

IX.—ON *TITILLARE* AND *TIKTEIN*.

BY PROF. T. HEWITT KEY.

An error does least harm, when soonest mended. I therefore wish to correct at once something that I said in my paper on Ritschl's *Plautus*. In speaking of Latin words formed by reduplication, I referred to *titilla-re* as an example; and I am the more desirous to correct the error, as I find it occurs in Schneider's and Dunbar's Lexicons, and maintains its ground even in Liddell and Scott's work s. v. *τιλλω*, 'I pull or tear'. But the very meaning of this verb seems to repel all connection with the Latin verb. The form also leads to a different conclusion, whether we look to the suffix *illa*, which by the examples of *vac-illa-* and *con-scrib-illa-* points to *tit* alone as the chief part of the verb, or to this syllable *tit* itself. Had the first syllable in *titillare* been short, as it is in *τιτραιν-*, *τιτρωσκ-*, *τινυσκ-*, one would have been more willing to accept it as a reduplicative syllable; but Lucretius and Horace alike assert the length of the *i*; the former II. 429: *Titillare magis sensum quam laedere possunt*, Horace Sat. II, 3, 179: *Praeterea ne uos titillet gloria, iure Iurando obstringam ambo*. For these two reasons we must conclude that the root of the word lies in the first syllable. Looking around for a related word, an Englishman naturally has his attention directed to his own verb *tickle*, which has much resemblance in form and a perfect identity of meaning. But whence 'does *tickle* itself come? I test this matter by the following proportion, as *mickle* to *much*, so *tickle* to *touch*. But *touch* is from the French *toucher*, Ital. *toccare*. The question still remains, in what relation this Italian verb stands to the Latin vocabulary. In a former paper I gave my reasons for believing that the ordinary suffix of Latin frequentatives was originally *ica*, as seen in *fod-ica-re*, *uell-ica-re*, in which the part *ic* is one with the diminutival suffix *ec* of Latin substantives, as seen in *sen-ec-*, 'a little oldman' &c.; and secondly that this suffix *ica* eventually passed into *ita*, precisely as the simple suffix *ec* became eventually *et*. A verb *tag-ica-* so

formed from *tag-* (*tang-*), 'touch', might without violence be contracted into *taccare*, which is all but identical with *toccare*. With the more familiar suffix *ita* we should have some such derivative as *tactare*; and as these frequentatives often exchange the *t* for an *s*, witness the verbs *mersa-re*, *pulsa-re*, which we know supplanted the old *merta-re*, *pulta-re*, so we actually find this form *taxa-re*, of which I spoke in my paper on *dum-taxat*.

From a form *tactare* I deduce first *tict-illa-re*, the vowel being modified under the influence of the following *i*; or some may think the change from *a* to *i* to have been caused by a feeling that the weaker vowel is better adapted to represent the idea of a diminutive. The next step is a matter of course. As the combination *ct* of Latin is systematically changed to *tt* in Italian, so also within the classical period we find *in-rita-re*, 'to snarl at', for *in-ric-ta-re*, a compound frequentative from *rig-* (*ringi*), *rite*, 'duly', for *recte*, and *nitor* (*nixus*) for *nictor*, or rather *gnictor*. The disappearance of the guttural from these words is facilitated by the well known tendency, already noted, of a *c* to pass into a *t*. The interchange is familiar in all languages, and is already noticed in Lucian's Trial of the letter *T* before the Court of Vowels at the suit of Σ. For although the injuries done to the dentals and sibilants constitute the gravamen of the charge there put forward, evidence is incidentally called to the usurpation by *T* of property belonging to *K*. One instance is the conversion of the great king (*Κυρον*) to *Tυρον* i. e. Mr. Cheese. I ought not to pass from the subject without noticing that Diez deduces the French *toucher* itself from a German origin, viz *zucken*, a word however which rather means 'to pull', and is substantially one with the more common *zieh-en*, though in practical use the two words differ, *zucken* being limited to a slight jerk. It is by no means rare for languages to possess varieties of the same word, and then to desynomize them. Thus this same verb has three representatives in English *tug*, *tow*, and *twitch*, the last of which seems to correspond with great precision to the German *zucken*. The

old French phrase *je me touche de lui*, 'I get away from him', which Diez brings forward in support of his theory, may possibly have been the error of some Frank, founded on a false feeling that *toucher* represented the German *zucken*. The existing idiom *toucher de l'argent* may be better explained by our own phrase 'fingering the money'.

Having done my best to erase one verb from the list of reduplicated forms, I propose by way of compensation, to claim that formation for a Greek verb, to which a different origin is commonly assigned. I refer to the verb *τικτ-ω*, but I must not claim the matter as an original thought of my own. The suggestion first came to me from my colleague Professor Malden, and I have since found the doctrine distinctly put forward in the *Lexicon* of Dunbar. The base of this verb being *τεκ-*, it is commonly assumed that *τικτ-ω* is formed from it, much as *τυπτ-ω* is from a base *τυπ-*, the change of vowel being passed over as a matter too trifling for notice. No doubt the Latin verbs *nect-*, *plect-*, *flect-* obtain their *t* in this way, but the Greek vocabulary contains not a single verb where a *τ* is added to a *κ*; not that the language has the slightest objection to the combination *εκτ*. Dunbar's theory is that *τικτω* is formed like *πιπτω*, being a substitute for *τικω*. His view is supported by the fact that the Greek language rejects the combination *τεκ*; but the doctrine of metathesis need not be called in. An interchange of *τ* and *κ* is, as we have already said, common in the Greek as in other languages, and a change of this kind in one part of a word is ever apt to be compensated by a converse change in the after-part of a word. In this way *τι-τεκ-ω* may well become *τι-κετ-ω* or *τικτω*. If the German *kitzeln* and our *tickle* be really varieties of the same word, we have another instance of such interchange followed by compensation. My only doubt about the connection arises from the fact that the theory supported in this paper assigns *tickle* to the French portion of our language. Leaving this question unsettled, I would draw attention to the fact, for which I am indebted to Professor Newman, that Greek Scholiasts treat the adjectives *ὑπερκωτος* and *νεκωτος* as

substitutes for *ὑπερτοκος*, 'monstrous' and *νεοτοκος*, 'new-born', thus assuming the very letter-change implied in *τικτω* for *τινω*. Of course the reduplicative theory requires an *i* in the first syllable and thus accounts for that which, though of no great moment, is left unexplained on the ordinary theory.

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X.—THE ANGLO-SAXON LANGUAGE &c. CALLED IN AID TO SUPPORT THE DOCTRINE WHICH ATTRIBUTES A SUFFIX *AGH* OR *AG* TO LATIN VERBS.  
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In our Transactions for 1856, pp. 295-354 I put forward the doctrine that a suffix *agh* or one of similar form plays an important part in the formation of secondary verbs, and in particular that to this suffix we are indebted for the first conjugation, i. e., the verbs in *a* of the Latin language.

Referring to that paper for the full details of the argument, I will here only repeat that I account in this way for the guttural in such forms as *mirac-ulum*, *lavac-rum*, *solac-ium*. I now wish to add to the arguments then adduced some confirmatory evidence, first from the Anglo-Saxon and Old-Norse. Rask in the Grammar of the former language (§ 201) justly contends that the first of his nine conjugations represents the *a* conjugation of the classical languages, and he specially points to the forms for the second and third persons of some verbs common to Anglo-Saxon with the Latin or Greek, as:—

borast, borað by the side of foras, forat;

polast, polað „ „ „ „ *ταλας ταλα*;

ceárást, ceárað „ „ „ „ *curas, curat*;

to which I may add:

temast, temað „ „ „ „ *domas, domat*;

erast, erað „ „ „ „ *aras, arat*.

Now a closer examination of the A.-Saxon will show that a guttural has been lost from this conjugation, and consequently that the full suffix here also was *ag*. I refer to the first person of the Indic. pres. *ic lufige*, to the plur. *we*