

with an important addition of Dutch which came over the border from New York and New Jersey, and a few Canadian-French expressions. For these the dictionary of Mr. Bartlett is an invaluable source of reference. We cannot praise too highly the industry and sagacity manifested in that work. His weak point lies in the fact that having been guided by dictionaries such as that of Wright, he too frequently assumes that a word which is marked as provincial is not generally known in England. Hence he gives as peculiarly and solely American words which have no special claim to be regarded as such. In addition to these mostly Saxon-born terms, there is a much greater number of quaint eccentric expressions of Western and Southern growth, which increase at such a rate that one might easily compile from a very few newspapers an annual volume of new ones. Yet again, English slang phrases are continually being received and shifted into new meanings and forms, as caprice or need may dictate. It may surprise the reader to learn that the works of Artemus Ward, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and other standard humourists, are by no means the great mines of *slang* which they are popularly supposed to be. It is in the newspapers, especially in their reports, theatrical or local, and not infrequently in the "editorials," that the new racy and startling words occur, as they are improvised and picked up. This dictionary contains a large collection of true and recent American colloquial or slang phrases, and though the works of the great American humourists have been carefully searched for this purpose, it will be found that the majority of terms given are from other sources. The reader who is familiar with Bartlett and other writers on Americanisms, can judge for himself to what extent—or to what a slight extent—we are "indebted" to them. It is true that they are frequently cited, but in the great majority of instances it has been for the purpose of correction, emendation, or illustration of their definitions.

The history of Slang is that of the transition of languages into new forms, and from this point of view it may be assumed that such a work as the present will be of as great interest to the thorough student of history as the folk-lore to which it properly belongs, or anything else which indicates the phases of culture.