



# A Philological Introduction to Greek and Latin

*Ferdinand Baur*

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A review from *MIND - A Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy*:

This little work, however technical, calls for notice in Mind by reason of the remarkably clear psychological conceptions underlying the author's treatment of his special subject. The exposition falls into three parts, from the division of Philology or the science of Language (as the phonetic representation of Thought) into Glottology, dealing with Vowels and Consonants as the matter of language:

Grammar or the science of linguistic form in the two phases of

- (1) Root and Stem Formation, and
- (2) Word formation with Inflexion.

How the Root arises originally as the expression of a general idea and passes into the fully developed "Word through the Stem," is very accurately conceived in point of psychology, and the philosophical student may follow even the technical details of the book for illustrations of the principles.

\* \* \* \* \*

Excerpts from the first chapter:

...Reason and language are inseparable. Without language, there is no reason; without reason, there is no language. Or, to put this in other words, there are no definite and clear thoughts, except such as can find expression in articulate sound; there are no articulate sounds except such as are intimately connected with definite conceptions and ideas. Thought which can be grasped is impossible without language. Words and conceptions exist only for each other,—words being the phonetic embodiments and the only exponents of conceptions....

...All phonetic expressions are originally the reflex of impressions on the senses, and this is true whether we consider them under the form of an imitation of sounds, or of interjections, i.e. sounds arising from a sensation.....

The phonetic expressions which, primarily, are either imitations of sounds, or interjections, are, secondarily, tokens of the object which produces the sound, or causes the sensation.

A number of phonetic expressions for identical impressions on the senses are fused into one collective expression, and this becomes a sign of a general conception which includes them all.

From an unlimited number of such possible conceptions, together with their phonetic expressions, a limited selection is made by language; each of these selected expressions, or phonetic types, becomes the sign of some one conception or object essential to human life.

The process by which these are selected is instinctive and rational, not arbitrary or conventional.

These phonetic types are the fundamental elements of language; and to discover them is the goal and result

of philology. They form, for us, the irreducible residuum of linguistic analysis, or, in other words, that which cannot be further explained.....

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