

## REVIEWS — RECENZE

Martin Lehnert: *Altenglisches Elementarbuch*, neunte, verbesserte Auflage, Westberlin: de Gruyter, 1978, Sammlung Göschen, Bd. 2210.

This textbook of Old English, already in its 9th edition, is a valuable source of information about the development in the Anglo-Saxon period, the periodization of the Anglo-Saxon literary heritage, the influence of other languages (especially Latin, Celtic and Scandinavian languages) upon the development of English. The introduction also deals with problems of literary language, Old English verse and Old English orthography. All this is done with evident pedagogical skill, in a concise form, and sources for further study are abundantly given. Within the scope of his introduction the author has succeeded in bringing as much essential knowledge about the subject as possible. A map showing the division of the Anglo-Saxon territory and also a chart presenting the classification of the Indo-European languages into groups are welcome additions to the book.

Lehnert has stressed the fact that it will be necessary in the future to devote special attention to the systematic analysis of the grammar of Anglian dialects to which present-day standard English is to be traced back. (The same idea occurs in Quirk & Wrenn, *An Old English Grammar*,<sup>2</sup> London, 1960, p. 2). He is, however, aware of the fact that the task is rather complicated because of the lack of original literary sources.

The second part of the textbook deals with the phonology of Old English, the author preferring the traditional succession phonology — morphology, pedagogically more demanding than the reverse order (chosen by Quirk and Wrenn). The division and chronology of the changes are presented logically and accompanied by a sufficient number of examples. At the same time differences in the Old English dialects are pointed out, special attention being paid to Anglian dialects. Again, examples are given of individual differences and deviations.

In Section 32 (Velarumlaut), the author explains the reason for the *i-* and *u-* mutations primarily on the basis of the mentalistic (psychological) theory of anticipation, though to the present reviewer the mechanistic theory (based on the articulatory effort) appears to be a sufficient cause of the change.

The third part of the textbook covers the morphology of Old English (the starting point of the presentation being the situation in Latin). Syntax of Old English is not included; it would be much appreciated if the following edition could comprise at least a brief sketch of it in view of important differences between Old and Modern English syntactic structures.

The fourth part brings Old English texts (Beda's story of Caedmon and extracts from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle). Caedmon's Hymn is presented also in its original Northumbrian version, which again accords with the author's emphasis on the importance of the Anglian dialects. The texts are translated into German; also the

Latin text of Beda's story is given. An *ad-hoc* vocabulary and a word index are added.

The textbook will prove useful to all students of English at university level and even advanced readers may find it of great interest.

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**Paul Procter** (Editor-in-Chief): **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English**, London: Longman, 1978, 1303 pp.

Irrespective of the stage reached, a learner of a foreign language — a beginner, a fairly or very advanced student, or one maturing to perfection — will need a special dictionary of the language he wishes to acquire. Apart from defining the meanings of words, such a dictionary will have to offer information on their pronunciation, their morphological and syntactic behaviour in the sentence, the collocations they enter into and the stylistic and the territorial restrictions they may be subject to. It will have to offer a good deal of information a native speaker may take for granted and therefore consider redundant.

A pioneer work in this field is Harold E. Palmer's *A Grammar of English Words* (London 1938). Palmer-inspired is the *Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary*, compiled under the general editorship of A. S. Hornby, published in Tokyo in 1942 and later reprinted as *A Learner's Dictionary of Current English* in England in 1948. Another pioneer work that deserves special mention is perhaps Albrecht Reum's *Dictionary of English Style* (Leipzig 1931), paying particular attention to collocations.

A new publication in the field is the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, prepared by a team of lexicographers, illustrators and computer experts under the general editorship of Paul Procter and benefiting from the advice and experience of such prominent scholars as Professors Randolph Quirk, Arthur Bronstein, David Crystal, A. C. Gimson, Geoffrey Leech and others.

The new dictionary will meet the needs of a wide range of non-native speakers of English, including such whose stock of words is still rather limited. This is because both the definitions and the examples are written in a controlled vocabulary, *A General Service List of English Words* (Longman 1953) having been primarily used for this purpose. For more delicate nuances of meanings a fastidious user may have to have recourse to other sources of reference, but Randolph Quirk is right in pointing out that 'the strict use of the defining vocabulary has in many cases resulted in a fresh and revealing semantic analysis' (p. vii).

A point worth mentioning in this connection is the retainment of the articles in the definitions, a practice observed by the first edition of *A Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, but abandoned in its later editions. It will be appreciated especially by those non-native speakers of English whose mother-tongues are articleless.

In some cases the value of the definitions is heightened by illustrations. In principle, the latter do not elucidate single lexical items, but cover groups of items that are thematically related, coming under such headings as 'geometrical figures', 'household equipment', 'human body', 'insects', 'mountain landscape'.

The British pronunciation given by the dictionary is that usually referred to as 'Received Pronunciation' and the transcription used is that employed by A. C. Gimson in the 14th edition of the *English Pronouncing Dictionary*. If differing from British pronunciation, American pronunciation is given as well, its 'more common forms' (p. xviii) having been chosen for representation.

One of the most valuable features of the dictionary is its information on the grammatical, morphological and syntactic behaviour of English words. The amount of this information exceeds that offered by the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. The codes employed are partly mnemonic in character and therefore easy to understand and to handle. Additional grammatical information is given in the usage notes, which also draw attention to synonyms and to common mistakes.

Another important feature are the labels indicating the stylistic rank of the words and/or the geographical region(s) within which they are used. In addition to the British and American variants of English, even the Australian, Canadian, Caribbean,