

Historical German Grammar. Volume I. Phonology, Word-Formation and Accidence by Joseph Wright; An Old High German Primer. With Grammar, Notes and Glossary by Joseph Wright
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on the penultimate, there must have existed in Vulgar Latin a form **colōbra*, accented on the antepenultimate. Cf. *conbre* in Raschi's Glosses (*Revue des Études Juives*, T. LIII, p. 167), which allows us to reconstruct **colbre*. Page 170: why not admit **vare* beside *vadere*, just as **fare* is admitted beside *facere*? It seems to me that it would give a satisfactory etymology for the French word *rêver*; *resver* and *rever* in O.F. might then be explained as arising from **re + ex + vare* and *re + vare*. Page 187: *-ērunť* passed regularly into *-ērunť* under the influence of *-ērant*, *-ērint* and *-ērent*.

L. BRANDIN.

Historical German Grammar. Volume I. Phonology, Word-Formation and Accidence. By JOSEPH WRIGHT. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 8vo. xiv + 314 pp.

An Old High German Primer. With Grammar, Notes and Glossary. By JOSEPH WRIGHT. Second Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 8vo. xii + 176 pp.

A promising beginning has been made to the series of Historical and Comparative Grammars, published by the Clarendon Press and edited by Professor Joseph Wright, with a *Historical German Grammar* by the editor himself. The volume opens with an introductory chapter which briefly outlines some of the general principles of language; this is followed by a classification of the Indogermanic languages with special reference to the Germanic group, and a summary of the chief differences between O.H.G., M.H.G. and N.H.G. The sound-value of the various alphabetic signs during the three periods of the German language is next discussed, stress or accent is dealt with, and then follows in the usual order a detailed history of vowels, consonants and inflexions.

A compendium presenting in brief form the present state of investigation into the linguistic problems connected with German has long been wanted, and Professor Wright's book ought therefore to prove most useful to students, especially to those who have to do without academic teaching and find themselves handicapped when they attempt to use the larger German works. But the teacher will be grateful too for the constant references to English which will greatly assist him in illustrating the more obscure features of German grammar to the English student.

While the book may thus be recommended as a whole, it challenges serious criticism in matters of detail. First of all, it is entirely dogmatic. There is not a single reference to the authorities upon which the author relies, or to the reasons why he differs from them. Again, absolute accuracy and the greatest caution in the statement of results are indispensable virtues in a book of this kind, and there is here much room for revision in a second edition. The necessity for condensation has not unfrequently led to vagueness, to the slurring over of difficult points and to incautious generalisations. Is there any reason why, contrary to

general usage, vocalic *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, consonantal *i* and *u*, and the velars with labialisation are not distinguished in print? Forms like *wlqos* (p. 26) and *treies* (p. 28) not only look peculiar, but are misleading. The present **nem-o-a* (p. 233) also seems to imply that these portions of the book need overhauling. From the earlier chapters I add some further instances. N.H.G. *du* corresponds to M.H.G. *dū*, the *ū* of which, like that of *nū*, did not become a diphthong in N.H.G.; the M.H.G. forms on p. 213 ought to be given as *du*, *dū*. In what respect are *wann*—*wenn*, *dann*—*denn* (p. 4) illustrative of a difference of accentuation? The classification of the dialects in § 9 is unsatisfactory; Swabian is not specially recognised, and Riparian and Moselle Franconian ought to appear under Middle Franconian. The claim of East Franconian to be included in the Upper German dialects should be mentioned. The chapter on stress (§ 23 ff.) is also unsatisfactory, particularly § 24, which deals with the secondary stress (Nebenton). Considering the importance of this stress for O.H.G. and M.H.G. prosody, it is strange to find it dismissed with the curt observation that it 'fluctuated.' § 26, too, is vague and indefinite. On page 28, 2, line 1 'the same or' ought to be omitted. The rule given in § 56 is, of course, doubtful, but if it is retained, the retention of *i* in the past participle of the strong verbs of the first class should be mentioned. A note on p. 41 incorrectly ascribes the prevention of the umlaut by a following *lt*, *ld*, only to upper German; the fluctuation between *u* and *ū* in the preterite subjunctive is quite common before other consonants as well as nasal + consonant. It is too much to say (p. 42, note) that Middle German did not distinguish in writing *ö*, *ü*, *öu*, *üe* from *o*, *u*, *ou*, *uo*. It is done often enough. These few examples—and it would be easy to add to them—will show the necessity of a careful revision when a new edition is called for of this very useful handbook.

A book like Professor Wright's *Old High German Primer* may fairly claim to have proved its usefulness when it has reached the dignity of a second edition; and indeed, this little book has been, and will probably remain for a long time, the sole refuge of those who are desirous of acquiring an elementary knowledge of O.H.G. of the ninth century, but dread Braune's larger books. Many a student will no doubt be tempted by the simplicity and lucidity of Professor Wright's book to take up a subject which usually repels by its formidable initial difficulties. The only part of the little work to which serious exception must be taken, is the chapter on syntax. It is thoroughly unsatisfactory, and had much better be omitted altogether. The few useful notes which it contains might easily find room in the accidence or in the vocabulary. The notes to the extracts might, with advantage be recast. The student working under a teacher does not need them, whereas the private student needs more elaborate help than is here offered him. A few words on metre would also have formed a valuable addition.

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