The discussion of these topics must, therefore, logically precede the discussion of the last topic, "the origin of speech."

The author's description and defense of the adopted method, stated to be employed now for the first time "consistently," may here be quoted in part. It is "to trace our modern twentieth-century languages as far back in time as history and our materials will allow us; and then, from this comparison of present English with Old English, of Danish with Old Norse, and of both with 'Common Gothic,' of French and Italian with Latin, of modern Indian dialects with Sanskrit, etc., to deduce definite laws for the development of languages in general, and to try and [read to] find a system of lines which can be lengthened backwards beyond the reach of history. If we should succeed in discovering certain qualities to be generally typical of the earlier as opposed to the later stages of languages, we shall be justified in concluding that the same qualities obtained in a still higher degree in the earliest times of all." If, by this projection into prehistoric conditions, into the childhood of mankind, "we arrive finally at uttered sounds of such a description that they can no longer be called a real language, but something antecedent to language—why, then the problem will have been solved; for transformation is something we can understand, while a creation out of nothing can never be comprehended by human understanding."

The method described is, therefore, not to solve in its ultimate form the question of the origin of language, but it is to lead to inferences of characteristics of the first semblances of 'real language.' What inferences does Dr. Jespersen offer for consideration?

As to speech-sounds, it is argued backward from the clarifying and simplifying effects of 'advancing civilization' that primitive languages must have been rich in difficult not neatly articulated sounds, making long, unanalyzed words, which were uttered with little restraint of passion and therefore with excessive ranges of pitch, as in song. On the side of grammar, there was entanglement and unanalyzed complications. "Primitive linguistic units," to

take the next step in the investigation, "must have been much more complicated in point of meaning, as well as much longer in point of sound, than those with which we are most familiar"; there was great lack of distinction between word and sentence. And irregularities or anomalies, from the cultivated point of view, as in the series *bonus, melior, optimus*, typify the psychology and the unsystematic habit of the primitive mind, which was lexical rather than grammatically logical. These inferences are then confirmed by the evidence of the languages of savage tribes, and the summarized result is emphasized: "The evolution of language shows a progressive tendency from inseparable, irregular conglomerations to freely and regularly combinable short elements" (p. 429). The vocabulary of simple tribes is enormously increased because of separately naming instead of classifying concrete and related objects, and because of containing no words for the expression of abstract ideas. Now, this concreteness, it is held, establishes "a close relationship between primitive words and poetry." The primitive man "was forced to express his thoughts in the language of poetry," in metaphor or by allegory: poetry precedes prose. The author is especially emphatic in opposing the judgment of Madvig and Whitney, who assumed the communication of thought to be the primary impulse of language. On the contrary, "the genesis of language is . . . in the poetic side of life"; in craving for expression, emotions and instincts preceded thought. Love made a primary demand for expression, and love-songs belong to the effective instrumentalities "in bringing about human language" (p. 484). A foot-note at this point reminds the reader that this view of primitive love-songs is reproduced from the author's *Progress in Language*, 1894, (a book that is now out of print and is now superseded by the present volume), and that the criticism it has elicited is refuted by a just consideration of his inductively obtained basis for reasoning backward toward the earliest impulses and forms of expression.

The subject is continued by taking a wider view of "Primitive Singing" (p. 434 f.) to embrace all the emotional occasions of song, which, in varying measure, is inarticulate in primitive, and in savage, and in peasant-life. The inference is that "men sang out their feelings long before they were able to speak their thoughts. . . . Our remote ancestors had not the slightest notion that such a thing as communicating ideas and feelings to someone else was possible. They little suspected that in singing as nature prompted them they were paving the way for a language capable of rendering minute shades of thought." The next question discussed is thus stated: "How did that which originally was a jingle of meaningless sounds come to be an instrument of thought?" And how was 'the sentence' evolved? The conclusion of the whole matter is this: "Language, then, began with half-musical

unanalyzed expressions for individual beings [concrete words, specialized in meaning, notably proper names; see p. 438] and solitary events. Languages composed of, and evolved from, such words and quasi-sentences are clumsy and insufficient instruments of thought, being intricate, capricious and difficult. But from the beginning the tendency has been one of progress, slow and fitful progress, but still progress towards greater and greater clearness, regularity, ease and pliancy." Of course, no language has yet attained perfection.

Dr. Jespersen has, of course, not definitely determined the beginnings of language, but he has reasoned about the subject in a keen and masterful manner, and the inferences he has drawn from linguistic data put the question—which can never be completely solved—on a fruitful basis for further speculation.

This treatise consists of "Book I, History of Linguistic Science"; "Book II, The Child"; "Book III, The Individual and the World"; "Book IV, Development of Language." Of the last 'Book' (pp. 305-442), the chapter on the origin of speech occupies less than one-fourth of the pages (pp. 412-442); but in extenuation of the charge of having given in this notice a disproportionate account of this chapter it is to be kept in mind that the author wishes all the preceding parts of his treatise to be directly and indirectly a preparation for his final argument. In these preceding parts (making twenty-four chapters), there are many paragraphs that do not relate directly to any purpose more specific than the advocacy of sound linguistic reasoning, which is carefully distinguished from philological reasoning in its comprehensive reaches. Accordingly a diversity of topics is handled in Dr. Jespersen's original and suggestive manner, with only an occasional touch of severity in criticism, which is always palliated by his unrelenting seriousness. The characteristics of his manner are well-shown in the chapter on "Etymology" (pp. 305-318), which may be mentioned because of the value of some new details, and especially for the emphasis on the fact that this subject has become severely scientific, leaving no encouragement to mere guess-work. But even the scientific method may mislead one into the error of an over-confident acceptance of a result. Thus, in Dr. Jespersen's opinion, Hermann Möller in a "model article," meeting "all the legitimate requirements of a scientific etymology," has solved "the riddle of *G. ganz*" (p. 308).

The second 'book' of the treatise, on the language of the child and its influence on linguistic development, tho abounding in suggestiveness also shows that the author's enthusiasm may at times beguile him into diffusiveness and an excessive citation of evidence of very slight significance, if indeed it be at all pertinent. The discussion could with advantage be considerably condensed. But the general reader will probably find this 'book' especially enter-

taining. He will surely mark the statement that "the two sexes differ very greatly in regard to speech" (p. 146); that in speech-facility little girls surpass the boys; and that this difference persists in adult-life. Dr. Jespersen has overlooked the evidence of the craniologist at this point. Recent investigations are reported to show that the sexes differ in the development of the convolution of Broca. However that may be, there are many sides to this question, and some of these are interestingly discussed in chapter XIII of the next 'book.'

Dr. Jespersen enters upon a critical examination of exaggerated and loosely accepted traditions relating to a difference in language between women and men belonging to the same tribe or linguistic community,—a difference which in its most reduced form has psychological and cultural aspects. "There can be no doubt that women exercise a great and universal influence on linguistic development through their instinctive shrinking from coarse and gross expressions" (p. 246). A feminine revolt against Gongorism and Marinism resulted in the artificiality of *Les Précieuses*. Another generalization is this: "the vocabulary of a woman as a rule is much less extensive than that of a man," for she keeps in "the main road of language, whereas man is inclined to find out new paths" (p. 248). Altho "linguistically quicker than man" she is slow to see the point of a pun.

A marked feature of woman's language is the use of adverbs of intensity. Lord Chesterfield heard a "fine woman" declare a small gold snuff-box "to be *vastly* pretty, because it was so *vastly* little." The snuff-box is out of date, but the woman of to-day is *just crazy* about many another object, for that is *so* like her. The literary artist has not overlooked the feminine "stop short or pull up" sentence: 'Well, I never'; 'The trouble you must have taken,' etc. Moreover, in sentence-structure, women are paratactic, men are hypotatic. "In a Danish comedy a young girl" is interrupted in her recital by the exclamation of her brother ("who has slyly taken out his watch"), "I declare! you have said *and then* fifteen times in less than two and a half minutes." In the final sentence of this chapter it is conjectured that the "great social changes" now affecting the world "may eventually modify even the linguistic relations of the two sexes."

A wide range of discerning observations will be recognized in the chapter on "Pidgin and Congeners," but this must now be dismissed from further notice, and commended, together with various other divisions, for the linguistic acumen and instructiveness always characteristic of what is offered by Dr. Jespersen. It may be said, however, that his efficient linguistic reasoning is at times too exclusive of cultural, philological implications; and his marked originality may lead him to put a captious emphasis on unimportant distinctions, as when he pronounces the theory of *nasalis*

sonans "a disfiguring excrescence on linguistic science" (p. 317; cf. p. 92). It is also not irrelevant at this point to notice that Dr. Jespersen advocates the manufacture and use of an artificial, international language, and pronounces a favorable judgment on the product Ido (pp. 9, 99; on p. 22 an obligation to Leibnitz is acknowledged).

No scholar can profitably ignore the history of his science. That is true in a very special sense when that history is chiefly in the present-perfect tense, when so much of what is significant in it relates to the present as the basis for further progress. There is not much in the history of the science of language as understood to-day that the scholar may safely pronounce negligible; it is for the most part too recent and plainly suggestive of the next steps to be taken. A sketch of that history is accordingly supplied in Dr. Jespersen's first 'book' (pp. 19-99),—a difficult task well performed.

The first division of this sketch, "Before 1800," supplies suggestive glances at "antiquity," the "Middle Ages and Renaissance," and "Eighteenth-century Speculation" with specific evaluation of Herder as linguistic philosopher and a recall to deserved notice of Jenisch. The latter's analysis of the essentials of language, which results in a formula for comparing and ranking languages is noteworthy. It is declared deeper and more comprehensive than Grimm's "attempt at estimating language" (p. 60), and was the begetter, one may assume, of Dr. Jespersen's contribution to *Scientia*, 1914, "Energetik der Sprache" and of his persistent maintenance of the "energetic views of language" (p. 9).

The science of language being in so specific a sense an attainment of the nineteenth century, a linguistic survey of that period constitutes the chief portion of this 'book' (pp. 32-99). It is brought down from Rask and Grimm to the year 1880, the date of the first edition of Delbrück's *Einleitung* and of Paul's *Principien*, and closed with a brief indication of subsequent "general tendencies." This history, as is well known and here duly acknowledged, has been composed by other scholars. (Attention may be directed to the recent sketch forming the Introduction to Paul's *Deutsche Grammatik*). To these the student will turn with a freshly aroused interest after observing the significantly eclectic chapters in which Dr. Jespersen has so admirably executed his intention "to throw into relief the great lines of development rather than to give many details." His primary purpose in this has been, he declares, to supply "an introduction to the problems dealt with in the rest of the book," in which is therefore demonstrated the vital continuity in the history of linguistic investigation and theory.