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## PRIMITIVE ENGLISH -E IN FLEXIONAL ENDINGS.

Primitive English -e is rarely to be expected in flexional endings, but etymologically it should occur in the Pr. E. forms from which nom. sg. *fæder* (=Lat. *pater*, etc.), the adverbs in -e (cf. O. Lat. *FACILVMED*, Lat. *facillimē*, and see W. Streitberg, *Urgermanische Grammatik*, § 189) and the word *hwæþre*, *hweþre* (cf. Goth. *hidre*, etc.) descend. Actually in all these cases *æ*, not *e*, is recorded: *steupfaedaer*, adverbial ending -ae, in the Ruthwell Cross (LSE. I, 18); adv. *uidæ*, -licae; *huethrae* in the Epinal Glossary (E. Sievers, PBB viii, 326); 'hweþræ' on the Leiden Riddle (A. H. Smith, *Three Northumbrian Poems*, p. 46). A definite sound-change of Pr. E. *e* to *æ* in flexional syllables might be postulated, but a more probable explanation is that in flexional endings the scribes failed to distinguish between the rare *e* and the very common *æ*.

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