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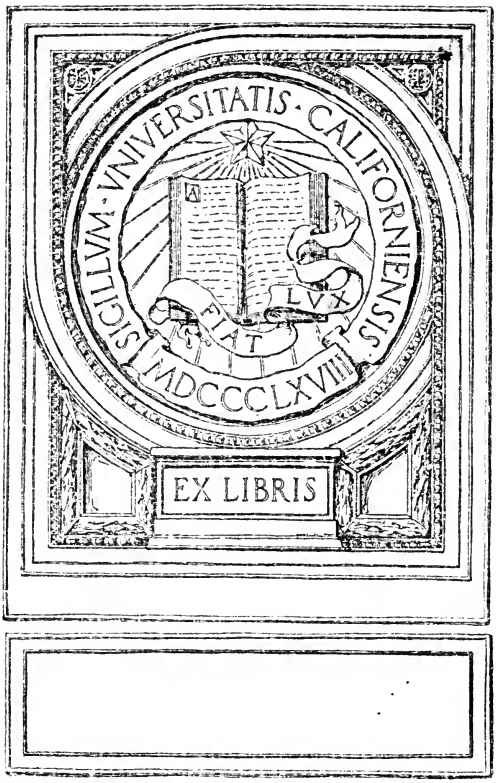
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GROWTH AND STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

BY

OTTO JESPERSEN, PH. D.

PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN,
AUTHOR OF "PROGRESS IN LANGUAGE",
"LEHRBUCH DER PHONETIK", "PHONETISCHE STREITFRAGEN",
"HOW TO TEACH A FOREIGN LANGUAGE", ETC.

LEIPZIG
PUBLISHED BY B. G. TEUBNER
1905

LONDON
DAVID NUTT
57—59 LONG ACRE
WILLIAMS & NORGATE
HENRIETTA STREET

NEW YORK
G. E. STECHERT & Co.
EAST 16TH STREET
WESTERMANN & Co.
EAST 17TH STREET

PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 30, 1905
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1905
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Preface.

The scope and plan of this volume have been set forth in the introductory paragraph. I have endeavoured to write at once popularly and so as to be of some profit to the expert philologist. In some cases I have advanced new views without having space enough to give all my reasons for deviating from commonly accepted theories, but I hope to find an opportunity in future works of a more learned character to argue out the most debatable points.

I owe more than I can say to numerous predecessors in the fields of my investigations, most of all to the authors of the *New English Dictionary*. The dates given for the first and last appearance of a word are nearly always taken from that splendid monument of English scholarship, and it is hardly necessary to warn the reader not to take these dates toeliterally. When I say, for instance, that *fenester* was in use from 1290 to 1548, I do not mean to say that the word was actually heard for the first and for the last time in those two years, but only that no earlier or later quotations have been discovered by the painstaking authors of that dictionary.

I have departed from a common practice in retaining the spelling of all authors quoted. I see no reason why in so many English editions of Shakespeare the spelling is modernized while in quotations from other Elizabethan authors the old spelling is followed. Quotations from Shakespeare are here regularly given in the spelling of

the First Folio (1623). The only points where, for the convenience of modern readers, I regulate the old usage, is with regard to capital letters and *u*, *v*, *i*, *j*, printing, for instance, *us* and *love* instead of *vs* and *loue*. — To avoid misunderstandings, I must here expressly state, that by Old English (O. E.) I always understand the language before 1150, still often termed Anglo-Saxon.

After apologizing for some inconsistencies in the use of italic letters and other typographical details, it remains for me to thank three friends for their kind assistance. Mr. A. E. Hayes of London and Dr. Lane Cooper of Cornell University have read through parts of my manuscript and have corrected my English style in several places. Professor G. C. Moore Smith of Sheffield University not only has rendered me the same service for other parts of the book, but has also assisted me during the proof-reading, and I owe him a special debt of gratitude for making me omit or soften down a few rather rash assertions and for giving me in many ways the benefit of his great knowledge of English language and English literature.

Gentofte (Copenhagen), August 1905.

O. J.

Chapter I.

Preliminary Sketch.

1. It will be my endeavour in this volume to characterize the chief peculiarities of the English language, and to explain the growth and significance of those features in its structure which have been of permanent importance. The older stages of the language, interesting as their study is, will be considered only in so far as they throw light either directly or by way of contrast on the main characteristics of present-day English, and an attempt will be made to connect the teachings of linguistic history with the chief events in the general history of the English people so as to show their mutual bearings on each other and the relation of language to national character. The knowledge that the latter conception is a very difficult one to deal with scientifically, as it may easily tempt one into hasty generalizations, should make us wary, but not deter us from grappling with problems which are really both interesting and important. — My plan will be, first to give a rapid sketch of the language of our own days, so as to show how it strikes a foreigner — a foreigner who has devoted much time to the study of English, but who feels that in spite of all his efforts he is only able to look at it as a foreigner does, and not exactly as a native would — and then sun the following chapters to enter more deeply into the on tory of the language in order to describe its first

shape, to trace the various foreign influences it has undergone, and to give an account of its own inner growth.

2. It is, of course, impossible to characterize a language in one formula; languages, like men, are too composite to have their whole essence summed up in one short expression. Nevertheless, there is one expression that continually comes to my mind whenever I think of the English language and compare it with others: it seems to me positively and expressly *masculine*, it is the language of a grown-up man and has very little childish or feminine about it. A great many things go together to produce and to confirm that impression, things phonetical, grammatical, and lexical, words and turns that are found. and words and turns that are not found, in the language. In dealing with the English language one is often reminded of the characteristic English hand-writing; just as an English lady will nearly always write in a manner that in any other country would only be found in a man's hand, in the same manner the language is more manly than any other language I know.

3. First I shall mention the sound system. The English consonants are well defined; voiced and voiceless consonants stand over against each other in neat symmetry, and they are, as a rule, clearly and precisely pronounced. You have none of those indistinct or half-slurred consonants that abound in Danish, for instance (such as those in ha*d*e, ha*g*e, li*v*lig) where you hardly know whether it is a consonant or a vowel-glide that meets the ear. The only thing that might be compared to this in English, is the *r* after a vowel, but then this has really given up definitely all pretensions to the [illegible] of a consonant, and is (in the pronunciat[illegible] in South of England) either frankly a vowel ([illegible] his

or else nothing at all (in *hart*, etc.). Each English consonant belongs distinctly to its own type, a *t* is a *t*, and a *k* is a *k*, and there an end. There is much less modification of a consonant by the surrounding vowels than in some other languages, thus none of that palatalization of consonants which gives an insinuating grace to such languages as Russian. The vowel sounds, too, are comparatively independent of their surroundings, and in this respect the language now has deviated widely from the character of Old English and has become more clear-cut and distinct in its phonetic structure, although, to be sure, the diphthongization of most long vowels (in *ale*, *whole*, *eel*, *who*, phonetically eil, houl, ijl, huw) counteracts in some degree this impression of neatness and evenness.

4. Besides these characteristics, the full nature of which cannot, perhaps, be made intelligible to any but those familiar with phonetic research, but which are still felt more or less instinctively by everybody hearing the language spoken, there are other traits whose importance can with greater ease be made evident to anybody possessed of a normal ear.

5. To bring out clearly one of these points I select at random, by way of contrast, a passage from the language of Hawaii: "I kona hiki ana aku ilaila ua hookipa ia mai la oia me ke aloha pumehana loa." Thus it goes on, no single word ends in a consonant, and a group of two or more consonants is never found. Can any one be in doubt that even if such a language sound pleasantly and be full of music and harmony, the total impression is childlike and effeminate? You do not expect much vigour or energy in a people speaking such a language; it seems adapted only to inhabitants of sunny regions where the soil requires scarcely any labour on the part of man to yield him everything he wants,

and where life therefore does not bear the stamp of a hard struggle against nature and against fellow-creatures. In a lesser degree we find the same phonetic structure in such languages as Italian and Spanish; but how different are our Germanic tongues. English has no lack of words ending in two or more consonants, — I am speaking, of course, of the pronunciation, not of the spelling — *age*, *hence*, *wealth*, *tent*, *tempt*, *tempts*, *months*, *helped*, *feasts*, etc. etc. and thus requires, as well as presupposes, no little energy on the part of the speakers. That many suchlike consonant groups do not tend to render the language beautiful, one is bound readily to concede; however, it cannot be pretended that their number in English is great enough to make the language harsh or rough. While the fifteenth century greatly increased the number of consonant groups by making the *e* mute in *monthes*, *helped*, etc., the following centuries, on the contrary, alleviated such groups as *-ght* in *night*, *thought* (where the "back-open" consonant as German *ch* is still spoken in Scotch) and the initial *kn-*, *gn-* in *know*, *gnaw*, etc. Note also the disappearance of *l* in *alms*, *folk*, etc., and of *r* in *hard*, *court*, etc.; the final consonant groups have also been simplified in *comb* and the other words in *-mb* (whereas *b* has been retained in *timber*) and in the exactly parallel group *-ng*, for instance in *strong*, where now only one consonant is heard after the vowel, a consonant partaking of the nature of *n* and of *g*, but identical with neither of them; formerly it was followed by a real *g*, which has been retained in *stronger*.

6. In the first ten stanzas of Tennyson's "Locksley Hall," three hundred syllables, we have only thirty-three words ending in two consonants, and two ending in three, certainly no excessive number, especially if we take into account the nature of the groups, which are nearly all of the easiest kind (-dz: comrades, Pleiads;

-mz: gleams, comes; -nz: robin's, man's, turns; -ns: distance, science; -ʃs: overlooks; -ts: gets, thoughts; -kts: tracts, cataracts; -zd: reposed, closed; -st: rest, West, breast, crest; -ʃt: burnish'd; -nd: sound, around, moorland, behind, land; -nt: want, casement, went, present; -ld: old, world; -lt: result; -lf: himself; -pt: dipt). Thus, we may perhaps characterize English, phonetically speaking, as possessing male energy, but not brutal force. The accentual system points in the same direction, as will be seen below (26—28).

7. The Italians have a pointed proverb: "Le parole son femmine e i fatti son maschi." If briefness, conciseness and terseness are characteristic of the style of men, while women as a rule are not so great economizers of speech, English is more masculine than most languages. We see this in a great many ways. In grammar it has got rid of a great many superfluities found in earlier English as well as in most cognate languages, reducing endings, etc., to the shortest forms possible and often doing away with endings altogether. Where German has, for instance, *alle diejenigen wilden tiere, die dort leben*, so that the plural idea is expressed in each word separately (apart, of course, from the adverb), English has *all the wild animals that live there*, where *all*, the article, the adjective, and the relative pronoun are all of them incapable of receiving any mark of the plural number; the sense is expressed with the greatest clearness imaginable, and all the unstressed endings *-e* and *-en*, which make most German sentences so drawling, are avoided.

8. Rimes based on correspondence in the last syllable only of each line (as bet, set; laid, shade) are termed male rimes as opposed to feminine rimes, where one strong and one weak syllable in one line correspond to the other line (as better, setter; lady, shady). It is

true that these names, which originated in France, were not at first meant to express any parallelism with the characteristics of the two sexes, but arose merely from the grammatical fact that the weak -*e* was the ending of the feminine gender (grande, etc.). But the designations are not entirely devoid of symbolic significance; there is really more of abrupt force in a word that ends with a strongly stressed syllable, than in a word where the maximum of force is followed by a weak ending. "Thanks" is harsher and less polite than the two-syllabled "thank you". English has undoubtedly gained in force, what it has possibly lost in elegance, by reducing so many words of two syllables to monosyllables. If it had not been for the great number of long foreign, especially Latin, words, English would have approached the state of such monosyllabic languages as Chinese. Now one of the best, if not the best, of Chinese scholars, G. v. d. Gabelentz, somewhere remarks that an idea of the condensed power of the monosyllabism found in old Chinese may be gathered from Luther's advice to a preacher "Geh rasch 'nauf, thu's maul auf, hör bald auf." He might with equal justice have reminded us of many English sentences. "First come first served" is much more vigorous than the French "premier venu, premier moulu" or "le premier venu engrène," the German "wer zuerst kommt, mahlt zuerst" and especially than the Danish "den der kommer først til mølle, får først malet." Compare also "no cure, no pay," "haste makes waste, and waste makes want," "live and learn," "Love no man: trust no man: speak ill of no man to his face; nor well of any man behind his back" (Ben Jonson), "to meet, to know, to love, and then to part" (Coleridge), "Then none were for the party; Then all were for the state; Then the great man help'd the poor, And the poor man loved the great" (Macaulay).

9. It will be noticed, however, — and the quotations just given serve to exemplify this, too — that it is not every collocation of words of one syllable that produces an effect of strength, for a great many of the short words most frequently employed are not stressed at all and therefore impress the ear in nearly the same way as prefixes and suffixes do. There is nothing particularly vigorous in the following passage from a modern novel: "It was as if one had met part of one's self one had lost for a long time", and in fact most people hearing it read aloud would fail to notice that it consisted of nothing but one-syllable words. Such sentences are not at all rare in colloquial prose, and even in poetry they are found oftener than in most languages, for instance: —

> And there a while it bode; and if a man
> Could touch or see it, he was heal'd at once,
> By faith, of all his ills.
>
> (Tennyson, The Holy Grail.)

But then, the weakness resulting from many small connecting words is to some extent compensated in English by the absence of the definite article in a good many cases where other languages think it indispensable, *e. g.* 'Merry Old England,' 'Heaven and Earth;' 'life is short;' 'dinner is ready;' 'school is over;' 'I saw him at church,' and this peculiarity delivers the language from a number of those short 'empty words,' which when accumulated cannot fail to make the style somewhat weak and prolix.

10. Business-like shortness is also seen in such convenient abbreviations of sentences as abound in English, for instance, 'While fighting in Germany he was taken prisoner' (= while he was fighting). 'He would not answer when spoken to.' 'To be left till called for.' 'Once at home, he forgot his fears.' 'We had no idea

what to do.' 'Did they run? Yes, I made them' (= made them run). 'Shall you play tennis to-day? Yes, we are going to. I should like to, but I can't'. 'Dinner over, he left the house.' Such expressions remind one of the abbreviations used in telegrams; they are syntactical correspondencies to the morphological shortenings that are also of such frequent occurrence in English: *cab* for *cabriolet*, *bus* for *omnibus*, *photo* for *photograph*, *phone* for *telephone*, and innumerable others.

11. This cannot be separated from a certain sobriety in expression. As an Englishman does not like to use more words or more syllables than are strictly necessary, so he does not like to say more than he can stand to. He dislikes strong or hyperbolical expressions of approval or admiration; "that isn't half bad" or "she is rather good-looking" are often the highest praises you can screw out of him, and they not seldom express the same warmth of feeling that makes a Frenchman ejaculate his "charmant" or "ravissante" or "adorable." German *kolossal* or *pyramidalisch* can often be correctly rendered by English *great* or *biggish*, and where a Frenchman uses his adverbs *extrêmement* or *infiniment*, an Englishman says only *very* or *rather* or *pretty*. 'Quelle horreur!' is 'That's rather a nuisance'. 'Je suis ravi de vous voir' is 'Glad to see you,' etc. An Englishman does not like to commit himself by being too enthusiastic or too distressed, and his language accordingly grows sober, too sober perhaps, and even barren when the object is to express emotions. There is in this trait a curious mixture of something praiseworthy, the desire to be strictly true without exaggerating anything or promising more than you can keep, and on the other hand of something blameworthy, the idea that it is affected, or childish and effeminate, to give vent to one's feelings, and the fear of appearing ridiculous by showing

strong emotions. But this trait is certainly found more frequently in men than in women, so I may be allowed to add this feature of the English language to the signs of masculinity I have collected.

12. Those who use many strong words to express their likes or dislikes will generally also make an extensive use of another linguistic appliance, namely violent movements in the intonation. Their voices will now suddenly rise to a very high pitch and then as suddenly fall to low tones. An excessive use of this emotional tonic accent is characteristic of many savage nations; in Europe it is found much more in Italy than in the North. In each nation it seems as if it were more employed by women than by men. Now, it has often been observed that the English speak in a more monotonous way than most other nations, so that an extremely slight rising or lowering of the tone indicates what in other languages would require a much greater interval. "Les Anglais parlent extrêmement bas," says H. Taine (Notes sur l'Angleterre, p. 66). "Une société italienne, dans laquelle je me suis fourvoyé par hasard, m'a positivement étourdi; je m'étais habitué à ce ton modéré des voix anglaises." Even English ladies are in this respect more restrained than many men belonging to other nations:

"She had the low voice of your English dames,
Unused, it seems, to need rise half a note
To catch attention"

(Mrs. Browning, Aurora Leigh p. 91).[1]

13. If we turn to other provinces of the language we shall find our impression strengthened and deepened.

It is worth observing, for instance, how few diminutives the language has and how sparingly it uses them.

1 Cf. my Lehrbuch der Phonetik, p. 226; Fonetik (Dan. ed.) p. 588.

English in this respect forms a strong contrast to Italian with its *-ino* (ragazzino, fratellino, originally a double diminutive), *-ina* (donnina), *-etto* (giovinetto), *-etta* (oretta), *-ello*, *-ella* (asinello, storiella) and other endings, German with its *-chen* und *-lein*, especially South German with its eternal *-le*, Dutch with its *-je*. In Dutch every child is a *kindje*, and every girl a *meisje;* every tree may be called a *boompje*, every cup of coffee or tea a *kopje*, every rabbit a *konijntje*, every foot a *voetje*, every key a *sleuteltje* etc, etc. The continual recurrence of these endings without any apparent necessity cannot but produce the impression that the speakers are innocent, childish, genial beings with no great business capacities or seriousness in life. But in English there are very few of these fondling endings; *-let* is in the first place a comparatively modern ending, very few of the words in which it is used go back more than a hundred years; and then its extensive use in modern times is chiefly due to the naturalists who want it to express in a short and precise manner certain small organs (budlet Darwin; bladelet Todd; conelet Dana; bulblet Gray; leaflet, fruitlet, featherlet, etc.)—an employment of the dimunutive which is as far removed as possible from the terms of endearment found in other languages. The endings *-kin* and *-ling* (princekin, princeling) are not very frequently used and generally express contempt or derision. Then, of course, there is *-y*, *-ie* (Billy, Dicky, auntie, birdie, etc.) which corresponds exactly to the fondling suffixes of other languages; but its application in English is restricted to the nursery and it is hardly ever used by grown-up people except in speaking to children. Besides, this ending is more Scotch than English, and the Scotch with all their deadly earnestness, especially in religious matters, are, perhaps, greater children than the English.

14. The business-like, virile qualities of the English language also manifest themselves in such things as word-order. Words in English do not play at hide-and-seek, as they often do in Latin, for instance, or in German, where ideas that by right belong together are widely sundered in obedience to caprice or, more often, to a rigorous grammatical rule. In English an auxiliary verb does not stand far from its main verb, and a negative will be found in the immediate neighbourhood of the word it negatives, generally the verb (auxiliary). An adjective nearly always stands before its noun; the only really important exception is when there are qualifications added to it which draw it after the noun so that the whole complex serves the purpose of a relative clause: "a man every way prosperous and talented" (Tennyson), "an interruption too brief and isolated to attract more notice" (Stevenson). And the same regularity is found in modern English word-order in other respects as well. A few years ago I made my pupils calculate statistically various points in regard to word-order in different languages. I give here only the percentage in some modern authors of sentences in which the subject preceded the verb and the latter in its turn preceded its object (as in "I saw him" as against "Him I saw, but not her" or "Whom did you see?"):—

Shelley, prose 89, poetry 85.
Byron, prose 93, poetry 81.
Macaulay, prose 82.
Carlyle, prose 87.
Tennyson, poetry 88.
Dickens, prose 91.
Swinburne, poetry 83.
Pinero, prose 97.

For the sake of comparison I mention that one Danish prose writer (J. P. Jacobsen) had 82, a Danish

poet (Drachmann) 61, Goethe (poetry) 30, a modern German prose writer (Tovote) 31, Anatole France 66, Gabriele d'Annunzio 49 per cent of the same word-order. That English has not always had the same regularity, is shown by the figure for Beowulf being 16, and for King Alfred's prose 40. Even if I concede that our statistics did not embrace a sufficient number of extracts to give fully reliable results, still it is indisputable that English shows more regularity and less caprice in that respect than most or probably all cognate languages, without however, attaining the rigidity found in Chinese, where the percentage in question would be 100 (or very near it). English has not deprived itself of the expedient of inverting the ordinary order of the members of a sentence when emphasis requires it, but it makes a more sparing use of it than German and the Scandinavian languages, and in most cases it will be found that these languages emphasize without any real necessity, especially in a great many every-day phrases: dær har jeg ikke været, dort bin ich nicht gewesen, I haven't been there; det kan jeg ikke, das kann ich nicht, I can't do that. How superfluous the emphasis is, is best shown by the usual phrase, det veed jeg ikke, das weiß ich nicht, where the Englishman does not even find it necessary to state the object at all: I don't know. Note also that in English the subject precedes the verb after most introducing adverbs: now he comes; there he goes, while German and Danish have, and English had till a few centuries ago, the inverted order: jetzt kommt er, da geht sie; nu kommer han, dær går hun; now comes he, there goes she. Thus order and consistency signalize the modern stage of the English language.

15. No language is logical in every respect, and we must not expect usage to be guided always by strictly logical principles. It was a frequent error with the older

schools of grammar that whenever the actual grammar of a language did not seem conformable to the rules of abstract logic they blamed the language and wanted to correct it. Without falling into that error we may, however, compare different languages and judge them by the standard of logic, and here again I think that, apart from Chinese which has been described as pure applied logic, there is perhaps no language in the civilized world that stands so high as English. Look at the use of the tenses; the difference between the past *he saw* and the composite perfect *he has seen* is carried through with great consistency as compared with the similarly formed tenses in Danish, not to speak of German, so that one of the most constant faults committed by English-speaking Germans is the wrong use of these forms ("Were you in Berlin?" for "Have you been in (or to) Berlin?", "In 1815 Napoleon has been defeated at Waterloo" for "was defeated"). And then the comparatively recent development of the extended (or "progressive") tenses has furnished the language with the wonderfully precise and logically valuable distinction between "I write" and "I am writing", "I wrote" and "I was writing." French has something similar in the distinction between le passé défini (j'écrivis) and l'imparfait (j'écrivais), but on the one hand the former tends to disappear, or rather has already disappeared in the spoken language, at any rate in Paris and in the northern part of the country, so that *j'ai écrit* takes its place and the distinction between "I wrote" and "I have written" is abandoned; on the other hand the distinction applies only to the past while in English it is carried through all tenses. Furthermore, the distinction as made in English is superior to the similar one found in the Slavonic languages, in that it is made uniformly in all verbs and in all tenses by means of the same device (*am -ing*), while the Slavonic languages

employ a much more complicated system of prepositions and derivative endings, which has almost to be learned separately for each new verb or group of verbs.

16. In praising the logic of the English language we must not lose sight of the fact that in most cases where, so to speak, the logic of facts or of the exterior world is at war with the logic of grammar, English is free from the narrow-minded pedantry which in most languages sacrifices the former to the latter, or makes people shy of saying or writing things which are not "strictly grammatical." This is particularly clear with regard to number. *Family* and *clergy* are, grammatically speaking, of the singular number; but in reality they indicate a plurality. Most languages can treat such words only as singulars, but in English one is free to add a verb in singular if the idea of unity is essential, and then to refer to this unit as *it*, or else to put the verb in the plural and use the pronoun *they*, if the idea of plurality is predominant. It is clear that this liberty of choice is often greatly advantageous. Thus we find sentences like these, "As the clergy are or are not what they ought to be, so are the rest of the nation" (Miss Austen), or "the whole race of man (sing.) proclaim it lawful to drink wine" (De Quincey), or "the club all know that he is a disappointed man" (the same). In "there are no end of people here that I don't know" (George Eliot) *no end* takes the verb in the plural because it is equivalent to "many," and when Shelley writes in one of his letters "the Quarterly are going to review me" he is thinking of the Quarterly (Review) as a whole staff of writers. Inversely, there is in English a freedom paralleled nowhere else of expressing grammatically a unity consisting of several parts, of saying, for instance, "I do not think I ever spent a more delightful three weeks" (Ch. Darwin), "for a quiet twenty minutes," "another United States,"

cf. also "a fortnight" (originally a fourteen-night); "three years is but short" (Shakespeare), "sixpence was offered him" (Ch. Darwin), "ten minutes is heaps of time" (E. F. Benson), etc. etc.

17. A great many other phenomena in English show the same freedom from pedantry, as when passive constructions such as "he was taken no notice of" are allowed, or when adverbs or prepositional complexes may be used attributively as in "his then residence," "an almost reconciliation" (Thackeray), "men invite their out-College friends" (Steadman), "smoking his before-breakfast pipe" (Co. Doyle), "in his threadbare, out-at-elbow shooting-jacket" (G. du Maurier), or when even whole phrases or sentences may be turned into a kind of adjective, as in "with a quite at home kind of air" (Smedley), "in the pretty diamond-cut-diamond scene between Pallas and Ulysses" (Ruskin), "a little man with a puffy Say-nothing to-me-, -or-I'll-contradict-you sort of countenance" (Dickens), "With an I-turn-the-crank-of-the-Universe air" (Lowell), "Rose is simply self-willed; a 'she will' or 'she won't' sort of little person" (Meredith). Although such combinations as the last-mentioned are only found in more or less jocular style, they show the possibilities of the language, and some expressions of a similar order belong permanently to the language, for instance, 'a would-be artist,' 'a stay-at-home man,' 'a turn-up collar.' Such things—and they might be easily multiplied—are inconceivable in such a language as French where everything is condemned that does not conform to a definite set of rules laid down by grammarians. The French language is like the stiff French garden of Louis XIV, while the English is like an English park, which is laid out seemingly without any definite plan, and in which you are allowed to walk everywhere according to your own fancy without having to fear a stern keeper enforcing

rigorous regulations. The English language would not have been what it is if the English had not been for centuries great respecters of the liberties of each individual and if everybody had not been free to strike out new paths for himself.

18. This is seen, too, in the vocabulary. In spite of the efforts of several authors of high standing, the English have never suffered an Academy to be instituted among them like the French or Italian Academies, which had as one of their chief tasks the regulation of the vocabulary so that every word not found in their Dictionaries was blamed as unworthy of literary use or distinction. In England every writer is, and has always been, free to take his words where he chooses, whether from the ordinary stock of everyday words, from native dialects, from old authors, or from other languages, dead or living. The consequence has been that English dictionaries comprise a larger number of words than those of any other nation, and that they present a variegated picture of words from the four quarters of the globe. Now, it seems to be characteristic of the two sexes in their relation to language that women move in narrower circles of the vocabulary, in which they attain to perfect mastery so that the flow of words is always natural and, above all, never needs to stop, while men know more words and always want to be more precise in choosing the exact word with which to render their idea, the consequence being often less fluency and more hesitation. It has been statistically shown that a comparatively greater number of stammerers and stutterers are found among men (boys) than among women (girls). Teachers of foreign languages have many occasions to admire the ease with which female students express themselves in another language after so short a time of study that most men would be able to say only few words hesitatingly

and falteringly, but if they are put to the test of translating a difficult piece either from or into the foreign language, the men will generally prove superior to the women. With regard to their native language the same difference is found, though it is perhaps not so easy to observe. At any rate our assertion is corroborated by an observation made by every student of languages that novels written by ladies are much easier to read and contain much fewer difficult words than those written by men. All this seems to justify us in setting down the enormous richness of the English vocabulary to the same masculinity of the English nation which we have now encountered in so many various fields.

To sum up: The English language is a methodical, energetic, business-like and sober language, that does not care much for finery and elegance, but does care for logical consistency and is opposed to any attempt to narrow-in life by police regulations and strict rules either of grammar or of lexicon. As the language is, so also is the nation,

> For words, like Nature, half reveal
> And half conceal the Soul within. (Tennyson.)

Chapter II.

The Beginnings.

20. The existence of the English language as a separate idiom began when Germanic tribes had occupied all the lowlands of Great Britain and when accordingly the invasions from the continent were discontinued, so that the settlers in their new homes were cut off from that steady intercourse with their continental relations which is an imperative condition of linguistic unity. The historical records of English do not go so far back as this, for the oldest written texts in the English language (in "Anglo-Saxon") date from about 700 and are thus removed by about three centuries from the beginnings of the language. And yet comparative philology is able to tell us something about the manner in which the ancestors of these settlers spoke centuries before that period, and to sketch the prehistoric development of what was to become the language of King Alfred, of Chaucer and of Shakespeare.

21. The dialects spoken by the settlers in England belonged to the great Germanic (or Teutonic) branch of the most important of all linguistic families, termed by many philologists the Indo-European (or Indo-Germanic) and by others, and to my mind more appropriately, Arian (Aryan). The Arian family comprises a great variety of languages, including, besides some languages of less importance, Sanskrit with Prakrit and many living languages

of India; Iranian with Modern Persian; Greek; Latin with the modern Romance languages (Italian, Spanish, French etc.); Celtic, two divisions of which still survive, one in Welsh and Armorican or Breton, the other in the closely connected Irish and Scotch-Gaelic, besides the nearly extinct Manx; Baltic (Lithuanian and Lettic) and Slavonic (Russian, Czech, Polish, etc.). Among the extinct Germanic languages Ulfila's Gothic was the most important; the living are High German, Dutch, Low German, Frisian, English, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Icelandic. The first five are generally grouped together as West-Germanic, while the four last-mentioned or Scandinavian languages constitute with Gothic the East-Germanic group, a grouping which does not, however, account for the really much more complex relationship between these languages.

22. The Arian language, which was in course of time differentiated into all these languages, or as the same fact is generally expressed in a metaphor of dubious value, was the parent-language from which all these languages have descended, must by no means be imagined as a language characterized by a simple and regular structure. On the contrary it must have been, grammatically and lexically, extremely complicated and full of irregularities. Its grammar was highly inflectional, the relations between the ideas being expressed by means of endings which were more intimately fused together with the chief element of the word than in such agglutinative languages as Hungarian (Magyar). Nouns and verbs were kept distinct, and where the same sense-modifications were expressed in both, such as plurality, it was by means of totally different endings. In fact, the indication of number — the threefold division into singular, dual, and plural — was inseparable from the case-endings in the nouns and from the person-endings

as well as signs of mood and tense in the verbs: one cannot point to distinct parts of such a Latin form as *est (cantat)* or *sunt (cantant)* or *fuissem (cantavissem)* and say, this element means singular (or plural), this one means indicative (or subjunctive) and that one indicates what tense the whole form belongs to. There were eight cases, but they did not, for the greater part, indicate such clear, concrete, outward relations as the Finnic (local) cases do; the consequence was a comparatively great number of clashings and overlappings, in form as well as in function. Each noun belonged to one of three genders, masculine, feminine, and neuter; but this division by no means corresponded with logical consistency to the natural division into living beings of one sex, living beings of the other sex, and everything else. Nor did the moods and tenses of the verb agree very closely with any definite logical categories, the idea of time being, moreover, mixed up with that of "tense-aspect" (in German "aktionsart"), i. e distinctions according as an action was viewed as momentary or protracted or iterated, etc. In the nominal as well as in the verbal inflections the endings varied with the character of the stem they were added to, and very often the accent was shifted from one syllable to another according to seemingly arbitrary rules, just as in modern Russian. In a great many cases, too, one form was taken from one word and another from a totally different one, a phenomenon (called by Osthoff "suppletivwesen") which we have in a few instances in modern English (*good, better; go, went,* etc.). An idea of the phonetic system of the old Arian language may best be gathered from Greek, which has preserved the old system with great fidelity on the whole, especially the vowels. But of course, no one of the historically transmitted languages, not even one of the oldest, can give more than an approximate

idea of the common Arian language distant from us by so many thousand years, and scholars have now learnt more prudence than at the time when Schleicher was bold enough to print a fable in what he believed to be a fairly accurate representation of primitive Arian.

23. In historical times we find Arian split up into a variety of languages, each with its own peculiarities, in sounds, in grammar, and in vocabulary. So different were these languages that the Greeks had no idea of any similarity or relationship between their own tongue and that of their Persian enemies; nor did the Romans suspect that the Gauls and Germans they fought spoke languages of the same stock as their own. Whenever the Germanic languages are alluded to, it is always in expressions like these, "a Roman tongue can hardly pronounce such names" or (after giving the names of some Germanic tribes) "the names sound like a noisy war-trumpet, and the ferocity of these barbarians adds horror even to the words themselves." Julian the Apostate compares the singing of Germanic popular ballads to the croaking and shrill screeching of birds.[1] Much of this, of course, must be put down to the ordinary Greek and Roman contempt for foreigners generally; nor can it be wondered at that they did not recognise in these languages congeners of their own, for the similarities had been considerably blurred by a great many important changes in sound and in structure, so that it is only the patient research of the nineteenth century that has enabled us to identify words in separate languages which are now so dissimilar as not to strike the casual observer as in any way related. What contributed, perhaps, more than anything else to make Germanic words look strange, were two great phonetic changes affecting large

1 Kluge, Paul's Grundriß I 354.

parts of the vocabulary, the *consonant-shift*[1] and the *stress-shift*.

24. The consonant-shift must not be imagined as having taken place at one moment; on the contrary it must have taken centuries, and modern research has begun to point out the various stages in this development. This is not the proper place to deal with detailed explanations of this important change, as we must hurry on to more modern times; suffice it then to give a few examples to show how it affected the whole look of the language. Any *p* was changed to *f*, — thus we have *father* corresponding to *pater* and similar forms in the cognate languages; any *t* was made into *th* [þ], as in *three*, — compare Latin *tres*; any *k* became *h*, — as *cornu* = *horn*.[2] And as similarly any *b* or *d* or *g*, any *bh*, *dh*, *gh* was shifted, you will understand that there were comparatively few words that were not altered past

1 In English books this change ("die erste Lautverschiebung") is often called Grimm's law, because the 2d edition of the first volume of Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Grammatik* (1822) made it generally known. But in his first edition (1819) Grimm did not yet know the law; between the two editions he had read the Danish scholar Rasmus Rask's *Undersøgelse om det gamle nordiske sprogs oprindelse* (written 1814, printed 1818), where the sound-correspondences are clearly set forth on p. 169. Grimm saw the enormous importance of the discovery and formulated the law in a more abstract manner than Rask. As part of the law had been seen more or less clearly by a few earlier philologists, and as Grimm's manner of stating it has been considerably modified by recent investigations, the law should not be named after any one man. At any rate it is perfectly absurd to extend the name of "Grimm's law" to any similar phonetic change, as is sometimes done ("Grimm's Law in South-Africa").

2 Latin words are here chosen for convenience only as representing these old consonants with great fidelity; but of course it must not be supposed that the English words named come from the Latin.

recognition; still such there were, for instance *mus*, now *mouse*, which contained none of the consonants susceptible of the shifting in question.

25. The second change affected the general character of the language even more thoroughly. Where previously the stress was sometimes on the first syllable of the word, sometimes on the second, or on the third, etc., without any seeming reason and without any regard to the intrinsic importance of that syllable, a complete revolution simplified matters so that the stress rules may be stated in a couple of lines: nearly all words were stressed on the first syllable; the chief exceptions occurred only where the word was a verb beginning with one out of a definite number of prefixes, such as those we have in modern English *beget*, *forget*, *overthrow*, *abide* etc. Verner has shown that this shifting of the place of the accent took place later than the Germanic consonant-shift, and we shall now inquire into the relative importance of the two.

26. The consonant-shift is important to the modern philologist, in so far as it is to him the clearest and least ambiguous criterion of the Germanic languages: a word with a shifted consonant is Germanic, and a word with an unshifted consonant in any of the Germanic languages must be a loan-word; whereas the shifted stress is no such certain criterion, chiefly because many words had already the stress on the first syllable. But if we ask about the intrinsic importance of the two changes, that is, if we try to look at matters from the point of view of the language itself, or rather the speakers, we shall see that the second change is really the more important one. It does not matter much whether a certain number of words begin with a *p* or with a *f*, but it does matter, or at any rate it *may* matter, very much whether the language has a rational system of accentuation or not; and I have no hesitation in saying that the old

stress-shift has left its indelible mark on the structure of the language and has influenced it more than any other phonetic change.[1] The significance of the stress shift will, perhaps, appear most clearly if we compare two sets of words in modern English. The original Arian stress system is still found in numerous words taken in recent times from the classical languages, thus *'family*, *fa'miliar*, *famili'arity* or *'photograph*, *pho'tographer*, *photo-'graphic*.[2] The shifted Germanic system is shown in such groups as *'love*, *'lover*, *'loving*, *'lovingly*, *'lovely*, *'love-liness*, *'loveless*, *'lovelessness*, or *'king*, *'kingdom*, *'kingship*, *'kingly*, *'kingless*, etc. As it is characteristic of all Arian languages that suffixes play a much greater role than prefixes, so that derivation is generally by endings, it follows that where the Germanic stress system has been carried through, the syllable that is most important has also the strongest stress, and that the relatively insignificant modifications of the chief idea which are indicated by formative syllables are also accentually subordinate. This is, accordingly, a perfectly logical system, corresponding to the most important rule observed in sentence stress, viz. that the stressed words are generally the most important ones. As, moreover, want of stress tends everywhere to obscure vowel-sounds, languages with moveable accent are exposed to the danger that related words, or different forms of the same word, are made more different than they would else have been, and their connection is more obscured than is strictly necessary; compare, for instance, the two sounds in the first syllable of *family* [æ][3] and *familiar* [ə], or the different treatment

1 Except perhaps the disappearance of so many weak *e*'s about 1400.

2 I indicate stress by means of a short vertical stroke ˈ immediately before the beginning of the strong syllable.

3 A list of the phonetic symbols used in this book will be found on the last page.

of the vowels in *photograph*, *photographer* and *photographic*. The phonetic clearness inherent in the consistent stress system is certainly a linguistic advantage, and the obscuration of the connection between related words is to be considered a drawback in most if not, perhaps, in all cases. The language of our forefathers seems therefore to have gained considerably by replacing the movable stress by a fixed one.

27. The question naturally arises: why was the accent shifted in this way? Two possible answers present themselves. The change may have been either a purely mechanical process, by which the first syllable was stressed without any regard to signification, or else it may have been a psychological process, by which the root syllable became stressed because it was the most important part of the word. As in the vast majority of cases the root syllable is the first, the question must be decided from those cases where the two things are not identical. Kluge[1] infers from the treatment of reduplicated forms of the perfect corresponding to Latin *cecidi*, *peperci*, etc. that the shifting was a purely mechanical process; for it was not the most important syllable that was stressed in Gothic *haihait* 'called', *rairoþ* 'reflected', *lailot* 'let' (read *ai* as short *e*), while the vowel of the root syllable actually disappears in the Old English forms of these words *heht*, *reord*, *leort*. But it may be objected to this view that the reduplicated syllable was in some measure the bearer of the root signification, as it had enough left of the root to remind the hearer of it, and in pronouncing it the speaker had before him part at least of the significant elements. The first syllable of a reduplicated perfect must to him have been of a far greater importance than one of those prefixes which served only

1 Paul's Grundriß I 2 389.

to modify to a small extent the principal idea expressed in the root syllable. The fact that the reduplicated syllable attracted the accent therefore speaks less strongly in favour of the mechanical explanation than does the want of stress on the verbal prefixes in the opposite direction, so that the case seems to me strongest for the psychological theory. In other words, we have here a case of *value-stressing*;[1] that part of the word which is of greatest value to the speaker and which therefore he especially wants the hearer to notice, is pronounced with the strongest stress.

28. We find the same principle of value-stressing everywhere, even in those languages whose traditional stress rests or may rest on other syllables than the root — this word is here used not in the sense of the etymologically original part of the word, but in the sense of what is to the actual instinct of the speaker intrinsically the most significant element — but in these languages it plays only the part of causing now and then a deviation from the traditional stress whereas in Germanic it has become *habitual* to stress the root syllable[2], and this leads to other consequences of some interest. In those languages where the traditional stress rests now on one, now on another syllable, and where the stress syllable is not always the most significant one, the difference between stressed and unstressed syllables is generally less than in the Germanic languages; there is a nicer and subtler play of accent, which we may observe in French, perhaps, better than elsewhere. In *nous chantons* the last syllable is stressed, but *chan-* is stronger than *for-* in Eng. *we forget*, because its psychological

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1 See my *Fonetik*, Copenh. 1899, p. 557 and 560; *Lehrbuch d. Phonetik*, Leipz. 1904, p. 209 ff.

2 *Fonetik*, p. 554; *Lehrbuch d. Phon.*, p. 207.

value is greater. Where a contrast is to be expressed it will most often be associated with one of the traditionally unstressed syllables, and the result is that the contrast is brought vividly before the mind with much less force than is necessary in English; in *nous chantons, et nous ne dansons pas* you need not even make *chan* and *dan* stronger, at any rate not much stronger than the endings, while in English *we sing, but we don't dance*, the syllables *sing* and *dance* must be spoken with an enormous force, because they are in themselves strongly stressed even when no contrast is to be pointed out. A still better example is French *c'est un acteur et non pas un auteur* and English *he is an actor, and not an author;* the Frenchman produces the intended effect by a slight tap, so to speak, on the two initial syllables of the contrasted words, while an Englishman hammers or knocks the corresponding syllables into the head of the hearer. The French system is more elegant, more artistic; the Germanic system is heavier or more clumsy, perhaps, in such cases as those just mentioned, but on the whole it must be said to be more rational, more logical, as an exact correspondence between the inner and the outer world is established, if the most significant element receives the strongest phonetic expression. We shall see in later sections how this Germanic stress-principle has been instrumental in bringing about important changes in other respects than those considered here. But what has been said here seems to me to indicate a certain connection between language and national character; for has it not always been considered a prominent feature of the Germanic peoples (English, Scandinavians, Germans) that they say their say bluntly without much considering the artistic effect, and that they emphasize what is essential without always having due regard to nuances or accessory notions? and does not the stress

system we have been considering present the very same aspect?

29. We do not know in what century the stress was shifted[1], but the shifting certainly took place centuries before the immigration of the English into Great Britain. To a similar remote period we must refer several other great changes affecting equally all the Germanic languages. One of the most important is the simplification of the tense system in the verb, no Germanic language having more than two tenses, a present and a past. As many of the old endings gradually wore off, they were not in themselves a clear enough indication of the differences of tense, and the gradation (ablaut) of the root vowel, which had at first been only an incidental consequence of differences of accentuation, was felt more and more as the real indicator of tense (see below). But neither gradation nor the remaining endings were fit to make patterns for the formation of tenses in new verbs; consequently, we see very few additions to the old stock of 'strong' verbs, and a new type of verbs, 'weak verbs', is constantly gaining ground. Whatever may have been the origin of the dental ending used in the past tense of these verbs, it is very extensively used in all Germanic languages and is, indeed, one of the characteristic features of their inflectional system. It has become the 'regular' mode of forming the preterite,

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1 Nothing can be concluded from the existence at the time of Tacitus of such series of alliterating names for members of the same family as Segestes Segimerus Segimundus, etc. (Kluge, Paul's Grundriß ^{2}357, 388) for alliteration does not necessarily imply that the syllable has the chief stress of the word; cf. the French formulas *messe et matines, Florient et Florette, Basans et Basilie, monts et merveilles, qui vivra verra, à tort et à travers* (Nyrop, Grammaire historique I ^{2}448).

that is, the one resorted to whenever new verbs are called into existence.

30. To this early period, while the English were still living on the Continent with their Germanic brethren, belong the first class of loan-words. No language is entirely pure; we meet with no nation that has not adopted some loan-words, so we must suppose that the forefathers of the old Germanic tribes adopted words from a great many other nations with whom they came into contact; and scholars have attempted to point out very old loan-words from various sources. Some of these, however, are doubtful, and none of them are important enough to arrest our attention before we arrive at the period when Latin influence began to be felt in the Germanic world, that is, about the beginning of our Christian era. But before we look at these borrowings in detail, let us first consider for a moment the general lesson that may be derived from the study of words taken over from one language into another.

31. Loan-words have been called the milestones of philology, because in a great many instances they permit us to fix approximatively the dates of linguistic changes. But they might with just as much right be termed some of the milestones of general history, because they show us the course of civilisation and the wanderings of inventions and institutions, and in many cases give us valuable information as to the inner life of nations when dry annals tell us nothing but the dates of the deaths of kings and bishops. When in two languages we find no trace of the exchange of loan-words one way or the other we are safe to infer that the two nations have had nothing to do with each other. But if they have been in contact, the number

of the loan-words and still more the quality of the loan-words, if rightly interpreted, will inform us of their reciprocal relations, they will show us which of them has been the more fertile in ideas and on what domains of human activity each has been superior to the other. If all other sources of information were closed, we should still have no hesitation in inferring from such loan-words in our modern North-European languages as *piano, soprano, opera, libretto, tempo, adagio* and numerous others that Italian music has played a great role all over Europe. Similar instances might easily be multiplied, and in many ways the study of language brings home to us the fact that when a nation produces something that its neighbours think worthy of imitation these will take over not only the thing but also the name. This will be the general rule, though exceptions may occur, especially when a language possesses a native word that will lend itself without any special effort to the new thing imported from abroad. But if a native word is not ready to hand it is easier to adopt the ready-made word used in the other country, nay this foreign word is very often imported even in cases where it would seem to offer no great difficulty to coin an adequate expression by means of native word-material. As, on the other hand, there is generally nothing to induce one to use words from foreign languages for things one has just as well at home, loan-words are nearly always *technical* words belonging to one special branch of knowledge or industry, and may be grouped so as to show what each nation has learnt from each of the others. It will be my object to go through the different strata of loans in English with special regard to their significance in relation to the history of civilisation.

32. What, then, were the principal words that the barbarians learnt from Rome in this period which may

be called the pagan or pre-Christian period?[1] One of the earliest, no doubt, was *wine* (Lat. *vinum*), and a few other words connected with the cultivation of the vine and the drinking of wine such as Lat. *calicem* OE. *calic* (Germ. *kelch*) 'a cup'. It is worth noting, too, that the chief type of Roman merchants that the Germanic people dealt with, were the *caupones* 'wine-dealers, keepers of wine-shops or public-houses'; for the word German *kaufen*, OE. *ceapian* 'to buy' is derived from it, as is also *cheap*, the old meaning of which was 'bargain, price'. (Cf. Cheapside). Another word of commercial significance is *monger* (fishmonger, ironmonger, costermonger), OE. *mangere* from an extinct verb *mangian*, derived from Lat. *mango* 'retailer'. Lat. *moneta*, *pondo*, and *uncia* too were adopted as commercial terms: OE. *mynet* 'coin, coinage', now *mint*; OE. *pund*, now *pound*; OE. *ynce*, now *inch*; the sound-changes point to very early borrowing. Other words from the Latin connected with commerce and travel are: *mile*, *anchor*, *punt* (OE. punt from Lat. ponto); a great many names for vessels or receptacles of various kinds; I take some from Pogatscher's list[2] and add the modern forms if the word is still living: *cist* (chest), *binn* (bin), *byden*, *bytt*, *cylle*, *ombor* or *amber* (amber), *disc* (dish), *scutel*, *orc*, *cytel* (kettle), *mortere* (mortar), *earc* (ark), etc. This makes us suspect a complete revolution in the art of cooking food, an impression which is strengthened by such Latin loan-words as *cook* (OE. *coc* from *coquus*), *kitchen* (OE. *cycene* from *coquina*) and *mill* (OE. *mylen* from *molina*), as well as names for a great many plants and fruits which

1 See especially Kluge, Paul's Grundriß, p. 327 ff.; Pogatscher, Lautlehre der griech., lat. u. roman. Lehnworte im altenglischen (Strassb. 1888). I give the words in their modern English forms, wherever possible.

2 l. c. 122. Cf. also Kluge, p. 331.

had not previously been cultivated in the north of Europe, such as *pear*, OE. *cirs* 'cherry', *persoc* 'peach' (the modern forms are later adoptions from the French), *plum* (OE. *plume*, from *prunus*), *pea* (OE. *pise* from *pisum*), *cole* (*caul*, *kale*, Scotch *kail*, from Lat. *caulis*), OE. *næp*, found in the second syllable of mod. *turnip*, from *napus*, *beet* (root), *mint*, *pepper*, etc. As military words, though not wanting, were not taken over in such great numbers as one might expect, we have now gone through the principal categories of early loans from the Latin language, from which conclusions as to the state of civilisation may be drawn. In comparing them with later loanwords from the same source we are struck by their concrete character. It was not Roman philosophy or the higher mental culture that impressed our Germanic forefathers; they were not yet ripe for that influence, but in their barbaric simplicity they needed and adopted a great many purely practical and material things, especially such as might sweeten everyday life. It is hardly necessary to say that these words were learnt in a purely oral manner, as shown in many cases by their forms; and this, too, is a distinctive feature of the oldest Latin loans as opposed to later strata of loanwords. They were also short words, mostly of one or two syllables, so that it would seem that the Germanic tongues and minds could not yet manage such long words as form the bulk of later loans. These early words were easy to pronounce and to remember, being of the same general type as most of the indigenous words, and therefore they very soon came to be regarded as part and parcel of the native language, indispensable as the things themselves which they symbolized.

Chapter III.

Old English.

33. We now come to the first of those important historical events which have materially influenced the English language, namely the settlement of Britain by Germanic tribes. The other events of paramount importance, which we shall have to deal with in succession, are the Scandinavian invasion, the Norman conquest, and the revival of learning. A future historian will certainly add the spreading of the English language in America, Australia, and South Africa. But none of these can compare in significance with the first conquest of England by the English, an event which was, perhaps, fraught with greater consequences for the future of the world in general than anything else in history. The more is the pity that we know so very little either of the people who came over or of the state of things they found in the country they invaded. We do not know exactly *when* the invasion began; the date usually given is 449, but Bede, on whose authority this date rests, wrote about three hundred years later, and much may have been forgotten in so long a period. Many considerations seem to make it more advisable to give a rather earlier date;[1] however, as we must imagine

1 R. Thurneysen, Wann sind die Germanen nach England gekommen? in Eng. Studien 22, 163.

that the invaders did not come all at once, but that the settlement took up a comparatively long period during which new hordes were continually arriving, the question of date is of no great consequence, and we are probably on the safe side if we say that after a long series of Germanic invasions the country was practically in their power in the latter half of the fifth century.

34. *Who* were the invaders, and where did they come from? This, too, has been a point of controversy. According to Bede, the invaders belonged to the three tribes of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes; and linguistic history corroborates his statement in so far as we have really three dialects, or groups of dialects: the Anglian dialects in the North with two subdivisions, Northumbrian and Mercian, the Saxon dialects in the greater part of the South, the most important of which was the dialect of Wessex (West-Saxon), and the Kentish dialect, Kent having been, according to tradition, settled by the Jutes. But when Bede points out the district now called Angel (German Angeln) in South Jutland (Slesvig) as the home of the Anglians, and identifies the Jutes with the inhabitants of Jutland, considerable doubt has been raised of late years.[1] It is not necessary here to enter on this debatable ground; suffice it to say that neither the language of the Anglians nor that of the Kentish people is Danish or shows any signs of closer relationship to Danish than West-Saxon, so that if the settlers came from Angel and other parts of Jutland, these districts cannot

1 See especially A. Erdmann, Über die heimat u. namen der Angeln. Upsala 1890. — H. Möller, Anzeiger f. deutsches Altertum XXII, 129 ff. — G. Schütte, Var Anglerne Tyskere, in Sønderjydske aarbøger 1900. — O. Bremer, in Paul's Grundriß I 2 115 ff., where other references will be found.

then have been inhabited by the same Danish population that has lived there as far back as ascertained history reaches. The continental language that shows the greatest similarity to English, is Frisian, and it is interesting to note that Frisian has some points in common with Kentish and some with Anglian, some even with the northernmost division of the Anglian dialect, points in which these OE. dialects differ from literary West-Saxon. Kentish resembles more particularly West Frisian, and Anglian East Frisian[1], facts which justify us in looking upon the Frisians as the neighbours and relatives of the English before their emigration from the continent. We may therefore speak of an Anglo-Frisian language, forming in some respects a connecting link between German Saxon (Low German) on the one hand and Scandinavian, especially Danish, on the other.

35. What language or what languages did the settlers find on their arrival in Britain? The original population was Celtic; but what about the Roman conquest? The Romans had been masters of the country for centuries; had they not succeeded in making the native population learn Latin as they had succeeded in Spain and Gaul? A few years ago Pogatscher[2] took up the view that they had succeeded, and that the Angles and Saxons found a Brito-Roman dialect in full vigour. Pogatscher endorsed Wright's view that "if the Angles and Saxons had never come, we should have been now a people talking a Neo-Latin tongue, closely resembling French." But this view was very strongly attacked by Loth[3], may

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1 W. Heuser, Altfriesisches lesebuch 1903 p. 1—5, and Indogermanische Forschungen, Anzeiger XIV 29.

2 Zur Lautlehre der . . . Lehnworte im Altenglischen 1888.

3 Les mots latins dans les langues brittoniques. Paris 1892.

and Pogatscher, in a subsequent article[1] had to withdraw his previous theory, if not completely, yet to a great extent, so that he no longer maintains that Latin ever was the *national* language of Britain, though he does not go the length of saying with Loth that the Latin language disappeared from Britain when the Roman troops were withdrawn. The possibility is left that while people in the country spoke Celtic, the inhabitants of the towns spoke Latin or that some of them did. However this may be, the fact remains that the English found on their arrival a population speaking a different language from their own. Did that, then, affect their own language, and in what manner and to what extent?

36. In his "Student's History of England" p. 31 Gardiner says "So far as British words have entered into the English language at all, they have been words such as *gown* or *curd*, which are likely to have been used by women, or words such as *cart* or *pony*, which are likely to have been used by agricultural labourers, and the evidence of language may therefore be adduced in favour of the view that many women and many agricultural labourers were spared by the conquerors." Here, then, we seem to have a Celtic influence from which an important historical inference can be drawn. Unfortunately, however, not a single word of those adduced can prove anything of the kind. For *gown* is not an old Celtic word, but was taken over from French in the 14th century (mediæval Latin *gunna*); *curd*, too, dates only from the 14th century, whereas if it had been introduced from Celtic in the old period we should cer-

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1 Angelsachsen und Romanen. Engl. Studien XIX 329—352 (1894). See also MacGillivray, The Influence of Christianity on the Vocabulary of Old English p. XI.

tainly find it in older texts; "it is not certain what relation (if any) the Celtic words hold to the English" (N. E. D). *Cart* is an Old Norse word; it is found in Celtic languages, but is there "palpably a foreign word" (N. E. D.) introduced from English; and *pony*[1], finally, is Lowland Scotch *powney* from Old French *poulenet* 'a little colt', a diminutive of *poulain* 'a colt'. Similarly, most of the other words of alleged Celtic origin are either Germanic or French words which the Celts have borrowed from English, or else they have not been used in England more than a century or two; in neither of these cases do they teach us anything with regard to the relations between the two nationalities fifteen hundred years ago.[2] The net result of modern investigation seems to be that not more than half a dozen words did pass over into English from the Celtic aborigines. How may we account for this very small number of loans? Sweet[3] says the reason was that 'the Britons themselves were to a great extent Romanized', a theory

1 Skeat, Notes on English Etymology 224.

2 *Curse*, OE. *cursian*, is often referred to Ir. *cúrsagaim*, but 'no word of similar form and sense is known in Celtic' (N. E. D.) *Cradle*, OE. *cradol*, seems to be a diminutive of an old Germanic word meaning 'basket' (O. H. G. chratto). See also *hog* in N. E. D. Windisch, in the article quoted below, p. 38, thinks that the Germanic *tun* in English took over the meaning of Celtic *dunum* (Latin 'arx') on account of the numerous old Celtic names of places in -dunum; but in OE. *tun* had more frequently the meaning of 'enclosure, yard' (cf. Dutch tuin), 'enclosed land round a dwelling', 'a single dwelling house or farm' (cf. Old Norse *tún*; still in Devonshire and Scotland); it was only gradually that the word acquired its modern meaning of village or town, long after the influence of the Celts must have disappeared. — *Slogan, pibroch, clan* etc., are modern; but *bannock* and *dry* 'magician' are really old loans from Celtic.

3 New English Grammar § 607.

which we seem bound to abandon now (see above). Are we to account for it, as Lindelöf does[1], from the unscrupulous character of the conquest, the English having killed all those Britons who did not run away into the mountainous districts? The supposition of wholesale slaughter is not, however, necessary, for a thorough consideration of the general conditions under which borrowings from one language by another take place will give us a clue to the mystery.[2] And as the whole history of the English language may be described from one point of view as one chain of borrowings, it will be as well at the outset to give a little thought to this general question.

37. The whole theory of Windisch about mixed languages turns upon this formula: it is not the foreign language a nation learns which is made into a mixed language, but its own native language becomes mixed under the influence of the foreign language. When we try to learn and talk a foreign language we do not intermix it with words taken from our own language; our endeavour will always be to speak the other language as purely as possible, generally we are painfully conscious of every native word that we use in the middle of phrases framed in the other tongue. But what we thus avoid in speaking a foreign language we very often do in our own. One of Windisch's illustrations

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1 Grunddragen af Engelska språkets historiska ljud- och formlära (Helsingfors 1895 p. 47) — an excellent little book.

2 See especially Windisch, Zur Theorie der Mischsprachen und Lehnwörter. Berichte über die Verhdl. d sächs. Gesellsch. d. Wissensch. XLIX. 1897 p. 101 ff. — G. Hempl, Language-Rivalry and Speech-Differentiation in the Case of Race-Mixture. Trans. of the Amer. Philol. Association XXIX. 1898 p. 30 ff.

is taken from Germany in the eighteenth century. It was then the height of fashion to imitate everything French, and Frederick the Great prided himself on speaking and writing good French. In his French writings one finds not a single German word, but whenever he wrote German, French words and phrases in the middle of German sentences abounded, for French was considered more refined, more *distingué*. Similarly, in the last remains of Cornish, the extinct Celtic language of Cornwall, numerous English loan-words occur, but the English did not mix any Cornish words with their own language, and the inhabitants of Cornwall themselves, whose native language was Cornish, would naturally avoid Cornish words when talking English, because in the first place English was considered the superior tongue, the language of culture and civilisation, and second, the English would not understand Cornish words. Similarly in the Brittany of to-day, people will interlard their Breton talk with French words, while their French is pure, without any Breton words. We now see why so few Celtic words were taken over into English.[1] There was nothing to induce the ruling classes to learn the language of the inferior natives; it could never be fashionable for them to show an acquaintance with that despised tongue by using now and then a Celtic word. On the other hand the Celt would have to learn the language of his masters, and learn it well; he could not think of addressing his superiors in his own unintelligible gibberish, and if the first generation did not learn good English, the second or third would, while the influence they themselves exercised on English would be infinitesimal. — There can be no doubt that this theory of Windisch's is in the main correct, though we shall, per-

1 And so few Gallic words into French.

haps, later on see instances where it holds good only with some qualification. At any rate we need look for no other explanation of the fewness of Celtic words in English.

38. About 600 A. D. England was christianized, and the conversion had far-reaching linguistic consequences. We have no literary remains of the pre-Christian period, but in the great epic of Beowulf we see a strange mixture of pagan and Christian elements. It took a long time thoroughly to assimilate the new doctrine, and, in fact, much of the old heathendom survives to this day in the shape of numerous superstitions. On the other hand we must not suppose that people were wholly unacquainted with Christianity before they were actually converted, and linguistic evidence points to their knowing, and having had names for, the most striking Christian phenomena centuries before they became Christians themselves. One of the earliest loan-words belonging to this sphere is *church*, OE. *cirice*, *cyrice*, ultimately from Greek *kuriakón* '(house) of the Lord' or rather the plural *kuriaká*. It has been well remarked that "it is by no means necessary that there should have been a single *kirika* in Germany itself; from 313 onwards, Christian churches with their sacred vessels and ornaments were well-known objects of pillage to the German invaders of the Empire: if the first with which these made acquaintance, wherever situated, were called *kuriaká*, it would be quite sufficient to account for their familiarity with the word."[1]

1 See the full and able article *church* in the N. E. D. We need not suppose, as is often done, that the word passed through Gothic, where the word is not found in the literature that has come down to us.

They knew this word so well that when they became Christians they did not adopt the word universally used in the Latin church and in the Romance languages (*ecclesia*, *église*, *chiesa*, etc.), and the English even extended the signification of the word *church* from the building to the congregation, the whole body of Christians. *Minster*, OE. *mynster* from *mōnasterium*, belongs also to the pre-Christian period. Other words of very early adoption were *devil* from *diabolus*, Greek *diábolos*, and *angel*, OE. *engel*[1] from *angelus*, Greek *ággelos*. But the great bulk of specifically Christian terms did not enter the language till after the conversion.

39. The number of new ideas and things introduced with Christianity was very considerable, and it is interesting to note how the English managed to express them in their language.[2] In the first place they adopted a great many foreign words together with the ideas. Such words are *apostle* OE. *apostol*, *disciple* OE. *discipul*, which has been more of an ecclesiastical word in English than in other languages, where it has the wider Latin sense of 'pupil' or 'scholar', while in English it is more or less limited to the twelve Disciples of Jesus or to similar applications. Further, the names of the whole scale of dignitaries of the church, from the *Pope*, OE. *papa*, downwards through *archbishop* OE. *ercebiscop*, *bishop* OE. *biscop*, to *priest* OE. *preost*; so also *monk* OE. *munuc*, *nun* OE. *nunna* with *provost* OE. *prafost* (præpositus) and *profost* (propositus), *abbot* OE. *abbod* (*d* from

1 See below, § 86, on the relation between the OE. and the modern forms.

2 See especially H. S. MacGillivray, The Influence of Christianity on the Vocabulary of Old English (Halle 1902). I arrange his material from other points of view and must often pass the limits of his book, of which only one half has appeared.

the Romance form) and the feminine OE. *abbudisse*. Here belong also such obsolete words as *sacerd* 'priest', *canonic* 'canon', *decan* 'dean', *ancor* or *ancra* 'hermit' (Latin anachoreta). To these names of persons must be added not a few names of things, such as *shrine* OE. *scrin* (scrinium), *cowl* OE. *cugele* (cuculla), *pall* OE. *pæll* or *pell* (pallium); *regol* or *reogol* '(monastic) rule', *capitul* 'chapter', *mæsse* 'mass', and *offrian*, in Old English only used in the sense of 'sacrificing, bringing an offering'; the modern usage in 'he offered his friend a seat and a cigar' is later and from the French.

40. It is worth noting that most of these loans were short words that tallied perfectly well with the native words and were easily inflected and treated in every respect like these; the composition of the longest of them, *ercebiscop*, was felt quite naturally as a native one. Such long words as *discipul* or *capitul*, or as *exorcista* and *acolitus*, which are also found, never became popular words; and *anachoreta* only became popular when it had been shortened to the convenient *ancor*.

41. The chief interest in this chapter of linguistic history does not, however, to my mind concern those words that were adopted, but those that were not. It is not astonishing that the English should have learned some Latin words connected with the new faith, but it is astonishing, especially in the light of what later generations did, that they should have utilized the resources of their own language to so great an extent as was actually the case. This was done in three ways: 1) by forming new words from the foreign loans by means of native affixes, 2) by modifying the sense of existing English words, and finally 3) by framing new words from native stems.

At that period the English were not shy of affixing native endings to foreign words; thus we have a great many words in *-had* (mod. *-hood*): *preosthad* 'priesthood',

clerichad, sacerdhad, biscophad 'episcopate', etc.; also such compounds as *biscopsedl* 'episcopal see', *biscopscir* 'diocese', and with the same ending *profostscir* 'provostship' and the interesting *scriftscir* 'parish, confessor's district' from *scrift* 'confessor', a derivative of *scrifan* (*shrive*) which is the Latin *scribere* with its signification curiously changed. Note also such words as *cristendom* 'Christendom, Christianity' (also *cristnes*) and *cristnian* 'christen' or rather 'prepare a candidate for baptism'[1] and *biscopian* 'confirm' with the noun *biscepung* 'confirmation'.

42. Existing native words were largely turned to account to express Christian ideas, the sense only being more or less modified. Foremost among these must be mentioned the word *God*. Other words belonging to the same class and surviving to this day are *sin* OE *synn*, *tithe* OE *teoða*, the old ordinal for 'tenth'; *easter* OE *eastron* was the name of an old pagan spring festival, called after Austro, a goddess of spring.[2] Most of the native words adapted to Christian usage have since been superseded by terms taken from Latin or French. Where we now say *saint* from the French, the old word was *halig* (mod. holy), preserved in *All-hallows-day* and *All-hallow-e'en*; the Latin *sanct* was very rarely used. *Scaru*, from the verb *scieran* 'shear, cut' has been supplanted by *tonsure*, *had* by *order*, *hadian* by *consecrate* and *ordain*, *gesomnung* by *congregation*, *þegnung* by *service*, *witega* by *prophet*, *þrowere* (from *þrowian* 'to suffer') by *martyr*, *þrowerhad* or *þrowung* by *martyrdom*, *niwcumen mann* ('new-come man') by *novice*, *hrycg-hrægel* (from *hrycg* 'back' and *hrægel* 'dress') by *dossal*, and *ealdor* by *prior*. Com-

1 "Cristnian signifies primarily the 'prima signatio' of the catechumens as distinguished from the baptism proper." Mac Gillivray p. 21.

2 Connected with Sanscrit *usra* and Latin *aurora* and, therefore, originally a dawn-goddess.

pounds of the last-mentioned Old English word were also applied to things connected with the new religion, thus *teoðing-ealdor* 'dean' (chief of ten monks). *Ealdormann*, the native term for a sort of viceroy or lord-lieutenant, was used to denote the Jewish High-Priests as well as the Pharisees. OE *husl*, mod. *housel* 'the Eucharist'[1], was an old pagan word for sacrifice or offering; an older form is seen in Gothic *hunsl*. The OE word for 'altar', *weofod*, is an interesting heathen survival, for it goes back to a compound *wigbeod* 'idol-table', and it was probably only because phonetic development had obscured its connection with *wig* 'idol' that it was allowed to remain in use as a Christian technical term.

43. This second class is not always easily distinguished from the third or those words that had not previously existed but were now framed out of existing native speech-material to express ideas foreign to the pagan world. Word-composition and other formative processes were resorted to, and in some instances the new terms were simply fitted together from translations of the component parts of the Greek or Latin word they were intended to render, as when Greek *euaggélion* was rendered *gōd-spell* (good-spell, afterwards with shortening of the first vowel *godspell*, which was often taken to be the 'spell' or message of God), mod. *gospel*; thence *godspellere* where now the foreign word *evangelist* is used. *Heathen*, OE. *hæðen*, according to the generally accepted theory, is derived from *hæþ* 'heath' in close imitation of Latin *paganus* from *pagus* 'a country district'.[2] Cf. also *þrynnes* or *þrines* ("three-ness") for *trinity*.

1 Still used in the nineteenth century, *e. g.* by Tennyson, as an archaism.

2 Another ingenious explanation connects the word through Gothic with Armenian *het(h)anos* 'heathen', which is borrowed from Greek *éthnos*; see Torp and Bugge, Indogerm. Forsch. V 178.

44. But in most cases we have no such literal rendering of a foreign term, but excellent words devised exactly as if the framers of them had never heard of any foreign expression for the same conception — as, perhaps, indeed, they had not in some instances. Some of these display not a little ingenuity. The scribes and Pharisees of the New Testament were called *boceras* (from *boc* book) and *sunder-halgan* (from *sundor* 'apart, asunder, separate'); in the north the latter were also called *ælarwas* 'teachers of the Law' or *ældo* 'elders'. A patriarch was called *heahfæder* 'high-father' or *eald-fæder* 'old-father'; the three Magi were called *tungol-witegan* from *tungol* 'star', and *witega* 'wise man'. For chaplain we have *handpreost* or *hiredpreost* (*hired* 'family'); for acolyte different word expressive of his several functions: *huslþegn* (*husl* Eucharist, *þegn* servant), *taporberend* (bearer of taper) and *wæxberend* (bearer of wax); instead of *ercebiscop* 'archbishop' we sometimes find *heahbiscop* and *ealdorbiscop*. For 'hermit' *ansetla* and *westensetla* (*an* 'one', *westen* 'desert') were used. 'Magic art' was called *scincræft* (*scin* 'phantom'); 'magician' *scincræftiga* or *scinlæca*, *scinnere*, 'phantom' or 'superstition', *scinlac*. For the disciples of Christ we find, beside *discipul* mentioned above, no less than ten different English renderings (cniht, folgere, gingra, hieremon, læringman, leornere, leorning-cniht, leorningman, underþeodda, þegn).[1] To 'baptize' was expressed by *dyppan* 'dip' (cf. German *taufen*, Dan. *døbe*) or more often by *fulwian* (from *ful-wihan* 'to consecrate completely'); 'baptism' by *fulwiht* or, the last syllable being phonetically obscured, *fulluht*, and John the Baptist was called *Johannes se fulluhtere*. We have another instance of disguised composition in *ondettan* 'to confess' and *ondettere* 'confessor' (and + hatan).

1 MacGillivray p. 44, who, besides, mentions four words special to the Northumbrians.

45. The power and boldness of these numerous native formations can, perhaps, best be appreciated if we go through the principal compounds of *God*: godbot 'atonement made to the church', godcund or godcundlic 'divine, religious, sacred', godcundnes 'divinity, sacred office', godferht 'pious', godgield 'idol', godgieldlic 'of idols', godgimm 'divine gem', godhad 'divine nature', godmægen 'divinity', godscyld 'impiety', godscyldig 'impious', godsibb 'sponsor', godsibbræden 'sponsorial obligations', godspell (cf., however, § 43), godspelbodung 'gospel-preaching', godspellere 'evangelist', godspellian 'preach the gospel', godspellisc 'evangelical', godspeltraht 'gospel-commentary', godspræce 'oracle', godsunu 'godson', godþrymm 'divine majesty', godwræc 'impious' godwrænes 'impiety'. Such a list as this, with the modern translations, shows the gulf between the old system of nomenclature, where everything was native and, therefore, easily understood by even the most uneducated, and the modern system, where with few exceptions classical roots serve to express even simple ideas; observe that although *gospel* has been retained, the easy secondary words derived from it have given way to learned formations. Nor was it only religious terms that were devised in this way; for Christianity brought with it also some acquaintance with the higher intellectual achievements in other domains, and we find such scientific terms as *læce-cræft* 'leech-craft' for medicine, *tungol-æ* ('star-law') for astronomy, *efnniht* for equinox, *sun-stede* and *sungihte* for solstice, *sunfolgend* (sunfollower) for heliotrope, *tid* 'tide' and *gemet* 'measure' for tense and mood in grammar, *foresetnes* for preposition etc., in short a number of scientific expressions of native origin, such as is equalled among the Germanic languages in Icelandic only.

46. If now we ask, why did not the Anglo-Saxons adopt more of the ready-made Latin or Greek words,

it is easy to see that the conditions here are quite different from those mentioned above when we asked a similar question with regard to Celtic. There we had a real race-mixture, where people speaking two different languages were living in actual contact in the same country. Here we have no Latin-speaking nation or community in actual intercourse with the English; and though we must suppose that there was a certain mouth-to-mouth influence from missionaries which might familiarize part of the English nation with some of the specifically Christian words, these were certainly at first introduced in far greater number through the medium of writing, exactly as is the case with Latin and Greek importations in recent times. Why, then, do we see such a difference between the practice of that remote period and our own time? One of the reasons seems obviously to be that people then did not know so much Latin as they learnt later, so that these learned words, if introduced, would not have been understood. We have it on King Alfred's authority that in the time immediately preceding his own reign "there were very few on this side of the Humber who could understand their (Latin) rituals in English, or translate a letter from Latin into English, and I believe that there were not many beyond the Humber. There were so few of them that I cannot remember a single one south of the Thames when I came to the throne . . . . . and there was also a great multitude of God's servants, but they had very little knowledge of the books, for they could not understand anything of them, because they were not written in their language."[1] And even in the previous period which Alfred regrets, when "the sacred orders were zealous

1 King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care. Preface (Sweet's translation).

in teaching and learning", and when, as we know from Bede and other sources[1], Latin and Greek studies were pursued successfully in England, we may be sure that the percentage of those who would have understood the learned words, had they been adopted into English, was not large. There was, therefore, good reason for devising as many popular words as possible. However, the manner in which our question was put was not, perhaps, quite fair, for we seemed to presuppose as the natural state of things for a nation to adopt as many foreign terms as its linguistic digestion would admit, so that it would be matter for surprise if a language had fewer foreign elements than Modern English. But on the contrary, it is rather the natural thing for a language to utilize its own resources before drawing on other languages. The Anglo-Saxon principle of adopting only such words as were easily assimilated with the native vocabulary, for the most part names of concrete things, and of turning to the greatest possible account native words and roots, especially for abstract notions, — that principle may be taken as a symptom of a healthful condition of a language and a nation; witness Greek, where we have the most flourishing and vigorous growth of abstract and other scientifically serviceable terms on a native basis that the world has ever seen, and where the highest development of intellectual and artistic activity went hand in hand with the most extensive creation of indigenous words while there were extremely few importations from abroad. It is not, then, the Old English system of utilizing the vernacular stock of words, but the modern system of neglecting the native and borrowing from a foreign vocabulary that has to be accounted for as something out of

1 See T. N. Toller, Outlines of the History of the English Language. Cambridge 1900, p. 68 ff.

the natural state of things. A particular case in point will illustrate this better than long explanations.

47. To express the idea of a small book that is always ready at hand, the Greeks had devised the word *egkheirídion* from *en* 'in', *kheír* 'hand' and the suffix *-idion* denoting smallness; the Romans similarly employed their adjective *manualis* 'pertaining to *manus*, the hand' with *liber* 'book' understood. What could be more natural then, than for the Anglo-Saxons to frame according to the genius of their own language the compound *handboc*? This naturally would be especially applied to the one kind of handy books that the clergy were in particular need of, the book containing the occasional and minor public offices of the Roman church. Similar compounds were used, and are used, as a matter of course, in the other cognate languages,—German *handbuch*, Danish *håndbog*, etc. But in the Middle English period, *handboc* was disused, the French (Latin) *manual* taking its place, and in the sixteenth century the Greek word (*enchiridion*) too was introduced into the English language. And so accustomed had the nation grown to preferring strange and exotic words that when in the nineteenth century *handbook* made its re-appearance it was treated as an unwelcome intruder. The oldest example of the new use in the NED. is from 1814, when an anonymous book was published with the title "A Handbook for modelling wax flowers." In 1833 Nicolas in the preface to a historical work wrote "What the Germans would term and which, if our language admitted of the expression, would have been the fittest title for it, 'The Handbook of History'",—but he dared not use that title himself. Three years later Murray the publisher ventured to call his guide-book "A Hand-Book for Travellers on the Continent", but reviewers as late as 1843 apologized for copying this coined word. In 1838 Rogers speaks of

the word as a tasteless innovation, and Trench in his "English Past and Present" (1854; 3rd ed. 1856 p. 71) says, "we might have been satisfied with 'manual', and not put together that very ugly and very unnecessary word 'handbook', which is scarcely, I should suppose, ten or fifteen years old." Of late years, the word seems to have found more favour, but I cannot help thinking that state of language a very unnatural one where such a very simple, intelligible, and expressive word has to fight its way instead of being at once admitted to the very best society.

48. The Old English language, then, was rich in possibilities, and its speakers were fortunate enough to possess a language that might with very little exertion on their part be made to express everything that human speech can be called upon to express. There can be no doubt that if the language had been left to itself, it would easily have remedied the defects that it certainly had, for its resources were abundantly sufficient to provide natural and expressive terms even for such a new world of concrete things and abstract ideas as Christianity meant to the Anglo-Saxons. It is true that we often find Old English prose clumsy and unwieldy, but that is more the fault of the literature than of the language itself. A good prose style is everywhere a late acquirement, and the work of whole generations of good authors is needed to bring about the easy flow of written prose. Neither, perhaps, were the subjects treated of in the extant Old English prose literature those most suitable for the development of the highest literary qualities. But if we look at such a closely connected language as Old Norse, we find in that language a rapid progress to a narrative prose style which is even now justly admired in its numerous sagas; and I do not see so great a difference between the two languages as would justify

a scepticism with regard to the perfectibility of Old English in the same direction. And, indeed, we have positive proof in a few passages that the language had no mean power as a literary medium; I am thinking of Alfred's report of the two Scandinavian travellers Ohthere and Wulfstan, who visited him—the Fridtjof Nansen and Sven Hedin of those days—, of a few passages in the Saxon Chronicle, and especially of some pages of the homilies of Wulfstan, where we find an impassioned prose of real merit.

49. On the other hand, we have a very rich and characteristic Old English poetic literature, ranging from powerful pictures of battles and of fights with mythical monsters to religious poems, idyllic descriptions of an ideal country and sad accounts of moods of melancholy. It is not here the place to dwell upon the literary merit of these poems, as we are only concerned with the language. But to anyone who has taken the trouble—and it is a trouble—to familiarize himself with that poetry, there is a singular charm in the language it is clothed in, so strangely different from modern poetic style. The movement is slow and leisurely; the measure of the verse does not invite us to hurry on rapidly, but to linger deliberately on each line and pause before we go on to the next. Nor are the poet's thoughts too light-footed; he likes to tell us the same thing two or three times. Where a single *he* would suffice he prefers to give a couple of such descriptions as 'the brave prince, the bright hero, noble in war, eager and spirited' etc., descriptions which add no new trait to the mental picture, but which, nevertheless, impress us artistically and work upon our emotions, very much like repetitions and variations in music. These effects are chiefly produced by heaping synonym on synonym, and the wealth of synonymous terms found in Old English poetry is really

astonishing, especially in certain domains, which had for centuries been the stock subjects of poetry. For 'hero' or 'prince' we find in Beowulf alone at least thirty-seven words (æðeling. æscwiga. aglæca. beadorinc. beaggyfa. bealdor. beorn. brego. brytta. byrnwiga. ceorl. cniht. cyning. dryhten. ealdor. eorl. eðelweard. fengel. frea. freca. fruma. hæleð. hlaford. hyse. leod. mecg. nið. oretta. ræswa. rinc. scota. secg. þegn. þengel. þeoden. wer. wiga).[1] For 'battle' or 'fight' we have in Beowulf at least twelve synonyms (beadu. guð. heaðo. hild. lindplega. nið. orleg. ræs. sacu. geslyht. gewinn. wig). Beowulf has seventeen expressions for the 'sea' (brim. flod. garsecg. hæf. heaðu? holm. holmwylm. hronrad. lagu. mere. merestræt. sæ. seglrad. stream. wæd. wæg. yþ or the plural yðe), to which should be added thirteen more from other poems (flodweg. flodwielm. flot. flotweg. holmweg. hronmere. mereflod. merestream. sæflod. sæholm. sæstream. sæweg. yþmere). For 'ship' or 'boat' we have in Beowulf eleven words (bat. brenting. ceol. fær. flota. naca. sæbat. sægenga. sæwudu. scip. sundwudu) and in other poems at least sixteen more words (brimhengest. brimþisa. brimwudu. cnearr. flodwudu. flotscip. holmmærn. holmmægen. merebat. merehengest. mereþyssa. sæflota. sæhengest. sæmearh. yþbord. yþhengest. yþhof. yþlid. yþlida).

50. How are we to account for this wealth of synonyms? We may subtract, if we like, such compound words as are only variations of the same comparison, as when a ship is called a sea-horse, and then different words for sea (sæ, mere, yþ) are combined with the words *hengest* 'stallion' and *mearh* 'mare'; but even if this class is not counted, the number of synonyms is

1 To which might be added, for instance, guma, maga, wrecca, etc.

great enough to call for an explanation. A language always has many terms for those things that interest the people in their daily doings; thus Sweet says: "if we open an Arabic dictionary at random, we may expect to find something about a camel: 'a young camel', 'an old camel', 'a strong camel', 'to feed a camel on the fifth day', 'to feel a camel's hump to ascertain its fatness', all these being not only simple words, but root-words".[1] And when we read that the Araucanians (in Chile) distinguished nicely in their languages between a great many shades of hunger, our compassion is excited, as Gabelentz remarks.[2] In the case of the Anglo-Saxons, however, we are not, perhaps, justified in drawing from the great number of words connected with the sea the conclusion that they were a sea-faring nation, but rather, as these words are chiefly poetical and not used in prose, that the nation *had been* seafaring, but had given up that life while reminiscenses of it were still living in their imagination.

51. In many cases we are now unable to see any difference in signification between two or more words, but in the majority of these instances we may assume that even if, perhaps, no difference was made by the Anglo-Saxons of the historical times, their ancestors did not use them indiscriminately. It is characteristic of primitive peoples that their languages are highly specialized, so that where we are contented with one generic word they have several specific terms. The aborigines of Tasmania had a name for each variety of gum-tree and wattle-tree, etc., but they had no equivalent for the expression 'a tree'. The Mohicans have words for cutting various objects, but none to convey *cutting* simply.

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1 Sweet, The Practical Study of Language, 1899, p. 163.
2 Gabelentz, Sprachwissenschaft 463.

The Zulus have such words as 'red cow', 'white cow', 'brown cow', etc., but none for 'cow' generally. In Cherokee, instead of one word for 'washing' we find different words, according to what is washed, 'I wash myself,—my head,—the head of somebody else,—my face, —the face of somebody else,—my hands or feet,—my clothes,—dishes,—a child, etc.[1]

52. Very little has been done hitherto to investigate the exact shades of meaning in Old English, but I have little doubt that when we now render a number of words indiscriminately by 'sword', they meant originally distinct kinds of swords, and so in other cases as well. With regard to washing, we find something corresponding, though in a lesser degree, to the exuberance of Cherokee, for we have two words, *wacsan* (*wascan*) and *þwean*, and if we go through all the examples given in Bosworth-Toller's Dictionary, we find that the latter word is always applied to the washing of persons (hands, feet, etc.), never to inanimate objects, while *wascan* is used especially of the washing of clothes, but also of sheep, of 'the inwards' (of the victim, Leviticus I, 9 and 13[2]). Observe also that *wascan* was originally only used in the present tense (as Kluge infers from *-sk-*), and we see a clear instance of that restriction in the use of words which is so common in the old stages of the language, but which so often appears unnatural to us.

53. The old poetic language on the whole showed a great many divergences from everyday prose, in the choice of words, in the word-forms, and also in the

1 Cf. Jespersen, Progress in Language, London 1894, p. 250.

2 In a late text (R. Ben. 59, 7) we find the contrast *agðer ge fata þwean, ge wæterclaðas wascan*, which does not agree exactly with the distinction made above.—Curiously enough, in Old Norse, *vaska* is in the Sagas used only of washing the head with some kind of soap.

construction of the sentences. This should not surprise us, for we find the same thing everywhere, and the difference between the dictions of poetry and of prose is perhaps greater in old or more primitive languages than in those most highly developed. In English, certainly the distance between poetical and prose language was much greater in this first period than it has ever been since. The poetical language seems to have been to a certain extent identical all over England, regardless of dialect differences shown in prose writings. King Alfred's prose is always distinctly West Saxon, but when he breaks out occasionally into poetry, he uses such forms as the preterite *heht*, instead of *het*, the only form found in his prose. We have such more or less artificial poetic dialects, which agree with no one of the actually spoken dialects, in Homeric Greek and elsewhere, for example in the Old Saxon Heliand according to H. Collitz.[1] The hypothesis of a poetical language of this kind, absorbing forms and words from the different parts of the country where poetry was composed at all, seems to me to offer a better explanation of the facts than the current theory according to which the bulk of Old English poetry was written at first in Northumbrian dialect and later translated into West-Saxon with some of the old Anglian forms kept inadvertently—and translated to such an extent that no trace of the originals should have been preserved. The very few and small pieces extant in old Northumbrian dialect are easily accounted for, even if we accept the theory of a poetical *koinē* or standard language prevailing in the time when Old English poetry flourished. But the whole question should be taken up by a more competent hand than mine.

1 The Home of the Heliand; Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, Vol. XVI, p. 123 ff. See also Bauer's Waldeckisches Wörterbuch, 1901, p. 91* ff.

54. The external form of Old English poetry was in the main the same as that of Old Norse, Old Saxon, and Old High German poetry; besides definite rules of stress and quantity, which were more regular than might at first appear, but which were not so strict as those of classical poetry, the chief words of each line were tied together by alliteration, that is, they began with the same sound, or, in the case of *sp, st, sc*, with the same sound group. The effect is peculiar, and may be appreciated in such a passage as this:

Him þa ellenrof andswarode,
wlanc Wedera leod, word æfter spræc,
heard under helme: 'We synt Higelaces
beod-geneatas, Beowulf is min nama.
Wille ic a-secgan suna Halfdenes,
mærum þeodne min ærende,
aldre þinum gif he us geunnan wile,
þæt we hine swa godne gretan moton.'
Wulfgar maþelode, þæt wæs Wendla leod,
wæs his mod-sefa manegum gecyðed,
wig ond wisdom. 'Ic þæs wine Deniga,
frean Scildinga, frinan wille,
beaga bryttan, swa þu bena eart,
þeoden mærne ymb þinne sið.[1]

55. Very rarely, combined with alliteration we find a sort of rhyme or assonance. In the prose of the last period of Old English the same artistic means were often resorted to to heighten the effect, and we find in Wulfstan's homilies such passages as the following where all tricks of phonetic harmony are brought into play: "in mordre and on mane, in susle and on sare, in wean and on wyrmslitum betweonan deadum and deoflum, in bryne and on biternesse, in bealewe and on bradum

1 Beowulf 340 ff.

ligge, in yrmþum and on earfeðum, on swyltewale and sarum sorgum, in fyrenum bryne and on fulnesse, in toða gristbitum and in tintegrum" or again "þær is ece ece and þær is sorgung and sargung, and a singal heof; ðær is benda bite and dynta dyne, þær is wyrma slite and ealra wædla gripe, þær is wanung and granung, þær is yrmða gehwylc and ealra deofla geþring".[1]

56. Nor has this love of alliterative word-combinations ever left the language; we find it very often in modern poetry, where however it is always subordinate to end-rhyme, and we find it in such stock phrases as—: it can neither *m*ake nor *m*ar me, as *b*usy as *b*ees (Chaucer, E 2422), *p*art and *p*arcel, *f*aint and *f*eeble, *d*ucks and *d*rakes (sometimes: play dick-duck-drake; Stevenson, Merry Men 277), what ain't *m*issed ain't *m*ourned (Pinero, Magistrate 5), as *b*old as *b*rass, *f*ree and *f*ranke (Caxton, Reynard 41), *b*arnes are *b*lessings (Shakesp., All's I. 3. 28), as *c*ool as a *c*ucumber, as *st*ill as (a) *st*one (Chaucer, E 121, as any stoon E 171, he stode stone style, Malory 145), over *st*ile and *st*one (Chaucer B 1988), from *t*op to *t*oe (from the top to toe, Shakesp. R 3 III. 1. 155), *m*ight and *m*ain, *f*uss and *f*ume, *m*anners *m*akyth *m*an, *c*are *k*illed a *c*at, *r*ack and *r*uin, *n*ature and *n*urture (Shakesp. Tp. IV. 1. 189; English Men of Science, their Nature and Nurture, the title of a book by F. Galton), etc. etc., even to Thackeray's "faint fashionable fiddle-faddle and feeble court slipslop". Alliteration sometimes modifies the meaning of a word, as when we apply *chick* to human offspring only in 'no chick or child', or when we say 'a *l*abour of *l*ove', without giving to *labour* the shade of meaning which it generally has as different

1 Wulfstan, Homilies, ed. by Napier, p. 187, 209. It is worthy of note that these poetical flights occur in descriptions of hell.

from *work*. The word *foe*, too, which is generally used in poetry or archaic prose only, is often used in ordinary prose for the sake of alliteration in connection with *friend* ("Was it an irruption of a friend or a foe?" Meredith, Egoist 439; "The Danes of Ireland had changed from foes to friends", Green, Short Hist. 107). Indeed alliterations come so natural to English people, that Tennyson says that "when I spout my lines first, they come out so alliteratively that I have sometimes no end of trouble to get rid of the alliteration".[1] I take up the thread of my narrative after this short digression.

1 Life, by his Son, Tauchn. ed. II. 285. Cf. what the Danish poet and metricist E. v. d. Recke says to the same effect, Principerne for den danske verskunst 1881, p. 112, and see also the amusing note by De Quincey, Opium-Eater p. 95 (Macmillan's Library of Eng. Classics): "Some people are irritated, or even fancy themselves insulted, by overt acts of alliteration, as many people are by puns. On their account let me say, that, although there are here eight separate f's in less than half a sentence, this is to be held as pure accident. In fact, at one time there were nine f's in the original cast of the sentence, until I, in pity of the affronted people, substituted *female agent* for *female friend*."

Chapter IV.

The Scandinavians.

57. The Old English language, as we have seen, was essentially self-sufficing; its foreign elements were few and did not interfere with the character of the language as a whole. But we shall now consider three very important factors in the development of the language, three superstructures, as it were, that came to be erected on the Anglo-Saxon foundation, each of them modifying the character of the language, and each preparing the ground for its successor. 1. A Scandinavian element, 2. a French element, and a 3. Latin element now enter largely into the texture of the English language, and as each element is characteristically different from the others, we shall treat them separately. First, then, the Scandinavian element.[1]

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1 The chief works on these loan-words, most of them treating nearly exclusively phonetic questions, are: Erik Björkman, *Scandinavian Loan-Words in Middle English* (Halle I 1900 II 1902), an excellent book; Erik Brate, *Nordische Lehnwörter im Orrmulum* (Beiträge zur Gesch. d. deutschen Sprache X, Halle 1884); Arnold Wall, *A Contribution towards the Study of the Scandinavian Element in the English Dialects* (Anglia XX, Halle 1898); G. T. Flom, *Scandinavian Influence on Southern Lowland Scotch* (New York, 1900). The dialectal material of the two last-mentioned treatises is necessarily to a great extent of a doubtful character. See also Kluge in Paul's *Grundriß d. germ. Philol.* 2d ed. p. 931 ff. (Straßburg 1899), Skeat, *Principles of English Etymology*

58. The English had resided for about four centuries in the country called after them, and during that time they had had no enemies from abroad. The only wars they had been engaged in were internal struggles between kingdoms belonging to, but not yet feeling themselves as one and the same nation. The Danes were to them not deadly enemies but a brave nation from over the sea, that they felt to be of a kindred race with themselves. The peaceful relations between the two nations may have been more intimate than is now generally supposed. An important discovery, made in 1902 by two American scholars[1], seems to throw fresh light on the subject by showing that an interesting, but hitherto mysterious Old English poem which is generally ascribed to the eighth century is a translation of a lost Scandinavian poem dealing with an incident in what was later to become the Volsunga Saga. This proves a literary intercourse between England and Scandinavia previous to the Viking ages, and therefore accords very well with the fact that the old Danish legends about King Hrothgar and his beautiful hall Heorot were preserved in England, even more faithfully than by the Danes themselves. Had the poet of Beowulf been able to foresee all that his countrymen were destined to suffer at the hands of the Danes, he would have chosen another subject for his great epic, and we should have missed the earliest noble outcome of the sympathy so often

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p. 453 ff. (Oxford 1887), and some other works mentioned below. I have excluded doubtful material; but a few of the words I give as Scandinavian, have been considered as native by other writers. In most cases I have been convinced by the reasons given by Björkman.

1 W. W. Lawrence, *The First Riddle of Cynewulf;* W. H. Schofield, *Signy's Lament.* (Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, vol. XVII. Baltimore 1902.)

displayed by Englishmen for the fortunes of Denmark. But as it is, in Beowulf no coming events cast their shadow before, and the English nation seems to have been taken entirely by surprise when in 793 a Danish fleet appeared at Lindisfarne and the long series of inroads began, in which "Danes" and "heathens" became synonyms for murderers and plunderers. At first the strangers came in small troops and disappeared as soon as they had filled their boats with gold and other valuables; but from the middle of the ninth century, "the character of the attack wholly changed. The petty squadrons which had till now harassed the coast of Britain made way for larger hosts than had as yet fallen on any country in the west; while raid and foray were replaced by the regular campaign of armies who marched to conquer, and whose aim was to settle on the land they won."[1] Battles were fought with various success, but on the whole the Scandinavians proved the stronger race and made good their footing in their new country. In the peace of Wedmore (878), King Alfred, the noblest and staunchest defender of his native soil, was fain to leave them about two-thirds of what we now call England; all Northumbria, all East Anglia and the half of Central England made out the district called the Danelaw.

59. Still, the relations between the two races were not altogether hostile. King Alfred effected not only the repulse of the Danes; he also gave us the first geographical description of the countries that the fierce invaders came from, in the passage already referred to (§ 48). Under the year 959, one of the chroniclers says of the Northumbrian king that he was widely revered

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1 J. R. Green, *A Short History of the Engl. People*, Illustr. ed. p. 87.

on account of his piety, but in one respect he was blamed: "he loved foreign vices too much and gave heathen (*i. e.* Danish) customs a firm footing in this country, alluring mischievous foreigners to come to this land." And in the only extant private letter in Old English[1] the unknown correspondent tells his brother Edward that "it is a shame for all of you to give up the English customs of your fathers and to prefer the customs of heathen men, who grudge you your very life; you show thereby that you despise your race and your forefathers with these bad habits, when you dress shamefully in Danish wise with bared neck and blinded eyes (with hair falling over the eyes?)." We see, then, that the English were ready to learn from, as well as to fight with the Danes. It is a small, but significant fact that in the glorious patriotic war-poem written shortly after the battle of Maldon (993) which it celebrates, we find for the first time one of the most important Scandinavian loan-words, *to call*; this shows how early the linguistic influence of the Danes began to be felt.

60. A great number of Scandinavian families settled in England never to return, especially in Norfolk, Suffolk and Lincolnshire, but also in Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, etc. Numerous names of places, ending in *-by*, *-thorp* (*-torp*), *-beck*, *-dale*, *-thwaite* etc., bear witness to the preponderance of the invaders in great parts of England, as do also many names of persons found in English sources from about 1000 A. D.[2] But these foreigners were not felt by the natives to be foreigners in the same manner as the English themselves had been looked upon as foreigners by the Celts. As

1 Edited by Kluge, Engl. Studien VIII, 62.

2 See the list in Björkman p. 24ff. Cf. also Steenstrup in Danmarks Riges Historie I 412.

Green has it[1], "when the wild burst of the storm was over, land, people, government reappeared unchanged. England still remained England; the conquerors sank quietly into the mass of those around them; and Woden yielded without a struggle to Christ. The secret of this difference between the two invasions was that the battle was no longer between men of different races. It was no longer a fight between Briton and German, between Englishman and Welshman. The life of these northern folk was in the main the life of the earlier Englishmen. Their customs, their religion, their social order were the same; they were in fact kinsmen bringing back to an England that had forgotten its origins the barbaric England of its pirate forefathers. Nowhere over Europe was the fight so fierce, because nowhere else were the combatants men of one blood and one speech. But just for this reason the fusion of the northmen with their foes was nowhere so peaceful and so complete." — It should be remembered, too, that it was a Dane, King Knut, who achieved what every English ruler had failed to achieve, the union of the whole of England into one peaceful realm.

61. King Knut was a Dane, and in the Saxon Chronicle the invaders were always called Danes, but from other sources we know that there were Norwegians too among the settlers. Attempts have been made to decide by linguistic tests which of the two nations had the greater influence in England[2], a question beset

1 J. R. Green, *A Short History of the E. People*, Illustr. ed. p. 84.

2 Brate thought the loan-words exclusively Danish; Kluge, Wall, and Björkman consider some of them Danish, others Norwegian, though in details they arrive at different results. See especially Björkman, *Zur dialektischen provenienz der nordischen lehnwörter im Englischen,* Språkvetensk. sällskapets förhandlingar 1898—1901, Upsala, and his larger work, p. 281 ff.

with considerable difficulties and which need not detain us here. Suffice it to say that some words, such as ME. *boun*, Mod. *bound* 'ready (to go to)' *busk*, *boon*, *addle*, point rather to a Norwegian origin, while others, such as *-by* in place-names, *die* (?), *booth*, *drown*, ME. *sum* 'as', agree better with Danish forms. In the great majority of cases, however, the Danish and Norwegian forms were at that time either completely or nearly identical, so that no decision as to the special homeland of the English loans is warranted. In the present work I therefore leave the question open, quoting Danish or ON (Old Norse, practically = Old Icelandic) forms according as it is most convenient in each case, meaning simply Scandinavian.[1]

62. In order rightly to estimate the Scandinavian influence it is very important to remember how great the similarity was between Old English and Old Norse. To those who know only modern English and modern Danish, this resemblance is greatly obscured, first on account of the dissimilarities that are unavoidable when two nations live for nearly one thousand years with very little intercommunication, and when there is, accordingly, nothing to counterbalance the natural tendency towards differentiation, and secondly on account of each nation having been in the meantime subject to a powerful foreign influence, English from French, and Danish from Low German. But even now we can see the essential conformity between the two languages, which in those times was so much greater as each stood so much nearer to the common source. An enormous number

1 Björkman's final words are: "These facts would seem to point to the conclusion that a considerable number of Danes were found everywhere in the Scandinavian settlements, while the existence in great numbers of Norwegians was confined to certain definite districts."

of words were then identical in the two languages, so that we should now have been utterly unable to tell which language they had come from, if we had had no English literature before the invasion; nouns such as man, wife, father, mother, folk, house, thing, life, sorrow, winter, summer, verbs like will, can, meet, come, bring, hear, see, think, smile, ride, stand, still, sit, set, adjectives and adverbs like full, wise, well, better, best, mine and thine, over and under, etc. etc. The consequence was that an Englishman would have no great difficulty in understanding a viking, nay we have positive evidence that Norse people looked upon the English language as one with their own. In many cases, however, the words were already so dissimilar that it offers no difficulty to distinguish them, for instance, when they contained an original *ai*, which in OE. had become long *a* (OE. *swan* = ON. *sveinn*), or *au*, which in OE. had become *ea* (OE. *leas* = ON. *lauss*, *louss*), or *sk*, which in English became *sh* (OE. *scyrte*, now *shirt* = ON. *skyrta*).

63. But there are, of course, many words to which no such reliable criteria apply, and the difficulty in deciding the origin of words is further complicated by the fact that the English would often modify a word, when adopting it, according to some more or less vague feeling of the English sound that corresponded generally to this or that Scandinavian sound. Just as the name of the English king Æðelred Eadgares sunu is mentioned in the Norse saga of Gunnlaugr Ormstunga, as Aðalráðr Játgeirsson, in the same manner *shift* is an Anglicized form of Norse *skipta*[1]; ON. *brúðlaup* 'wedding' was modified into *brydlop* (cf. OE. *bryd* 'bride'; a consistent Anglicizing would be *brydhleap*); *tíðende* is unchanged in

1 In ME. forms with *sk* are also found; Björkman p. 126.

Orrms *tiþennde*, but was generally changed into *tiding(e)*, cf. OE. *tid* and the common Eng. ending *-ing*; ON. *þjónusta* 'service' appears as *þeonest*, *þenest*, and *þegnest*; ON. words with the negative prefix *ú* are made into English *un-*, *e. g. untima*, *unbain* (ON. *úbeinn*), *unrad* or *unræd*[1]; cf. also *wæpnagetæc* below, and others.

64. Sometimes the Scandinavians gave a fresh lease of life to obsolescent or obsolete native words. The preposition *till*, for instance, is found only once or twice in OE. texts belonging to the pre-Scandinavian period, but after that time it begins to be exceedingly common in the North, from whence it spreads southward; it was used as in Danish with regard both to time and space and it is still so used in Scotch. Similarly *dale* (OE. *dæl*) "appears to have been reinforced from Norse (*dal*), for it is in the North that the word is a living geographical name" (NED.), and *barn*, Scotch *bairn* (OE. *bearn*) would probably have disappeared in the North, as it did in the South, if it had not been strengthened by the Scandinavian word. The verb *blend*, too, seems to owe its vitality (as well as its vowel) to Old Norse, for *blandan* was very rare in Old English.

65. We also see in England a phenomenon, which, I think, is parallelled nowhere else to such an extent, namely the existence side by side for a long time, sometimes for centuries, of two slightly differing forms for the same word, one the original English form and the other Scandinavian. In the following the first form is the native one, the form after the dash the imported one.

66. In some cases both forms survive in standard speech; they have then, as a rule, developed slightly different meanings: *whole* (formerly *hool*) — *hale*; both

1 Though the Scand. form is also found in a few instances; *oulist* 'listless', *oumautin* 'swoon'.

were united in the old phrase "hail and hool" / *no — nay*; the latter is now used only to add an amplifying remark ("it is enough, nay too much"), but formerly it was used to answer a question, though it was not so strong a negative as *no* ("Is it true? Nay." "Is it not true. No") / *rear — raise* / *from — fro*, now used only in "to and fro" / *shirt — skirt* / *shot — scot* / *shriek — screak, screech* / *edge — egg* vb. (to egg on, 'to incite'). OE. *leas* survives only in the suffix *-less* (nameless, etc.), while the Scand. *loose* has entirely supplanted it as an independent word.

67. In other cases, the Scandinavian form survives in dialects only, while the other belongs to the literary language: *dew — dag* 'dew, thin rain; vb. to drizzle' / *true — trigg* 'faithful, neat, tidy' / *leap — loup* / *neat — nowt* 'cattle' / *church — kirk*[1] / *churn — kirn*[1] / *chest — kist*[1] / *mouth — mun* / *yard — garth* 'a small piece of enclosed ground'. All these dialectal forms belong to Scotland or the North of England.

68. As a rule, however, one of the forms has in course of time been completely crowded out by the other. The surviving form is often the native form, as in the following instances: *goat — gayte* / *heathen — heythen, haiþen* / *loath — laith* / *grey — gra, gro* / *few — fa, fo* / *ash(es) — ask* / *fish — fisk* / *naked — naken* / *yarn — garn* / *bench — bennk* / *star — sterne* / *worse — werre*. Similarly the Scand. *thethen, hethen, hwethen* are generally supposed to have been discarded in favour of the native forms, OE. *þanon, heonan, hwanon*, to which was added an adverbial *s*: *thence, hence, whence*, though these modern forms may equally well be due to the Scandinavian ones, whose vowels they keep; for the loss of *th* cf. *since* from *sithence* (*sithens*, OE. *siþþan* + *s*).

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1 These *k*-words are, however, subject to some doubt.

69. We now come to those instances in which the intruder succeeded in ousting the legitimate heir, and shall begin with *egg*. Caxton in a well-known passage gives us a graphic description of the struggle between this form and the native *ey*:

> And certaynly our langage now used varyeth ferre from that whiche was used and spoken whan I was borne. For we englysshe men ben borne under the domynacyon of the mone, whiche is never stedfaste, but ever waverynge, wexynge one season, and waneth & dyscreaseth another season. And that comyn englysshe that is spoken in one shyre varyeth from a nother. In so moche that in my dayes happened that certayn marchauntes were in a shippe in tamyse, for to have sayled over the see into zelande. And for lacke of wynde, thei taryed atte forlond, and wente to lande for to refreshe them And one of theym named sheffelde,[1] a mercer, cam in-to an hows and axed for mete; and specyally he axyd after eggys. And the goode wyf answerde, that she coude speke no frenshe. And the marchaunt was angry, for he also coude speke no frenshe, but wolde have hadde egges, and she understode hym not. And thenne at laste a nother sayd that he wolde have eyren. Then the good wyf sayd that she understod hym wel. Loo, what sholde a man in thyse dayes now wryte, egges or eyren. Certaynly it is harde to playse every man, by cause of dyversite & chaunge of langage.[2]

Very soon after this was written, the old English forms *ey*, *eyren* finally went out of use.

70. Among other word-pairs similarly fated may be

1 Probably a north-country man.

2 Caxton's Eneydos, p. 2—3. (E. E. T. S. Extra Series 57.)

mentioned: OE. *a*, ME. *o* 'ever' — *ay* (both were found together in the frequent phrase 'for ay and oo' / *tho* (cf. *those*) — *they* / *theigh*, *thah*, *theh* and other forms — *though* / *swon* — *swain* (boatswain, etc.) / *ibirde* — *birth* / *eie* — *awe* / *þunresdæi* — *Thursday* / *in* (on) *þe lifte* — *on lofte*, now *aloft* / *swuster* — *sister* / *chetel* — *kettle*; and finally not a few words with English *y* over against Scand. *g*: *yete* — *get* / *yeme* 'care, heed' — *gom(e)*, dialectal *gaum* 'sense, wit, tact' / *yelde* — *guild* 'fraternity, association' / *yive* or *yeve* — *give* / *yift* — *gift*. In this last-mentioned word *gift*, not only is the initial sound due to Scandinavian, but also the modern meaning, for the Old English word meant 'the price paid by a suitor in consideration of receiving a woman to wife' and in the plural 'marriage, wedding'. No subtler linguistic influence can be imagined that this, where a word has been modified both with regard to pronunciation and meaning, and curiously enough has by that process been brought nearer to the verb from which it was originally derived (*give*).

71. In some words the old native form has survived, but has adopted the signification attached in Scandinavian to the corresponding word; thus *dream* in OE. meant 'joy', but in ME. the modern meaning of 'dream' is taken over from ON. *draumr*, Dan. *dröm*; analogous cases are *bread* (OE. *bread* 'fragment'), *bloom* (OE. *bloma* 'mass of metal'). In one word, this same process of sense-shifting has historical significance; the OE. *eorl* meant vaguely a 'nobleman' or more loosely 'a brave warrior' or 'man' generally; but under Knut it took over the meaning of the Norse *jarl* 'an under-king' or governor of one of the great divisions of the realm, thus paving the way for the present signification of *earl* as one of the grades in the (French) scale of rank. OE. *freond* meant only 'friend', whereas ON. *frændi*, Dan. *frænde* means 'kinsman', but in Orrm and other ME. texts the word sometimes has the

Scand. meaning[1] and so it has to this day in Scotch (see many instances in J. Wright's Dialect Dictionary, *e. g.* "We are near friends, but we dont speak"); the Scotch proverb "Friends agree best at a distance" corresponds to the Danish "Frænde er frænde værst". OE. *dwellan* or *dwelian* meant only 'to lead astray, lead into error, thwart' or intr. 'to go astray'[2]; the intransitive meanings, 'to tarry, abide, remain in a place', which correspond with the Scandinavian meanings, are not found till the beginning of the 13th century. OE. *ploh* is found only with the meaning of 'a measure of land' (still in Scotch *pleuch*), but in ME. it came to mean the implement *plough* (OE. *sulh*) as in ON. *plógr*. OE. *holm* meant 'ocean', but the modern word owes its signification of 'islet, flat ground by a river' to Scandinavian *holm*.

72. These were cases of native words conforming to foreign speech habits; in other instances the Scandinavians were able to place words at the disposal of the English which agreed so well with other native words as to be readily associated with them, nay which were felt to be fitter expressions for the ideas than the Old English words and therefore survived. *Death* (deaþ) and *dead* are OE. words, but the corresponding verbs were *steorfan* and *sweltan*; now it is obvious that Danish *døya* (now *dø*) was more easily associated with the noun and the adjective than the old verbs, and accordingly it was soon adopted (*deyen*, now *die*), while *sweltan* was discarded and the other verb acquired the more special signification

1 Saxon Chron. 1135, which is given in the NED. as an instance of this meaning, appears to me to be doubtful.

2 *Dwelode*, in Ælfric, *Homilies* 1. 384, is wrongly translated by Thorpe 'continued', so that Kluge is wrong as giving this passage as the earliest instance of the modern meaning; it means 'wandered, went astray'.

of *starving*. *Sæte*, Mod. E. *seat*, was adopted because it was at once associated with the verbs *to sit* and *to set*. The most important importation of this kind was that of the pronominal forms *they*, *them* and *their*, which entered readily into the system of English pronouns beginning with the same sound (*the*, *that*, *this*) and were felt to be more distinct than the old native forms which they supplanted. Indeed these were liable to constant confusion with some forms of the singular number (*he*, *him*, *her*) after the vowels had become obscured, so that *he* and *hie*, *him* and *heom*, *her* (*hire*) and *heora* could no longer be kept easily apart. We thus find the obscured form, which was written *a* (or *'a*), in use for 'he' till the beginning of the 16th century (compare the dialectal use, for instance in Tennyson's "But Parson a cooms an' a goäs"), and in use for 'she' and for 'they' till the end of the 14th century. Such a state of things would naturally cause a great number of ambiguities; but although the *th*-forms must consequently be reckoned a great advantage to the language, it took a long time before the old forms were finally displaced, nay, the dative *hem* still survives in the form *'em* ("take 'em"), which is now by people ignorant of the history of the language taken to be a shortened *them*; *her* 'their' is the only form for the possessive of the plural found in Chaucer (who says *they* in the nominative) and there are two or three instances in Shakespeare. One more Scandinavian pronoun is *same*, which was speedily associated with the native adverb *same* (swa same 'similarly'). Other words similarly connected with the native stock are *want* (adj. and vb.), which reminded the English of their own *wan* 'wanting', *wana* 'want' and *wanian* 'wane, lessen', and *ill*, which must have appeared like a stunted form of *evil*, especially to a Scotchman who had made his own *devil* into *deil* and *even* into *ein*.

73. If now we try to find out by means of the loan-word test (see above, § 31) what were the spheres of human knowledge or activity in which the Scandinavians were able to teach the English, the first thing that strikes us is that the very earliest stratum of loanwords[1], words which by the way were soon to disappear again from the language[2], relate to war and more particularly to the navy: *orrest* 'battle', *fylcian* 'to collect, marshal', *lið* 'fleet', *barda*, *cnear*, *scegþ* different sorts of warships, *ha* 'rowlock'. This agrees perfectly well with what the Saxon Chronicle relates about the English being inferior to the heathen in ship-building, until King Alfred undertook to construct a new kind of warships.[3]

74. Next, we find a great many Scandinavian law-terms; they have been examined by Professor Steenstrup in his well-known work on "Danelag".[4] He has there been able, in an astonishing number of cases, to show conclusively that the vikings modified the legal ideas of the Anglo-Saxons, and that numerous new law-terms sprang up at the time of the Scandinavian settlements which had previously been utterly unknown. Most of them were simply the Danish or Norse words, others were Anglicizings, as when ON. *vapnatak* was made into *wæpnagetæc* (later *wapentake*) or when ON. *heimsokn* appears as *hamsocn* 'house-breaking or the fine for that offence', or *saklauss* as *sacleas* 'innocent'. The most important of these juridical imports is the word *law* itself, known in England from the 10th century in the form *lagu*, which must have been the exact Scandinavian form, as it is

1 See Björkman, p. 5.

2 They were naturally supplanted by French words, see below.

3 Therefore, I cannot believe that ON. *bat* is a loan from OE. *bat* (boat), although it is difficult to account for the vowel by any other theory.

4 Copenhagen 1882 (— Normannerne IV).

the direct fore-runner of the ON. form *log*, ODan. *logh*.[1] *By-law* is now felt to be a compound of the preposition *by* and *law*, but originally *by* was the Danish *by* 'town, village' (found in Derby, Whitby, etc.), and the Danish genitive-ending is preserved in the other English form *byrlaw*. Other words belonging to this class are *niðing* 'criminal, wretch', *thriding* 'third part', preserved in the mutilated form *riding*[2], *rape* (ON. *hreppr*, *hrappr*, a division in Sussex), *carlman* 'man' as opposed to woman, *bonda* or *bunda* 'peasant', *lysing* 'freedman', *þræll*, Mod. *thrall*, *mal* 'suit, agreement', *wiþermal* 'counter-plea, defence', *seht* 'agreement', *stefnan* 'summon', *crafian* now *crave*, *landcop* or anglicized *landceap* and *lahcop* or *lahceap* (for the signification see Steenstrup p. 192 ff.); *ran* 'robbery'; *infangenþeof* later *infangthief* 'jurisdiction over a thief apprehended within the manor'. It will be seen that with the exception of *law*, *bylaw*, *thrall* and *crave* — the least juridical of them all — these Danish law-terms have disappeared from the language as a simple consequence of the Norman conquerors taking into their own hands the courts of justice and legal affairs generally. Steenstrup's research, which is largely based on linguistic facts, may be thus summarized. The Scandinavian settlers re-organized the administration of the realm and based it on a uniform and equable division of the country; taxes were imposed and collected after the Scandinavian pattern; instead of the lenient criminal law of former times, a virile and powerful law was introduced which was better capable

1 The OE. word was *æ* or *æw*, which meant 'marriage' as well and was restricted to that sense in late OE., until it was displaced by the French word.

2 *North-thriding* being heard as *North-riding*; in the case of the two other ridings of Yorkshire, *East-thriding* and *West-thriding*, the *th*-sound was assimilated to the preceding *t*, the result in all three cases being the same misdivision of the word.

of intimidating fierce and violent natures. More stress was laid on personal honour, as when a sharp line was drawn between stealthy or clandestine crimes and open crimes attributable to obstinacy or vindictiveness. Commerce, too, was regulated so as to secure trade.[1]

75. Apart from these legal words it would be very difficult to point out any single group of words belonging to the same sphere from which a superiority of any description might be concluded. *Window* is borrowed from *vindauga* ('wind-eye'); but we dare not infer that the northern settlers taught the English anything in architecture, for the word stands quite alone; besides OE. had another word for 'window', which is also based on the eye-shape of the windows in the old wooden houses: *eaghyrel* 'eye-hole' (cf. *noshyrel* nostril).[2] Nor does the borrowing of *steak*, ME. *steyke* from ON. *steik* prove any superior cooking on the part of the vikings. But it is possible that the Scandinavian *knives* (ME. *knif* from Scand. *knif*) were better than or at any rate different from those of other nations, for the word was introduced into French (*canif*) as well as into English.

76. If, then, we go through the lists of loan-words, looking out for words from which conclusions as to the state of culture of the two nations might be drawn, we shall be doomed to disappointment, for they all seem to denote objects and actions of the most commonplace description and certainly do not represent any new set of ideas hitherto unknown to the people adopting them.

1 Steenstrup, *Danelag* p. 391 ff.

2 Most European languages use the Lat. *fenestra* (G. *fenster*, Dutch *venster*, Welsh *ffenester*), which was also imported from French into English as *fenester*, in use from 1290 to 1548. Slavonic languages have *okno*, derived from *oko* 'eye'. On the eye-shape of old windows see R. Meringer, Indogerm. Forschungen XVI 1904, p. 125.

We find such everyday nouns as *husband*, *fellow*, *sky*, *skull*, *skin*, *wing*, *haven*, *root*, *skill*, *gate*[1], etc. Among the adjectives adopted from Scand. we find *meek*, *low*, *scant*, *loose*, *odd*[2], *wrong*, *ill*, *ugly*, *rotten*. The impression produced perhaps by this list that only unpleasant adjectives came into English from Scandinavia, is easily shown to be wrong, for *happy* and *seemly* too are derived from Danish roots, not to speak of *stor*, which was common in Middle English for 'great', and dialectal adjectives like *glegg* 'clear-sighted, clever', *heppen* 'neat, tidy', *gain* 'direct, suitable, handy', (Sc. the gainest way, ON. hinn gegnsta veg, Dan. den genneste vej). The only thing common to the adjectives, then, is seen to be their extreme commonplaceness, and the same impression is confirmed by the verbs, as for instance, *thrive*, *die*, *cast*, *hit*, *take*, *call*, *want*, *scare*, *scrape*, *scream*, *scrub*, *scowl*, *skulk*, *bask*, *drown*, *ransack*, *gape*, *guess* (doubtful), etc. To these must be added numerous words preserved only in dialects (north country and Scotch) such as *lathe* 'barn' Dan. *lade*, *hoast* 'cough' Dan. *hoste*, *flit* 'move' Dan. *flytte*, *gar* 'make, do' Dan. *göre*, *lait* 'search for' Dan. *lede*, *red up* 'to tidy' Dan. *rydde op*, *keek in* 'peep in', *ket* 'carrion, horseflesh, tainted flesh, rubbish', originally 'flesh, meat as Dan. *kød*, etc., all of them words belonging to the same familiar sphere, and having nothing about them that might be called technical or indicative of a higher culture. The same is true of that large class of words which have been mentioned above (§ 65—72), where the Scandinavians did not properly bring the word itself, but modified either the form or the signification of a

1 *Gate* 'way, road, street', frequent in some northern towns in the names of streets, frequent also in ME. adverbial phrases *algate*, *anothergathe*(s) (corrupted into *anotherguess*), etc. In the sense 'manner of going' it is now spelt *gait*.

2 Cf. North-Jutland dialect (Vendsyssel) *oj* 'odd (number)'.

native word; among them we have seen such everyday words as *get*, *give*, *sister*, *loose*, *birth*, *awe*, *bread*, *dream*, etc.[1] It is precisely the most indispensable elements of the language that have undergone the strongest Scandinavian influence, and this is raised into certainty when we discover that a certain number of those grammatical words, the small coin of language, which Chinese grammarians term 'empty words', and which are nowhere else transferred from one language to another, have been taken over from Danish into English: pronouns like *they*, *them*, *their*, *the same* and probably *both*; a modal verb like Scotch *maun*, *mun* (ON. *munu*, Dan. *mon*, *monne*); comparatives like *minne* 'lesser', *min* 'less', *helder* 'rather'; pronominal adverbs like *hethen*, *thethen*, *whethen* 'hence, thence, whence', *samen* 'together'; conjunctions like *though*, *oc* 'and', *sum*, which for a long time seemed likely to displace the native *swa* (so) after a comparison, until it was itself displaced by *eallswa>as*; prepositions like *fro* and *till* (see above § 64).[2]

77. It is obvious that all these non-technical words can show us nothing about mental or industrial superiority; they do not bear witness as to the currents of civilization; what was denoted by them cannot have been new to the English; we have here no new ideas, only new names. Does that mean, then, that the loan-word test which we are able to apply elsewhere, fails in this one case, and that linguistic facts can tell us nothing

1 It is noticeable, too, that the native word *heaven* has been more and more restricted to the figurative and religious acceptation, while the Danish *sky* is used exclusively of the visible firmament; *sky* originally meant cloud.

2 Another preposition, *umbe*, was probably to a large extent due to Scandinavian, the native form being *ymbe, embe;* but perhaps in some texts *u* in *umbe* may represent the vowel [y].

about the reciprocal relations of the two races? No; on the contrary, the suggestiveness of these loans leaves nothing to be desired, they are historically significant enough. If the English loan-words in this period extend to spheres where other languages do not borrow, if the Scandinavian and the English languages were woven more intimately together, the reason must be a more intimate fusion of the two nations than is seen anywhere else. They fought like brothers and afterwards settled down peaceably, like brothers, side by side. The numbers of the Danish and Norwegian settlers must have been considerable, else they would have disappeared without leaving such traces in the language.

78. It might at the first blush seem reasonable to think that what was going on among Scandinavian settlers in England was parallel to what we see going on now in the United States. But there is really no great similarity between the two cases. The language of Scandinavian and other settlers in America is often a curious mixture, but it is very important to notice that it is Danish or Norwegian, sprinkled with English words: "han har fencet sin farm og venter en god krop" he has fenced his farm and expects a good crop; "lad os krosse streeten" let us cross the street, „tag det træ" take that tray; "hun suede ham i courten for 25 000 daler" etc. But this is *toto cælo* different from the English language of the middle ages. And if we do not take into account those districts where Scandinavians constitute the immense majority of the population and keep up their old speech as pure as circumstances will permit, the children or at any rate the children's children of the immigrants speak English, and very pure English too without any Danish admixture. The English language of America has no loan-words worth mentioning from the languages of the thousands and thousands of

Germans, Scandinavians, French, Poles and others that have settled there. Nor are the reasons far to seek.[1] The immigrants come in small groups and find their predecessors half, or more than half, Americanized; those belonging to the same country cannot, accordingly, maintain their nationality collectively; they come in order to gain a livelihood, generally in subordinate positions where it is important to each of them separately to be as little different as possible from his new surroundings, in garb, in manners, and in language. The faults each individual commits in talking English, therefore, can have no consequences of lasting importance, and at any rate his children are in most respects situated like the children of the natives and learn the same language in essentially the same manner. In old times, of course, many a Dane in England would speak his mother-tongue with a large admixture of English, but that has no significance in linguistic history, for in course of time the descendants of the immigrants would no longer learn Scandinavian as their mother-tongue, but English. But that which is important, is the fact of the English themselves intermingling their own native speech with Scandinavian elements. Now the manner in which this is done shows us that the culture or civilization of the Scandinavian settlers cannot have been of a higher order than that of the English, for then we should have seen in the loan-words special groups of technical terms indicative of this superiority. Neither can their state of culture have been much inferior to that of the English, for

1 See G. Hempl's valuable paper on *Language-Rivalry and Speech-Differentiation in the case of Race Mixture.* (Transact. of the Amer. Philol. Association, XXIX, 1898, p. 35). Hempl's very short mention of the Scandinavians in England, is, perhaps, the least satisfactory portion of his paper; none of his classes apply to our case.

in that case they would have adopted the language of the natives without appreciably influencing it. This is what happened with the Goths in Spain, with the Franks in France and with the Danes in Normandy, in all of which cases the Germanic tongues were absorbed into the Romance languages.[1] It is true that the Scandinavians were, for a short time at least, the rulers of England, and we have found in the juridical loan-words linguistic corroboration of this fact; but the great majority of the settlers did not belong to the ruling class. Their social standing must have been, on the whole, slightly superior to the average of the English, but the difference cannot have been great, for the bulk of Scandinavian words are of a purely democratic character. This is clearly brought out by a comparison with the French words introduced in the following centuries, for here language confirms what history tells us, that the French represent the rich, the ruling, the refined, the aristocratic element in the English nation. How different is the impression made by the Scandinavian loan-words. They are homely expressions for things and actions of everyday importance; their character is utterly democratic.

1 It is instructive to contrast the old speech-mixture in England with what has been going on for the last two centuries in the Shetland Islands. Here the old Norwegian dialect ("Norn") has perished as a consequence of the natives considering it more genteel to speak English (Scotch). All common words of their speech now are English, but they have retained a certain number of Norn words, all of them technical, denoting different species of fish, fishing implements, small parts of the boat or of the house and its primitive furniture, those signs in clouds, etc., from which the weather was forecast at sea, technicalities of sheep rearing, nicknames for things which appear to them ludicrous or ridiculous, etc. — all of them significant of the language of a subjugated and poor population. (J. Jakobsen, Det norrøne sprog på Shetland, København 1897.)

The difference is also shown by so many of the French words having never penetrated into the speech of the people, so that they have been known and used only by the 'upper ten', while the Scandinavian ones are used by high and low alike; their shortness too agrees with the monosyllabic character of the native stock of words, consequently they are far less felt as foreign elements than many French words; in fact, in many statistical calculations of the proportion of native to imported words in English, Scandinavian words have been more or less inadvertently reckoned to the native elements. Just as it is impossible to speak or write in English about higher intellectual or emotional subjects or about fashionable mundane matters without drawing largely upon the French (and Latin) elements, in the same manner Scandinavian words will crop up together with the Anglo-Saxon ones in any conversation on the thousand nothings of daily life or on the five or six things of paramount importance to high and low alike. An Englishman cannot *thrive* or be *ill* or *die* without Scandinavian words; they are to the language what *bread* and *eggs* are to the daily fare. To this element of his language an Englishman might apply what Wordsworth says of the daisy:

> Thou unassuming common-place
> Of Nature, with that homely face,
> And yet with something of a grace
> Which Love makes for thee! —

79. The form in which the words were borrowed occasions very few remarks. Those nouns which in Scand. had the nominative ending *-r*, did not keep it, the kernel only of the word (= accus.) being taken over. In one instance the Norse genitive ending appears

in English; the Norse phrase *á náttar þeli* 'in the middle of the night' (*þel* means 'power, strength') was Anglicized into *on nighter tale* (Cursor Mundi), or *bi nighter tale* (Havelock, Chaucer etc.). The *-t* in neuters of adjectives, that distinctive Scandinavian trait, is found in *scant*[1], *want* and *(a)thwart*. Most Norse verbs were inflected weakly in English, as might be expected (*e. g. die*, which in Old Scand. was a strong verb), but there is one noteworthy exception, *take*, that kept its Scand. strong inflection, ON. *taka tók taken*. There are a few interesting words with the Scand. passive voice in *-sk* (from the reflexive pronoun *sik*): *bask*[2] and *busk*[3], but in English they are treated like active forms. The shortness of the *sk*-forms may have led to their being taken over as inseparable wholes, for ON. *oðlask* and *þrívask* lost the reflexive ending in English *addle* 'acquire, earn' and *thrive*.

80. As the Danes and the English could understand one another without much difficulty it would be natural that many niceties of grammar should be sacrificed, the intelligibility of either tongue coming to depend mainly on its mere vocabulary.[4] So when we find that the wearing away and levelling of grammatical forms in the regions in which the Danes chiefly settled was a couple of centuries in advance of the same process in the more southern parts of the country, the conclusion does not seem unwarrantable that this is due to the settlers who did not care to learn English correctly in every minute

1. Properly *skammt*, neuter of *skammr* 'short'; the derived verb *skemta*, Dan. *skemte* 'joke' is found in ME. *skemten*.

2. ON. *baða-sk* 'bathe oneself' rather than *baka-sk* 'bake oneself'.

3. ON. *búa-sk* 'prepare oneself'.

4. Jespersen, *Progress in Language*, p. 173. Compare the explanation of the similar simplification of Dutch in South Africa given by H. Meyer, *Die Sprache der Buren*. (Göttingen 1901, p. 16.)

particular and who certainly needed no such accuracy in order to make themselves understood.

80 a. With regard to syntax our want of adequate early texts in Scandinavia as well as in North England makes it impossible for us to state anything very definite; but the nature of those loans which we are able to verify, warrants the conclusion that the intimate fusion of the two languages must certainly have influenced syntactical relations, and when we find in later times numerous striking correspondences between English and Danish, it seems probable that some at least of them date from the viking settlements. It is true, for instance, that relative clauses without any pronoun are found in very rare instances in Old English; but they do not become common till the Middle English period, when they abound; the use of these clauses is subject to the same restrictions in both languages, so that in ninety out of a hundred instances where an Englishman leaves out the relative pronoun, a Dane would be able to do likewise, and vice versa; the preposition in both languages comes last in the clause. The rules for the omission or retention of the conjunction *that* are nearly identical. The use of *will* and *shall* in Middle English corresponds pretty nearly with Scandinavian; if in Old English an auxiliary was used to express futurity, it was generally *sceal*, just as in modern Dutch (*zal*); *wile* was rare. In Modern English the older rules have been greatly modified, but in many cases where English commentators on Shakespeare note divergences from modern usage, a Dane would have used the same verb as Shakespeare. Furness, in his note to the sentence "Besides it should appear" (Merch. III. 2. 289 = 275 Globe ed.) writes: "It is not easy to define this 'should' ..... The Elizabethan use of *should* is to me always difficult to analyse. Compare Stephano's question about Caliban: 'Where the devil should he learn

our language?'" Now, a Dane would say 'det skulde synes', and 'Hvor Fanden skulde han lære vort sprog?' Abbott (Shakesp. Grammar § 319) says "There is a difficulty in the expression 'perchance I will'; but, from its constant recurrence, it would seem to be a regular idiom"; a Dane, in the three quotations given, would say *vil*. And similarly in other instances. "He could have done it" agrees with "han kunde have gjort det" as against "er hätte es tun können" (and French "il aurait pu le faire"), and the Scotch idiom "He wad na wrang'd the vera Deil" (Burns), „ye wad thought Sir Arthur had a pleasure in it" (Scott) where an Englishman cannot omit *have*, has an exact parallel in Danish "vilde gjort", etc. Other points in syntax might perhaps be ascribed to Scandinavian influence, such as the universal position of the genitive case before its noun (where Old English like German placed it very often after it), the use of a preposition governing a dependent clause (he talked of how people had injured him; where German must say *davon, wie*, and Dutch *er van hoe*), etc.; but in these delicate matters it is not safe to assert too much, as in fact, many similarities may have been independently developed in both languages.

Chapter V.

The French.

81. If with regard to the Scandinavian invasion historical documents were so scarce that the linguistic evidence drawn from the number and character of the loan-words was a very important supplement to our historical knowledge of the circumstances, the same cannot be said of the Norman Conquest. The Normans, much more than the Danes, were felt as an alien race; their occupation of the country attracted much more notice and lasted much longer; they became the ruling class and as such were much more spoken of in contemporary literature and in historical records than the comparatively obscure Scandinavian element; and finally, they represented a higher culture than the natives and had a literature of their own, in which numerous direct statements and indirect hints tell us about their doings and their relations with the native population. No wonder, therefore, that historians should have given much more attention to this fuller material and to all the interesting problems connected with the Norman conquest than to the race-mixture attending the Scandinavian immigrations. This is true in respect not only of political and social history, but also of the language, in which the Norman-French element is so conspicuous, and so easily accessible to the student that it has been very often treated from various points of view. And yet, there is still

much work for future investigators to do. In accordance with the general plan of my work, I shall in this chapter deal chiefly with what has been of permanent importance to the future of the English language, and endeavour to characterize the influence exercized by French as contrasted with that exercized by other languages with which English has come into contact.

82. The Normans became masters of England, and they remained masters for a sufficiently long time to leave a deep impress on the language. The conquerors were numerous and powerful, but the linguistic influence would have been far less if they had not continued for centuries in actual contact and constant intercourse with the French of France, of whom many were induced by later kings to settle in England. We need only go through a list of French loan-words in English to be firmly convinced of the fact that the immigrants formed the upper classes of the English society after the conquest, so many of the words are distinctly aristocratic. It is true that they left the old words *king* and *queen* intact, but apart from these nearly all words relating to government and to the highest administation are French; see, for instance, *crown*, *state*, *government* and to *govern*, *reign*, *realm* (O Fr. realme, Mod. Fr. royaume), *sovereign*, *country*, *power; minister*, *chancellor*, *council* (and *counsel*), *authority*, *parliament*, *exchequer*. *People* and *nation*, too, were political words; the corresponding OE. *þeod* is not found later than the thirteenth century. Feudalism was imported from France, and with it were introduced a number of words, such as *fief*, *feudal*, *vassal*, *liege*, and the names of the various steps in the scale of rank: *prince*, *peer*, *duke* with *duchess*, *marquis*, *viscount*, *baron* (*baronet*). It is, perhaps, surprising that *lord* and *lady* should have remained in esteem, and that *earl* should have been retained, *count* being chiefly used in speak-

ing of foreigners, but the earl's wife was designated by the French word *countess*, and *court* is French, as well as the adjectives relating to court life, such as *courteous*, *noble*, *fine* and *refined*. *Honour* and *glory* belong to the French, and so does *heraldry*, while nearly all English expressions relating to that difficult science are of French origin, some of them curiously distorted.

83. The upper classes, as a matter of course, took into their hands the management of military matters; and although in some cases it was a long time before the old native terms were finally displaced (*here* and *fird*, for instance, were used till the fifteenth century when *army* began to be common), we have a host of French military words, many of them of very early introduction. Such are *war* (ME. werre, Old North Fr. werre, Central French guerre) and *peace*, *battle*, *arms*, *armour*, *buckler*, *hauberk*, *mail* (chain-mail; O Fr. maille 'mesh of a net'), *lance*, *dart*, *cutlass*, *banner*, *ensign*, *assault*, *siege*, etc. Further *officer*, *colonel*, *captain* and *chieftain*, *lieutenant*, *sergeant*, *soldier*, *troops*, *dragoon*, *vessel*, *navy* and *admiral* (orig. *amiral* in English as in French, ultimately an Arabic word). Some words which are now used very extensively outside the military sphere, were without any doubt at first purely military, such as *challenge*, *enemy*, *danger*, *escape* (scape), *espy* (spy), *aid*, *prison*, *hardy*, *gallant*, *march*, *force*, *company*, *guard*, etc.

84. Another natural consequence of the power of the Norman upper classes is that most of the terms pertaining to the law are of French origin, such as *justice*, *just*, *judge*; *jury*, *court* (we have seen the word already in another sense), *suit*, *sue*, *plaintiff* and *defendant*, a *plea*, *plead*, to *summon*, *cause*, *assize*, *session*, *attorney*, *fee*, *accuse*, *crime*, *guile*, *felony*, *traitor*, *damage*, *dower*, *heritage*, *property*, *real estate*, *tenure*, *penalty*, *demesne*, *injury*, *privilege*. Some of these are now hardly to be called technical

juridical words, and there are others which belong still more to the ordinary vocabulary of every-day life, but which were undoubtedly at first introduced by lawyers at the time when procedure was conducted entirely in French[1]; for instance, *case*, *marry*, *marriage*, *oust*, *prove*, *false* (perhaps also *fault*), *heir*, probably also *male* and *female*, while *defend* and *prison* are common to the juridical and the military worlds. *Petty* (Fr. petit) was, I suspect, introduced by the jurists in such combinations as *petty jury*, *petty larceny*, *petty constable*, *petty sessions*, *petty averages*, *petty treason* (still often spelt *petit treason*), etc., before it was used commonly. Similarly *puisne* is still the juridical spelling showing the origin (in law it means 'younger or inferior in rank', but originally 'later born'), while in ordinary language it has adopted the spelling *puny*, as if the *-y* had been the usual adjective ending.

85. Besides, there are a good many words that have never become common property, but have been known to jurists only, such as *mainour* (to be taken with the mainour, to be caught in the very act of stealing, from Fr. manœuvre), *jeofail* ('an oversight', the acknowledgement of an error in pleading, from je faille), *cestui que trust*, *cestui* (*a*) *que vie* and other phrases equally shrouded in mystery to the man in the street. *Larceny* has been almost exclusively the property of lawyers, so that it has not ousted *theft* from general use; such words as *thief* and *steal* were of course too popular to be displanted by French juridical terms, though *burglar* is probably of French origin. It is also worth observing how many of the phrases in which the adjective is invariably placed

1. From 1362 English was established as the official language spoken in the courts of justice, yet the curious mongrel language known as 'Law French' continued in use there for centuries; Cromwell tried to break its power, but it was not finally abolished till an act of parliament of 1731.

after its noun, are law terms, taken over bodily from the French, *e. g. heir male*, *issue male*, *fee simple*, *proof demonstrative*, *malice prepense* (or, Englished, *malice aforethought*)[1], *letters patent* (formerly also with the adjective inflected, *letters patents*, Shakesp. R 2 II 1. 202), *attorney general* (and other combinations of *general*, all of which are official, though some of them are not juridical).

86. As ecclesiastical matters were also chiefly under the control of the higher classes, we find a great many French words connected with the church, such as *religion*, *service*, *trinity*, *saviour*, *virgin*, *angel* (O Fr. angele, now Fr. ange; the OE. word engel was taken direct from Latin, see § 38), *saint*, *relic*, *abbey*, *cloister*, *friar* (ME. frere as in French), *clergy*, *parish*, *baptism*, *sacrifice*, *orison*, *homily*, *altar*, *miracle*, *preach*, *pray*, *prayer*, *sermon*, *psalter* (ME. sauter), *feast* ('religious anniversary'). Words like *rule*, *lesson*, *save*, *tempt*, *blame*, *order*, *nature*, which now belong to the common language and have very extensive ranges of signification, were probably at first purely ecclesiastical words. As the clergy were, moreover, teachers of morality as well as of religion they introduced the whole gamut of words pertaining to moral ideas from *virtue* to *vice*: duty, conscience, grace, charity, cruel, chaste, covet, desire, lechery, fool (one of the oldest meanings is 'sensual'), jealous, pity, discipline, mercy, and others.

87. To these words, taken from different domains, may be added other words of more general meaning, which are highly significant as to the relations between the Normans and the English, such as *sir* and *madam*, *master* and *mistress* with their contrast *servant* (and the verb to *serve*), further, *command* and *obey*, *order*, *rent*, *rich*

1. Cf. also *lords spiritual* and *lords temporal*; the *body politic*.

and *poor* with the nouns *riches* and *poverty; money, interest, cash, rent,* etc.

88. It is a remark that was first made by John Wallis[1] and that has been very often repeated, especially since Sir Walter Scott made it popular in "Ivanhoe", that while the names of several animals in their lifetime are English (*ox, cow, calf, sheep, swine, boar, deer*) they appear on the table with French names (*beef, veal, mutton, pork, bacon, brawn, venison*). This is generally explained from the masters leaving the care of the living animals to the lower classes, while they did not leave much of the meat to be eaten by them. But it may with just as much right be contended that the use of the French words here is due to the superiority of the French *cuisine*, which is shown by a great many other words as well, such as *sauce, boil, fry, roast, toast, pasty, pastry, soup, sausage, jelly, dainty;* while the humbler *breakfast* is English, the more sumptuous meals, *dinner* and *supper*, as well as *feasts* generally, are French.

89. We see on the whole that the masters knew how to enjoy life and secure the best things to themselves; note also such words as *joy* and *pleasure, delight, ease* and *comfort; flowers* and *fruits* may be mentioned in the same category. And if we go through the different objects or pastimes that make life enjoyable to people having plenty of leisure (this word, too, is French) we shall find an exceedingly large number of French words. The *chase*[2] of course was one of the favourite pastimes, and though the native *hunt* was never displaced, yet we find many French terms relating to the chase, such as *brace* and *couple, leash, falcon, quarry, warren,*

1. Grammatica linguae Anglicanae 1653.

2. It is the Central French form of the word that was taken over in a North French dialectal form as *catch* (Latin *captiare*).

scent, *track*. The general term *sport*, too, is of course a French word; it is a shortened form of *desport* (*disport*). *Cards* and *dice* are French words, and so are a great many words relating to different games (*partner*, *suit*, *trump*), some of the most interesting being the numerals used by card and dice players: *ace*, *deuce*, *tray*, *cater*, *cinque*, *size*; cf. Chaucer's "Sevene is my chaunce, and thyn is cynk and treye" (C 653).

90. The French led the fashion in the middle ages, just as they do to some extent even now, so we expect to find a great many French words relating to dress; in fact, in going through Chaucer's Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, where in introducing his gallery of figures he seldom omits to mention their dress, one will see that in nearly all cases where etymologists have been able to trace the special names of particular garments to their sources these are French. And of course, such general terms as *apparel*, *dress*, *costume*, and *garment* are derived from the same language.

91. The French were the teachers of the English in most things relating to art; not only such words as *art*, *beauty*, *colour*, *image*, *design*, *figure*; *ornament*, *to paint*, but also the greater number of the more special words of technical significance are French; from architecture may be mentioned, by way of specimens: *arch*, *tower*, *pillar*, *vault*, *porch*, *column*, *aisle*, *choir*, *reredos*, *transept*, *chapel*, *cloister* (the last of which belong here as well as to our § 86), not to mention *palace*, *castle*, *manor*, *mansion*, etc. If we go through the names of the various kinds of artisans, etc., we cannot fail to be struck with the difference between the more homely or more elementary occupations which have stuck to their old native names (such as baker, miller, smith, weaver, saddler, shoemaker, wheelwright, fisherman, shepherd and others), on the one hand, and on the other those which brought their prac-

tioners into more immediate contact with the upper classes, or in which fashion perhaps played a greater part; these latter have French names, for instance, *tailor*, *butcher*, *mason*, *painter*, *carpenter* and *joiner* (note also such words as *furniture*, *chair*, *table* etc.).

92. I am afraid I have tired the reader a little with all these long lists of words. My purpose in giving them was to give abundant linguistic evidence for the fact that the French were the rich, the powerful, and the refined classes. It was quite natural that the lower classes should soon begin to imitate such of the expressions of the rich as they could catch the meaning of. They would adopt interjections and exclamations like *alas*, *certes*, *sure*, *adieu;* and perhaps *verray* (later *very*) was at first introduced as an exclamation. Whole phrases were adopted: in the Ancrene Riwle (about 1225) we find (p. 268) *Deuleset* (Dieu le sait) in two manuscripts while a third has *Crist hit wat;* and three hundred years later, we find "As good is a becke (= a wink), as is a *dewe vow garde*" (Bale, Three Lawes 1. 1470). As John of Salisbury (Johannes Sarisberiensis) says expressly in the twelfth century[1], it was the fashion to interlard one's speech with French words; they were thought modish, and that will account for the fact that many non-technical words too were taken over, such as *air*, *age* (juridical?) *arrive* (military?), *beast*, *change*, *cheer*, *cover*, *cry*, *debt* (juridical?), *feeble*, *large*, *letter*, *manner*, *matter*, *nurse* and *nourish*, *place*, *point*, *price*, *reason*, *turn*, *use*, and a great many other everyday words of very extensive employment.

93. If, then, the English adopted so many French words because it was the fashion in every respect to imitate their 'betters', we are allowed to see in this

1. Quoted by D. Behrens, Paul's Grundriß I² 963.

adoption of *non-technical* words an outcome of the same trait of their character as that which in its exaggerated form has in modern times been termed snobbism or toadyism, and which has made large sections of the English people more interested in the births, deaths and especially marriages of dukes and marquises than in anything else outside their own small personal sphere.

94. But when we trace this feature of snobbishness back to the first few centuries after the Norman conquest, we must not forget that there were great differences, so that some people would affect many French words and others would stick as far as possible to the native stock of words. We see this difference in the literary works that have come down to us. In Layamon's "Brut", written very early in the thirteenth century and amounting in all to more than 56,000 short lines, the number of words of Anglo-French origin is only about 150.[1] The "Orrmulum", which was written perhaps twenty years later, contains more than 20,000 lines, yet even Kluge, who criticizes the view that this very tedious work contains no French words, has not been able to find in it more than twenty odd words of French origin.[2] But in the contemporary prose work "Ancrene Riwle", we find on 200 pages about 500 French words. A couple of centuries later, it would be a much harder task to count the French words in any author, as so many words had already become part and parcel of the English language; but even then there were considerable differences between authors. Chaucer undoubtedly employs a far greater number of French words than most other writers.

1. Skeat, Principles of English Etymology, II (1891) p. 8; Morris, Historical Outl. of Engl. Accidence (1885) p. 338.

2. Kluge, Das französische Element im Orrmulum, Englische Studien, XXII p. 179.

of his time. Nor would it be fair to ascribe all these borrowings to what I have mentioned as snobbism; the greater a writer's familiarity with French culture and literature, the greater would be his temptation to introduce French words for everything above the commonplaces of daily life.

95. The following table shows the strength of the influx of French words at different periods; it comprises one thousand words (the first hundred French words in the New English Dictionary for each of the first nine letters and the first 50 for *j* and *l*) and gives the half-century to which the earliest quotation in that Dictionary belongs.[1]

Before 1050	2
1051—1100	2
1101—1150	1
1151—1200	15
1201—1250	64
1251—1300	127
1300—1350	120
1351—1400	180
1401—1450	70
1451—1500	76
1501—1550	84
1551—1600	91
1601—1650	69
1651—1700	34
1701—1750	24
1751—1800	16
1801—1850	23
1851—1900	2
	1000

1. I have followed the authority of the same Dictionary also in regard to the question of the origin of the words,

The list shows conclusively that the linguistic influence did not begin immediately after the conquest, and that it was strongest in the years 1251—1400, to which nearly half of the borrowings belong (42.7 p. c.). Further it will be seen that the common assumption that the age of Dryden was particularly apt to introduce new words from French is very far from being correct.

96. In a well-known passage, Robert of Gloucester (ab. 1300) speaks about the relation of the two languages in England: "Thus, he says, England came into Normandy's hand; and the Normans at that time (*þo*; it is important not to overlook this word) could speak only their own language, and spoke French just as they did at home, and had their children taught in the same manner, so that people of rank in this country who came of their blood all stick to the same language that they received of them, for if a man knows no French people will think little of him. But the lower classes still[1] stick to English and to their own language. I imagine there are in all the world no countries that do not keep their own language except England alone. But it is well known that it is the best thing to know both languages, for the more a man knows the more is he

reckoning thus as French some words which I should, perhaps, myself have called Latin. Derivative words that have certainly or probably arisen in English (e. g. daintily, damageable) have been excluded, as also those perfectly unimportant words for which the N. E. D. gives less than five quotations. Most of them cannot really be said to have ever belonged to the English language.

1. *yute* 'yet'; sometimes curiously mistranslated: hold to their own *good* speech.

worth." This passage raises the question: How did common people manage to learn so many foreign words? — and how far did they assimilate them?

97. In a few cases the process of assimilation was facilitated by the fact that a French word happened to resemble an old native one; this was sometimes the natural consequence of French having in some previous period borrowed the corresponding word from some Germanic dialect. Thus no one can tell exactly how much modern *rich* owes to OE. *rice* 'powerful, rich' and how much to French *riche*; the noun (Fr. and ME.) *richesse* (now *riches*) supplanted the early ME. *richedom*. The old native verb *choose* was supplemented with the noun *choice* from Fr. *choix*. OE. *hergian* and OFr. *herier*, *harier*, run together in Mod. E. *harry*; OE. *hege* and Fr. *haie* run together in *hay* 'hedge, fence'. It is difficult to separate two *main*'s, one of which is OE. *mægen* 'strength, might' and the other OFr. *maine* (Latin *magnus*; the root of both words is ultimately the same), cf. *main sea* and *main force*. The modern *gain* (noun and verb) was borrowed in the fifteenth century from French (*gain*, *gaain*; *gagner gaaignier*, cf. It. *guadagnare*, a Germanic loan), but it curiously coincided with an earlier noun *gain* (also spelt *gein*, *geyn*, *gayne*, etc., oldest form *gaȝhenn*), which meant 'advantage, use, avail, benefit, remedy' and a verb *gain* (*gayne*, *geȝȝnenn*) 'to be suitable or useful, avail, serve', both from Old Norse. When French *isle* (now *île*) was adopted, it could not fail to remind the English of their old *iegland*, *iland* and eventually it corrupted the spelling of the latter into *island*. *Neveu* (now spelled *nephew*) recalled OE. *nefa*, *meneye* (*menye*, Fr. *maisnie* 'retinue, troop') recalled *many* (OE. *menigeo*), and *lake*, the old *lacu* 'stream, river.'[1]

1. This is still the meaning of *lake* in some dialects.

The two words *rest* have been confounded to some extent. In grammar, too there were some correspondences, as when nouns had the voiceless and the corresponding verbs the voiced consonants; French *us — user*, now *use* sb. pronounced [ju·s], vb. [ju·z] just as Eng. *house* sb. [haus], vb. [hauz]; French *grief — griever*, Eng. *grief — grieve* just as *half — halve*. Note also the formation of nouns in *-er* (*baker*, etc.) which is hardly distinguishable from French formations in words like *carpenter* (Fr. *-ier*), *interpreter* (ME. *interpretour*, Fr. *-eur*), etc. But on the whole such more or less accidental similarities between the two languages were few in number and could not materially assist the English population in learning the new words that were flooding their language.

98. A greater assistance may perhaps have been derived from a habit which may have been common in conversational speech, and which was at any rate not uncommon in writing, that of using a French word side by side with its native synonym, the latter serving more or less openly as an interpretation of the former for the benefit of those who were not yet familiar with the more refined expression. Thus in the Ancrene Riwle (ab. 1225): cherité þet is luve (p. 8) | in desperaunce, þet is, in unhope & in unbileave forte beon iboruwen (p. 8) | Understondeð þet two manere temptaciuns — two kunne vondunges — beoð (p. 180) | pacience, þet is þolemodness (ibid.) | lecherie, þet is, golness (p. 198) | ignoraunce, þet is unwisdom & unwotenesse (p. 278). I quote from Behrens's collection of similar collocations[1] the following instances that prove conclusively that the native word was then better known than the imported one: bigamie

1. Franz. Studien V. 2 p. 8. Cf. also "of whiche tribe, that is to seye, kynrede, Jesu Crist was born" (Maundeville 67).

is unkinde [unnatural] þing, on engleis tale twiewifing (Genesis & Exod. 449) | twelfe iferan, þe Freinsce heo cleopeden dusze pers (Layamon I. 1. 69) | þat craft: to lokie in þan lufte, þe craft his ihote [is called] astronomie in oþer kunnes speche [in a speech of a different kind] (ib. II. 2. 598). It is well worth observing that in all these cases the French words are perfectly familiar to a modern reader, while he will probably require an explanation of the native words that served then to interpret the others. In Chaucer we find similar double expressions, but they are now introduced for a totally different purpose; the reader is evidently supposed to be equally familiar with both, and the writer uses them to heighten or strengthen the effect of the style[1]; for instance: He coude songes *make* and wel *endyte* (A 95) = Therto he coude *endyte* and *make* a thing (A 325) | *faire* and *fetisly* (A 124 and 273) | *swinken* with his handes and *laboure* (A 186) | Of studie took he most *cure* and most *hede* (A 303) | *Poynaunt* and *sharp* (A 352) | At sessiouns ther was he *lord* and *sire* (A 355).[2] In Caxton this has become quite a mannerism, see, *e. g.* I shal so *awreke* and *avenge* this trespace (Reynard 56, cf. p. 116 *advenge* and *wreke* it) | in *honour* and *worship* (ib. p. 56) | *olde* and *auncyent* doctours (p. 62) | *feblest* and *wekest* (p. 64) | I toke a *glasse* or a *mirrour* (p. 83) | Now ye shal here of the *mirrour*; the *glas* . . . . . (p. 84) | *good* ne *proffyt* (p. 86) |

1 This use of two expressions for the same idea is extremely common in the middle ages and the beginning of the modern period, and it is not confined to those cases where one was a native and the other an imported word; see Kellner, Engl. Studien XX p. 11 ff. (1895); Greenough and Kittredge, Words and their Ways, p. 113 ff.; so also in Danish, see Vilh. Andersen in Dania p. 86 ff. (1890) and Danske Studier 1893, p. 7 ff.

2 Cf. also, Curteys he was, lowly, and servisable (A 99); Curteys he was, and lowly of servyse (A 250).

fowle and *dishonestly* (p. 94) | *prouffyt* and *fordele* (p. 103). It will be observed that with the exception of the last word, the language has preserved in all cases both the synonyms that Caxton uses side by side, so that we may consider the English vocabulary as settled, *in that respect*, towards the end of the fifteenth century.

99. Many of the French words, such as *cry*, *claim*, *state*, *poor*, *change*, and, indeed, most of the words enumerated above, (§ 82—92), and one might say, nearly all the words taken over before 1350 and not a few of those of later importation, have become part and parcel of the English language, so that they appear to everybody just as English as the pre-Conquest stock of native words. But a great many others have never become so popular. There are a great many gradations between words of everyday use and such as are not at all understood by the common people, and to the latter class may sometimes belong words which literary people would think familiar to everybody. Hyde Clark relates an anecdote of a clergyman who blamed a brother preacher for using the word *felicity*, "I do not think all your hearers understood it; I should say *happiness*." "I can hardly think," said the other, "that any one does not know what *felicity* means, and we will ask this ploughman near us. Come hither, my man! you have been at church and heard the sermon; you heard me speak of *felicity*; do you know what it means?" "Ees, sir!" "Well, what does *felicity* mean?" "Summut in the inside of a pig, but I can't say altogether what."[1] — Note also the way in which Touchstone addresses the rustic in *As You Like It* (V. 1.52) "Therefore, you Clowne, abandon, — which is in the vulgar leave, — the societie

1 A Grammar of the English Tongue. 4th ed. London 1879, p. 61.

— which in the boorish is companie, — of this female, — which in the common is woman; which together is, abandon the society of this Female, or, Clowne, thou perishest; or, to thy better understanding, dyest."

100. From what precedes we are now in a position to understand some at least of the differences that have developed in course of time in those cases where two synonyms have survived, one of them native, the other French. The former always is nearer the nation's heart than the latter, it has the strongest associations with everything primitive, fundamental, popular, while the French word is often more formal, more polite, more refined and has a less strong hold on the emotional side of life. A *cottage* is finer than a *hut*, and fine people often live in a cottage, at any rate in summer. "The word *bill* was too vulgar and familiar to be applied to a hawk, which had only a *beak* (the French term, whereas *bill* is the A. S. *bile*). 'Ye shall say, this hauke has a large *beke*, or a short *beke* and call it not *bille*'; Book of St. Alban's, fol. a 6, back".[1] — To *dress* means to adorn, deck, etc., and thus generally presupposes a finer garment than the old to *clothe*, the wider signification of which it seems, however, to be more and more appropriating to itself. *Amity* means 'friendly relations, especially of a public character between states or individuals', and thus lacks the warmth of *friendship*. The difference between *help* and *aid* is thus indicated in the Funk-Wagnalls Dictionary: "*Help* expresses greater dependence and deeper need than *aid*. In extremity we say "God *help* me!" rather than "God *aid* me!" In time of danger we cry "*help! help!*" rather than "*aid! aid!*" To *aid* is to second another's own exertions. We can speak of *helping* the helpless, but not of *aiding* them. *Help* includes

1 Skeat, The Works of G. Chaucer vol. III p. 261.

aid, but *aid* may fall short of the meaning of *help*." All this amounts to the same thing as saying that *help* is the natural expression, belonging to the indispensable stock of words and therefore possessing more copious and profounder associations than the more literary and accordingly colder word *aid*. *Folk* has to a great extent been superseded by *people*, chiefly, I suppose, on account of the political and social employment of the word; Shakespeare rarely uses *folk* (4 times) and *folks* (ten times), and the word is evidently a low-class word with him; it is rare in the Authorized Version, and Milton never uses it; but in recent usage *folk* seems to have been gaining ground, partly, perhaps, from antiquarian and dialectal causes. *Hearty* and *cordial* made their appearance in the language at the same time (the oldest quotations 1380 and 1386, NED.), but where they signify the same thing their force is not the same, for "a hearty welcome" is warmer than "a cordial welcome", and *hearty* has many applications that *cordial* has not (heartfelt, sincere; vigorous: a hearty slap on the back; abundant: a hearty meal, etc.). *Saint* smacks of the official recognition by the Catholic Church, while *holy* refers much more to the mind. *Matin(s)* is used only with reference to church service, while *morning* is the ordinary word. Compare also *darling* with *favourite*, *lonely* with *solitary*, *indeed* with *in fact*, *to give* or *to hand* with *to present* or *to deliver*, *love* with *charity*, etc.

101. In some cases the only real difference that can be indicated between the native and the French synonyms is that the former is more colloquial and the latter more literary, e. g. *begin — commence*, *hide — conceal*, *feed — nourish*, *hinder — prevent*, *look for — search for*, *inner* and *outer — interior* and *exterior*, and many others. In a few cases, however, the native word is more literary. *Valley* is the everyday word, and *dale* has only lately been introduced

into the standard language from the dialects of the hilly northern counties. *Action* has practically supplanted *deed* in ordinary language, so that the latter can be reserved for more dignified speech.

102. In spite of the intimate contact between French and English it sometimes happens that French words which have been introduced into other Germanic languages and belong to their everyday vocabulary are not found in English or are there much more felt to be foreign intruders than in German or Danish. This is true for instance of *friseur*, *manchette*, *réplique*, of *gêne* and the verb *gêner* (the NED. has no instances of it, but a few are found in the Stanford Dict.). *Serviette* is rarer than *napkin*. *Atelier* is not common; it occurs in Thackeray's *The Newcomes* p. 242, where immediately afterwards the familiar word *studio* is used: did English artists go more to Italy and less to Paris to learn their craft than their Scandinavian and German confrères? To the same class belong the following words, which, when found in English books, are generally pointed out as strangers by italic letters: *naive*, *bizarre*, and *motif*, — the last word an interesting recent doublet of *motive*.

103. As the grammatical systems of the two languages were very different, a few remarks must be made here about the form in which French words were adopted. Substantives and adjectives were nearly always taken over in the accusative case, which differed in most words from the nominative in having no *s*. The latter ending is, however, found in a few words, such as *fitz* (Fitzherbert, etc.; in French, too, the nominative *fils* has ousted the old acc. *fil*; *fitz* is an Anglo-Norman spelling), *fierce* (O Fr. nom. *fiers*, acc. *fier*), and *James*.[1] In the plural,

1 But Chaucer has *by seint Jame* (rhyming with *name*, D. 1443). As imilar vacillation is found in the name *Steven*

Old French had a nominative without any ending and an accusative in *-s*, and English popular instinct naturally associated the latter form with the common English plural ending in *-es*. In course of time those words which had for a long time, in English as in French, formed their plural without any ending (*e. g. cas*) were made to conform with the general rule (sg. *case*, pl. *cases*).[1] — French adjectives had the *s* added to them just like French nouns, and we find a few adjectives with the plural *s*, as in *the goddes celestials* (Chaucer); *letters patents* survived as a fixed group till the time of Shakespeare (§ 85). But the general rule was to treat French adjectives exactly like English ones.

104. As to the verbs, the rule is that the stem of the French present plural served as basis for the English form; thus (*je survis*), *nous survivons*, *vous survivez*, *ils survivent* became *survive*, (*je résous*), *résolvons*, etc., became *resolve*, O Fr. (*je desjeun*), *nous disnons*, etc., became *dine;* thus is explained the frequent ending *-ish*, in *punish*, *finish*, etc. English *bound* (to leap), accordingly, cannot be the French *bondir*, which would have yielded *bondish*, but is an English formation from the noun *bound*, which is the French *bond*. I think that *levy* is similarly formed on the noun *levy*, which is Fr. *levée;* but in *sally* the *y* represents the *i* which made the Fr. *ll mouillé*. Where the French infinitive was imported it was generally in a

Stephen, where now the *s*-less form has prevailed, but where formerly the Fr. nom. was also found (seynt stevyns, Malory 104).—Where the French inflection was irregular, owing to Latin stress shifting, etc., the accusative was adopted, in *emperor* (*-our*, O Fr. nom. *emperere*), *companion* (O Fr. nom. *compain*), *neveu, nephew* (O Fr. nom. *nies*) and others, but the nom. is kept in *sire* (O Fr. acc. *seignor*), *mayor* (O Fr. *maire*, acc. *majeur*).

1 Note *invoice, trace* (part of a horse's harness), and *quince*, where the French plural ending now forms part of the English singular; cf. Fr. *envoi, trait, coign*.

substantival function, as in *dinner*, *remainder*, *attainder*, *rejoinder*, cf. the verbs *dine*, *remain*, *attain*, *rejoin;* so also the law terms *merger*, *user*, and *misnomer*. Still we have a few verbs in which the ending *-er* can hardly be anything else but the French infinitive ending: *render* (which is thereby kept distinct from *rend*), *surrender*, *tender* (where the doublet *tend* also exists), and perhaps *broider* (*embroider*). There is a curious parallel to the Norse *bask* and *busk* (79) in *saunter*, where the French reflective pronoun has become fixed as an inseparable element of the word, from *s'auntrer*, another form for *s'aventurer* 'to adventure oneself'.

105. French words have, as a matter of course, participated in all the sound changes that have taken place in English since their adoption. Thus words with the long [i] sound have had it diphthongized into [ai], e. g. *fine*, *price*, *lion*. The long [u], written *ou*, has similarly become [au], *e. g.* O Fr. *espouse* (Mod. Fr. *épouse*), M. E. *spouse*, pronounced [spuˑzə], now pron. [spauz], Fr. *tour*, Mod. E. *tower*. Compare also the treatment of the vowels in *grace*, *change*, *beast* (O Fr. *beste*), *ease* (Fr. *aise*), etc. Such changes of loan-words are seen everywhere: they are brought about gradually and insensibly. But there is another change which has often been supposed to have come about in a different manner. A great many words are now stressed on the first syllable which in French were stressed on the final syllable, and this is often ascribed to the inability of the English to imitate the French accentuation. All English words, it is said, had the stress on the first syllable, and this habit was unconsciously extended to foreign words on their first adoption into the language. We see this manner of treating foreign words in Icelandic at the present day. But the explanation does not hold good in our case. English had a few words with unstressed first syllable (*be-*, *for-*,

etc., see above, § 25), and as a matter of fact, French words in English were for centuries accented in the French manner, as shown conclusively by Middle English poetry. It was only gradually that more and more words had their accent shifted on to its present place. The causes of this shifting were the same as are elsewhere at work in the same direction.[1] In many words the first syllable was felt as psychologically the most important one, as in *punish*, *finish*, *matter*, *manner*, *royal*, *army* and other words ending with meaningless or formative syllables. The initial syllable very often received the accent of contrast. In modern speech we stress the otherwise unstressed syllables to bring out a contrast clearly, as in "not *op*pose but *sup*pose" or "If on the one hand speech gives *ex*pression to ideas, on the other hand it receives *im*pressions from them" (Romanes, Mental Evolution in Man, p. 238), and in the same manner we must imagine that in those days when *real*, *formal*, *object*, *subject* and a hundred similar words were normally stressed on the last syllable, they were so often contrasted with each other that the modern accentuation became gradually the habitual one. This will explain the accent of *January*, *February*, *cavalry*, *infantry*, *primary*, *orient* and other words. An even more powerful principle is rhythm, which tends to avoid two consecutive strong syllables; compare modern *go down* ˈ*stairs*, but the ˈ*downstairs room*, *St. Paul's* ˈ*churchyard*, but the ˈ*churchyard wall*. Chaucer stresses many words in the French manner, except when they precede a stressed syllable, in which case the accent is shifted, thus *coˈsyn* (cousin), but ˈ*cosyn* ˈ*myn; in felici*ˈ*te parˈfit*, but *a* ˈ*verray* ˈ*parfit* ˈ*gentil* ˈ*knight; seˈcre* (secret), but *in* ˈ*secre wyse*, etc. An in-

1 See my *Fonetik*, Copenhagen 1899, especially p. 559, 567, 576; *Lehrbuch der Phonetik*, Leipzig 1904, p. 210, 214, 216.

structive illustration is found in such a line as this (Cant. Tales D 1486):

In ˈdivers ˈart and in diˈvers fiˈgures.

These principles—value-stressing, contrast, rhythm—will explain all or most of the instances in which English has shifted the French stress; but it is evident that it took a very long time before the new shapes of the words which arose at first only occasionally through their influence were powerful enough finally to supplant the older forms.[1]

106. Not long after the intrusion of the first French words we begin to see the first traces of a phenomenon which was to rise to very great proportions and which must now be termed one of the most prominent features of the language, namely hybridism. Strictly speaking, we have a hybrid (a composite word formed of elements from different languages) as soon as an English inflectional ending is added to a French word, as in the genitive *the Duke's children* or the superlative *noblest*, etc., and from such instances we rise by insensible gradations to others, in which the fusion is more surprising. From the very first we find verbal nouns in *-ing* or *-ung* formed from French verbs (indeed, they are found at a time when they could not be formed from every native verb, § 200), *e. g. prechinge; riwlunge* (Ancrene Riwle); *scornunge* and *seruuinge* (Layamon); *spusinge* (Owl & N.). Other instances of English endings added to French words are *faintness* (from the end of the fourteenth century), *closeness* (half a century later), *secretness* (Chaucer secreenesse B 773), *simpleness* (Shakespeare and others), *materialness*

1 In recent borrowings the accent is not shifted, cf. *machine, intrigue,* where the retention of the French *i*-sound is another sign that the words are of comparatively modern introduction.

(Ruskin), *abnormalness* (Benson), etc. Further, a great many adjectives in *-ly* (courtly, princely, etc.) and, of course, innumerable adverbs with the same ending (faintly, easily, nobly); adjectives in *-ful* (beautiful, dutiful, powerful, artful) and *-less* (artless, colourless); nouns in *-ship* (courtship, companionship) and *-dom* (dukedom, martyrdom) and so forth.

107. While hybrid words of this kind are found in comparatively great numbers in most languages, hybrids of the other kind, *i. e.* composed of a native stem and a foreign ending, are in most languages much rarer than in English. These formations presuppose the occurrence in numerous adopted words of the same ending in such a way that the process is perfectly transparent. Here are to be mentioned the numerous hybrids in *-ess* (shepherdess, goddess; Wycliffe has dwelleresse; in a recent volume I have found "*seeress* and prophetess"), in *-ment* (endearment and enlightenment are found from the 17th century, but bewilderment not before the 19th; wonderment, frequent in Thackeray; oddment, R. Kipling, hutment), in *-age* (mileage, acreage, leakage, shrinkage, wrappage, breakage, cleavage, roughage, shortage, etc.); in *-ance* (hindrance, used in the fifteenth century in the meaning 'injury'; in the signification now usual it is found as early as 1526, and perhaps we may infer from its occurring neither in the Bible, nor in Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope, that it was felt to be a bastard, though Locke, Cowper, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Tennyson admit it; forbearance, originally a legal term; furtherance); in *-ous* (murderous; thunderous; slumberous is used by Keats and Carlyle); in *-ry* (fishery, bakery, etc.; gossipry, Mrs. Browning; Irishry; forgettery jocularly after memory); in *-ty* (oddity, womanity half-jocularly after humanity): in *-fy* (fishify, Shakespeare; snuggify, Ch. Lamb; Torify, Ch. Darwin; scarify, Fielding; tipsify, Thackeray;

funkify; speechify[1] with the corresponding nouns in *-fication* (uglification, Shelley).[2]

108. One of the most fertile English derivative endings is *-able*, which has been used in a great number of words besides those French ones which were taken over ready made (such as *agreeable*, *movable*). In comparatively few cases it is added to substantives (serviceable, companionable, marriageable, peaceable, seasonable). Its proper sphere of usefulness is in forming adjectives from verbs, rarely in an active sense (suitable = that suits, unshrinkable), but generally in a passive sense (bearable = that can or may be borne). Thus we have now drinkable, eatable, steerable (balloons), weavable, understandable, findable, forgiveable, and hundreds of others, so that everybody has a feeling that he is free to form a new adjective of this kind as soon as there is any necessity for, or convenience in, using it, just as he feels no hesitation in adding *-ing* to any verb, new or old. And of course, no one ever objects to these adjectives (or the corresponding nouns in *-ability*) because they are hybrids or bastards, any more than one would object to forms like *acting* or *remembering* on the same score.

109. These adjectives have now become so indispensable that the want is even felt of forming them from composite verbal expressions, such as *get at*. But though *get-at-able* and *come-at-able* (and *do-without-able?*) are pretty frequently heard in conversation, most people shrink from writing or printing them. Sterne has *come-at-ability*, Smiles *get-at-ability*, and George Eliot in a letter *knock-upable*.

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1 Cf. also "Daphne — before she was happily treeified", Lowell, Fable for Critics.

2 See below on hybrids with Latin and Greek endings (§ 123).

Tennyson, too, writes in a jocular letter, "thinking of you as no longer the comeatable runupableto, smokeable-with J. S. of old." Note here the place of the preposition in the last two adjectives, and compare "enough to make the house unliveable in for a month" (The Idler, May 1892, 366) and "the husband being fairly good-natured and livable-with" (Bernard Shaw, Ibsenism 41). It is obvious that these adjectives are too clumsy to be ever extensively used in serious writings. But there is another way out of the difficulty which is really much more conformable to the genius of the language, namely to leave out the preposition in all those cases where there can be no doubt of the preposition understood. *Unaccountable* (= that cannot be accounted *for*) has long been accepted by everybody; I have found it, for instance, in Congreve, Addison, Swift, Goldsmith, De Quincey, Miss Austen, Dickens and Hawthorne. *Indispensable* has been — well, indispensable for two centuries and a half. *Laughable* is used by Shakespeare, Dryden, Carlyle, Thackeray, etc. *Dependable* and *independable* are, perhaps rarer, but *disposable* and *available* are in general use.[1] All this being granted, it is difficult to see why *reliable* should be the most abused word of the English language. It is certainly formed in accordance with the fundamental laws of the language; it is short and unambiguous, and what more should be needed? Those who measure a word by its age will be glad to hear that Miss Mabel Peacock has found it in a letter, bearing the date of 1624, from the pen of the

1 Miss Austen writes, "There will be work for five summers before the place is *liveable*" (Mansf. Park 216) = the above-mentioned *liveable-in*. Cf. below *gazee* and others in *-ee* (§ 111). The principle of formation is the same as in *waiter* 'he who waits *on* people', *caller* 'he who calls *on* some one'.

Rev. Richard Mountagu, who eventually became a bishop. And those who do not like using a word unless it has been accepted by great writers will find a formidable array of the best names in Fitzedward Hall's list[1] of authors who have used the word.[2] It is curious to note that the word which is always extolled at the expense of *reliable* as an older and nobler word, namely *trustworthy*, is really much younger: at any rate, I have not been able to trace it further back than the beginning of the nineteenth century; besides, any impartial judge will find its sound less agreeable to the ear on account of the consonant group — *stw* — and the heavy second syllable.

110. Fitzedward Hall in speaking about the recent word *aggressive*[3] says, "It is not at all certain whether the French *agressif* suggested *aggressive*, or was suggested by it. They may have appeared independently of each other." The same remark applies to a great many other formations on a French or Latin basis; even if the several components of a word are Romance, it by no means follows that the word was first used by a Frenchman. On the contrary, the greater facility and the greater boldness in forming new words and turns

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1 On English Adjectives in *-able*, with special reference to *reliable*. London 1877. Fitzedw. Hall reverted to the subject on several other occasions.

2 Coleridge, Sir Robert Peel, John Stuart Mill, Abp. Longley, Samuel Wilberforce, Dickens, Charles Reade, Walter Bagehot, Anthony Trollope, R. A. Proctor, Harriet Martineau, Cardinal Newman, Gladstone, James Martineau, S. Baring-Gould, Sir G. O. Trevelyan, Sir Monier Williams, Leslie Stephen, H. Maudsley, W. Noel Saintsbury, Henry Sweet, Robinson Ellis, Thomas Arnold. In America, Washington Irving, Daniel Webster, Edw. Everett, G. P. Marsh; I leave out, rather arbitrarily I fear, sixteen of the names given by Fitzedw. Hall.

3 *Modern English* 314.

of expression which characterizes English generally in contradistinction to French, would in many cases speak in favour of the assumption that an innovation is due to an English mind. This I take to be true with regard to *dalliance*, which is so frequent in ME. (*dalyaunce*, etc.) while it has not been recorded in French at all. The wide chasm between the most typical English meaning of *sensible* (a sensible man, a sensible proposal) and those meanings which it shares with French *sensible* and Lat. *sensibilis*, probably shows that in the former meaning the word was an independent English formation. *Duration* as used by Chaucer may be a French word; it then went out of the language, and when it reappeared after the time of Shakespeare, it may just as well have been re-formed in England as borrowed; *duratio* does not seem to have existed in Latin. *Intensitas* is not a Latin word, and *intensity* is older than *intensité*.

III. In not a few cases, the English soil has proved more fertilizing than the French soil from which words were transplanted. In French, for instance, *mutin* has very few derivatives (*mutiner*, *mutinerie*), while in English we have *mutine* sb., *mutine* vb. (Shakespeare), *mutinous*, *mutinously*, *mutinousness*, *mutiny* sb., *mutiny* vb., *mutineer* sb., *mutineer* vb., *mutinize*, of which it is true that *mutine* and *mutinize* are now extinct. We see the same thing in such a recent borrowing as *clique*, which stands alone in French while in English two centuries have provided us with *cliquedom*, *cliqueless*, *cliquery*, *cliquomania*, *cliquomaniac*, *clique*, vb., *cliquish*, *cliquishness*, *cliquism*, *cliquy* or *cliquey*. From *due* we have *duty*, to which no French correspondent word has been found in France itself, although *dueté*, *duity*, *deweté* are found in Anglo-French writers; in English *duty* is found from the 13th century, and we have moreover *duteous*, *dutiable*, *dutied*, *dutiful*, *dutifully*, *dutifulness*, *dutiless*, none of which appear to be older

than the 16th century. *Aim*, the noun as well as the verb, is now among the most useful and indispensable words in the English vocabulary and it has some derivatives, such as *aimer*, *aimful*, and *aimless*, but in French the two verbs from which it originates, *esmer* ⟨ Lat. æstimare, and *aasmer*, ⟨ Lat. adæstimare, have totally disappeared. Note also the differentiations of the words *strange* and *estrange;*[1] of *entry* (⟨ Fr. *entrée*) and *entrance*, while in French *entrance* has been given up; and that of *guaranty* and *guarantee*, not to speak of *warrant* and *warranty*. The extent to which foreign speech-materials have been turned to account is really astonishing, as is seen, perhaps, most clearly in the extensive use of the derivative ending *-ee*. This was originally the French participial ending *-é* used in a very few cases such as *apelé*, E. *appellee* as opposed to *apelor*, E. *appellor*, *nominee*, etc. and then gradually extended in legal use to words in which such a formation would be prohibited in French by formal as well as syntactical reasons: *vendee* is the man to whom something is sold (l'homme à qui on a vend*u* quelquechose), cf. also *referee*, *lessee*, *trustee*, etc. Now, these formations are no longer restricted to juridical language, and there seems to be a growing disposition to turn this ending to account as a very convenient manner of forming passive nouns; Goldsmith and Richardson have *lovee*, Sterne speaks of "the mortgager and mortgagee . . . . . the jester and jestee"; further the *gazee* (De Quincey) = the one gazed *at*, *staree* (Edgeworth), *cursee* and *laughee* (Carlyle), *flirtee*, *floggee*, *wishee*, *bargainee*, *beatee*, *knockee*, *jokee*, *biographee*, *mesmeree*, *examinee*, *callee* (our callee = the man we call on), etc. etc. Such a word as *trusteeship* is

1 Compare also the juridical *estray* and the ordinary *stray*, *estate* and *state*.

eminently characteristic of the composite character of the language: Scandinavian *trust* + a French ending used in a manner unparalleled in French + an old English ending.

112. French influence has not been restricted to one particular period (see § 95), and it is interesting to compare the forms of old loan-words with those of recent ones, in which we can recognise traces of the changes the French language has undergone since mediæval times. Where a *ch* in an originally French word is pronounced as in *change*, *chaunt*, etc. (with the sound-group tʃ), the loan is an old one; where it is sounded as in *champagne* (with simple ʃ), we have a recent loan. *Chief* is thus shown to belong to the first period, while its doublet *chef* (= chef de cuisine) is much more modern. It is curious that two petnames should now be spelled in the same way *Charlie*, although they are distinct in pronunciation: the masculine is derived from the old loan *Charles* and has, therefore, the sound [tʃ], the feminine is from the recent loan *Charlotte* with [ʃ]. Similarly *g* as in *giant* and *j* as in *jaundice* [pronounced dʒ] are indicative of old loans, while the pronunciation [ʒ] is only found in modern adoptions, such as *rouge*. Sometimes, however, recent loans are made to conform to the old practice; *jaunty*, *gentle* and *genteel* represent three layers of borrowing from the same word but they have all of them the same initial sound. Other instances of the same French word appearing in more than one shape according to its age in English are *saloon* and *salon*, *suit* and *suite*, *rout* 'big party, defeat' and *route* (the diphthong in the former word is an English development of the long [u] § 105), *quart*, pronounced [kwɔ·t], and *quart* pronounced [ka·t] 'a sequence of four cards in piquet', cf. also *quarte* or *carte* in fencing.

113. In some cases, we witness a curious re-shaping

of an early French loan-word, by which it is made more like the form into which the French has meanwhile developed. This, of course, can only be explained by the uninterrupted contact between the two nations. Chaucer had *viage* just as Old French, but now the word is *voyage*; *leal* has given way to *loyal*; the noun *flaute* and the verb *floyten* are now made into *flute* like mod. Fr. *flûte*.[1] Similarly the signification of ME. *douten* like that of OFr. *douter* was 'to fear' (cf. *redoubt*), but now in both languages this signification has disappeared. *Danger* was at first adopted in the Old French sense of 'dominion, power', but the present meaning was developed in France before it came to England. The many parallelisms in the employment of *cheer* and Fr. *chère* could not very well have arisen independently in both languages at once. This continued contact constitutes a well-marked contrast between the French and the Scandinavian influence, which seems to have been broken off somewhat abruptly after the Norman conquest.

1 Cf. below the Latinizing of many French words § 116.

Chapter VI.

Latin and Greek.

114. Although Latin has been read and written in England from the Old English period till our own days, so that there has been an uninterrupted possibility of Latin influence on the English language, yet we may with comparative ease separate the latest stratum of loans from the two strata that we have already considered. It embodies especially abstract or scientific words, adopted exclusively through the medium of writing and never attaining to the same degree of popularity as words belonging to the older strata. The words adopted are not all of Latin origin, there are perhaps more Greek than Latin elements in them, if we count the words in a big dictionary. Still the more important words are Latin, and most of the Greek words have entered our language through Latin, or have, at any rate, been Latinized in spelling and endings before being used in English, so that we have no occasion here to deal separately with the two stocks. The great historical event, without which this influence would never have assumed such gigantic dimensions, was the revival of learning. Through Italy and France the Renaissance came to be felt in England as early as the fourteenth century, and since then the invasion of classical terms has never stopped, although the multitude of new words introduced was greater, perhaps, in the fourteenth, the

sixteenth and the nineteenth than in the intervening centuries. The same influence is conspicuous in all European languages, but in English it has been stronger than in any other language, French perhaps excepted. This fact cannot, I think, be principally due to any greater zeal for classical learning on the part of the English than of other nations. The reason seems rather to be, that the natural power of resistance possessed by a Germanic tongue against these alien intruders had been already broken in the case of the English language by the wholesale importation of French words. They paved the way for the Latin words which resembled them in so many respects, and they had already created in English minds that predilection for foreign words which made them shrink from consciously coining new words out of native material. If French words were more *distingués* than English ones, Latin words were still more so, for did not the French themselves go to Latin to enrich their own vocabulary? The first thing noticeable about this class of Latin importations is, therefore, that it cannot be definitely separated from the French loans.

115. A great many words may with equal right be ascribed to French and to Latin, since their English form would be the same in both cases and the first users would probably know both languages. This is especially the case with those words which in French are not popular continuations of spoken Latin words, but later borrowings from literary Latin, *mots savants*, as Brachet termed them in contradistinction to *mots populaires*. As examples of words that may have been taken from either language, I shall mention only *grave*, *gravity*, *consolation*, *solid*, *infidel*, *infernal*, *position*.

116. A curious consequence of the Latin influence during and after the Renaissance was that quite a number

of French words were remodelled into closer resemblance with their Latin originals. Chaucer uses *descrive* (rhyming with *on lyve* 'alive' H. 121), but in the 16th century the form *describe* makes its appearance. *Perfet* and *parfet* (Fr. *perfait*, *parfait*) were the normal English forms for centuries. Milton writes *perfeted* (Areop. 10); but the *c* was introduced from the Latin, at first in spelling only, but afterwards in pronunciation as well.[1] Similarly *verdit* has given way to *verdict*. Where Chaucer had *peynture* as in French (peinture), *picture* is now the established form. The Latin prefix *ad* is now seen in *advice* and *adventure*, while Middle English had *avis* (*avys*) and *aventure*; the latter form is still retained in the phrase *at aventure*, where however, *a* has been apprehended as the indefinite article (at a venture), and another remnant of the old form is disguised in *saunter* (Fr. s'aventurer 'to adventure oneself'). *Avril* (avrille) has been Latinized into *April*; and a modern reader does not easily recognize his *February* in ME. *feouerele* or *feouerrere*[2] (u = v, cf. *février*). In *debt* and *doubt*, which used to be *dette* and *doute* as in French, the spelling only has been affected; compare also *victuals* for *vittles* (Fr. *vitailles*, cf. *battle* from *bataille*). Similarly *bankerota* (cf. Italian), *banqueroute*, *bankrout* (Shakesp.) had to give way to *bankrupt*; the oldest example of the *p*-form in the NED. dates from 1533. The form *langage* was used for centuries, before it became *language* by a curious crossing of French and Latin forms. *Egal* was for more than two centuries the commoner form; *equal*, now the only recognized form, was apparently a more learned form

1 Bacon writes (*New Atlantis* 15): all nations have *enterknowledge* one of another. In recent similar words *inter-* is always used.

2 Juliana p. 78, 79.

and was used for instance in Chaucer's *Astrolabe*, while in his poems he writes *egal*; Shakespeare generally has *equal*, but *egal* is found a few times in some of the old editions of his plays. Tennyson tries to re-introduce *egality* by the side of *equality*, not as an ordinary word, however, but as applied to France specially ("That cursed France with her egalities!" Aylmer's Field). French and Latin forms coexist, more or less differentiated, in *complaisance* and *complacence* (*complacency*), *genie* (rare) and *genius*, *base* and *basis* (Greek). *Certainty* (Fr.) and *certitude* (Lat.) are often used indiscriminately, but there is now a tendency to restrict the latter to merely subjective certainty, as in Cardinal Newman's "my argument is: that *certitude* was a habit of mind, that *certainty* was a quality of propositions; that probabilities which did not reach to logical *certainty*, might suffice for a mental *certitude*," etc.[1] — Note also the curious difference made between *critic* with stress on the first syllable, adjective[2] and nomen agentis (from Lat., or Greek direct? or through French?) and *critique* with stress on the second syllable, nomen actionis (late borrowing from Fr.); Pope uses *critick'd* as a participle (stress on the first), while a verb *critique* with stress on the last syllable is found in recent use; *criticize*, which since Milton has been the usual verb, is a pseudo-Greek formation.

117. Intricate relations between French and Latin are sometimes shown in derivatives: *colour* is from French, as is evident from the vowel in the first syllable [ʌ]; but in *discoloration* the second syllable is sometimes made [kɔl] as from Latin, and sometimes [kʌl] as from French. Compare also *example* from French, *exemplary* from Latin.

1 *Apologia pro Vita sua.* New impression, London 1900, p. 20.

2 With the by-form *critical.*

Machine with *machinist* and *machinery* are from the French, witness the pronunciation [mə'ʃi·n]; but *machinate* and *machination* are taken direct from Latin and accordingly pronounced [mækineit, mæki'neiʃən]; so these two groups which ought by nature to belong together are kept apart, and no one knows whether the adjective *machinal* should go with one or the other group, some dictionaries pronouncing [mə'ʃi·nəl] and others ['mækinəl] — a suggestive symptom of the highly artificial state of the language!

118. It would be idle to attempt to indicate the number of Latin and Greek words in the English language, as each new treatise on a scientific subject adds to their number. But it is interesting to see what proportion of the Latin vocabulary has passed into English. Professors J. B. Greenough and G. L. Kittredge have counted the words beginning with A in Harper's Latin Dictionary, excluding proper names, doublets, parts of verbs, and adverbs in *-e* and *-ter*. "Of the three thousand words there catalogued, one hundred and fifty-four (or about one in twenty) have been adopted bodily into our language in some Latin form, and a little over five hundred have some English representative taken, or supposed to be taken, through the French. Thus we have in the English vocabulary about one in four or five of all the words found in the Latin lexicon under A. There is no reason to suppose that this proportion would not hold good approximately for the whole alphabet."[1]

119. It must not be imagined that all the Latin words as used in English conform exactly with the rules of Latin pronunciation or with the exact classical meanings. "My instructor, says Fitzedward Hall[2], took me to task

1 Words and their Ways, 1902, p. 106.

2 Fitzedward Hall, Two Trifles. Printed for the Author

for saying *'doctrĭnal*. 'Where an English word is from Latin or Greek, you should always remember the stress in the original, and the quantity of the vowels there.' I replied: 'If others, in their solicitude to *pro'pāgate* refinement, choose to be *ir'rītated* or *'excĭted*, because of what they take to be my *genu'ĭne ig'nōrance* in *ora'tōry*, they should at least be sure that their discomposure is not *gratu'ĭtous*.'" — Among words used in English with a different signification from the classical one, may be mentioned *enormous* (Latin *enormis* 'irregular', in English formerly also *enorm* and *enormious*), *item* (Latin *item* 'also', used to introduce each article in a list, except the first), *ponder* (Lat. *ponderare* 'to weigh, examine, judge', transitive) *premises* ('adjuncts of a building', originally things set forth or mentioned in the beginning), *climax* (Greek *klîmax* 'a ladder or gradation'; in the popular sense of culminating point it is found in Emerson, Dean Stanley, John Morley, Miss Mitford and other writers of repute), *bathos* (Greek *báthos* 'depth'; in the sense of 'ludicrous descent from the elevated to the commonplace' it is due to Pope; the adjective *bathetic*, which is not formed on a correct Greek analogy, was first used by Coleridge). It should be remembered, however, that when once a certain pronunciation or signification has been firmly established in a language, the word fulfils its purpose in spite of ever so many might-have-beens, and that, at any rate, correctness in one language should not be measured by the yard of another language. *Transpire* is perfectly legitimate in the sense 'to be emitted through the pores of the skin' and in the derived sense 'to become known, to become public gradually' although there is no Latin verb *transpirare* in either of these senses; if, therefore, the

1895. I have changed his symbol for stress, indicating here as elsewhere the beginning of the strong syllable by a prefixed ˈ.

modern journalistic use of the verb in the sense of 'happen' ('a terrible murder has again transpired in Whitechapel') is objectionable, it is not on account of any deviation from Latin usage, but because it has arisen through a vulgar misunderstanding of the *English* signification of an English word. Stuart Mill exaggerates the danger of such innovations, when he writes: "Vulgarisms, which creep in nobody knows how, are daily depriving the English language of valuable modes of expressing thought. To take a present instance: the verb *transpire* . . . . . Of late a practice has commenced of employing this word, for the sake of finery, as a mere synonym of *to happen:* "the events which have *transpired* in the Crimea," meaning the incidents of the war. This vile specimen of bad English is already seen in the despatches of noblemen and viceroys: and the time is apparently not far distant when nobody will understand the word if used in its proper sense . . . . . The use of "aggravating" for "provoking", in my boyhood a vulgarism of the nursery, has crept into almost all newspapers, and into many books; and when writers on criminal law speak of aggravating and extenuating circumstances, their meaning, it is probable, is already misunderstood."[1] Let me add two small notes to Mill's remarks. First, that *aggravate* in the sense of 'exasperate, provoke' is exemplified in the NED. from Cotgrave (1611), T. Herbert (1634), Richardson (1748) — thus some time before Mill heard it in his nursery — and Thackeray (1848). And secondly, that the verb which Mill uses to explain it, *provoke*, is here used in a specifically English sense which is nearly as far removed from the classical signification as that of *aggravate* is. But we shall presently

1 Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic,* People's edition, 1886, p. 451.

see that the English have taken even greater liberties with the classical languages.

120. When the influx of classical words began, it had its *raison d'être* in the new world of old, but forgotten ideas, then first revealed to medieval Europe. Instead of their narrow circle of everyday monotonousness, people began to suspect new vistas, in art as well as in science, and classical literature became a fruitful source of information and inspiration. No wonder then, that scores and hundreds of words should be adopted together with the ideas they stood for, and should seem to the adopters indispensable means of enriching a language which to them appeared poor and infertile as compared with the rich storehouses of Latin and Greek. But as times wore on, the ideas derived from classical authors were no longer sufficient for the civilized world, and, just as it will happen with children outgrowing their garments, the modern mind outgrew classicism, without anybody noticing exactly when or how. New ideas and new habits of life developed and demanded linguistic expression, and now the curious thing happened that classical studies had so leavened the minds of the educated classes that even when they passed the bounds of the ancient world they drew upon the Latin and Greek vocabulary in preference to their own native stock of words.

121. This is seen very extensively in the nomenclature of modern science, in which hundreds of chemical, botanical, biological and other terms have been framed from Latin and Greek roots, most of them compound words and some extremely long compounds. It is certainly superfluous here to give instances of such formations, as a glance at any page of a comprehensive dictionary will supply a sufficient number of them, and as one needs only a smattering of science to be acquaint-

ed with technical words from Latin and Greek that would have struck Demosthenes and Cicero as bold, many of them even as indefensible or incomprehensible innovations. It is not, perhaps, so well known that quite a number of words that belong to the vocabulary of ordinary life and that are generally supposed to have the best-ascertained classical pedigree, have really been coined in recent times more or less exactly on classical analogies. Some of them have arisen independently in several European countries. Such modern coinages are, for instance, *eventual* with *eventuality*, *immoral*, *fragmental* and *fragmentary*, *primal*, *annexation*, *fixation* and *affixation*, *climatic*. There are scores of modern formations in *-ism*[1], *e. g. absenteeism*, *alienism*, *classicism*, *colloquialism*, *favouritism*, *individualism*, *mannerism*, *realism*, not to speak of those made from proper names, such as *Swinburnism*, *Zolaism*, etc. Among the innumerable words of recent formation in *-ist* may be mentioned *dentist*, *economist*, *florist*, *jurist*, *oculist*, *copyist* (formerly *copist* as in some continental languages), *determinist*, *economist*, *ventriloquist*, *individualist*, *plagiarist*, *positivist*, *socialist*, *terrorist*, *nihilist*, *tourist*. For *calculist* the only author quoted in the NED. is Carlyle. *Scientist* has often been branded as an "ignoble Americanism" or "a cheap and vulgar product of trans-Atlantic slang", but Fitzedw. Hall has pointed out that it was fabricated and advocated, in 1840, together with *physicist*, by Dr. Whewell. Whoever objects to such words as *scientist* on the plea that they are not correct Latin formations, would have to blot out of his vocabulary such well-established words as *suicide*, *telegram*, *botany*, *sociology*, *tractarian*, *vegetarian*, *facsimile* and *orthopedic*; but then, happily, people are not consistent.

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1 See Fitzedw. Hall, *Modern English*, p. 311. His lists have also been utilized in the rest of this paragraph.

122. Authors sometimes coin quasi-classic words without finding anybody to pass them on, as when Milton writes "our *inquisiturient* Bishops" (Areop. 13). Coleridge speaks of *logodædaly*, Thackeray of a lady's "*viduous* mansion" (Newc. 794), Dickens of "*vocular* exclamations" (Oliv. Twist); Tennyson writes in a letter (Life I. 254) "you range no higher in my *andrometer*;" Bulwer-Lytton says "a cat the most *viparious* [meaning evidently 'tenacious of life'] is limited to nine lives"; and Mrs. Humphrey Ward "his air of oldfashioned *punctilium*."[1] I have here on purpose mixed correct and incorrect forms, jocular and serious words, because my point was to illustrate the love found in most English writers of everything Latin or Greek, however unusual or fanciful. Sometimes jocular "classicisms" survive and are adopted into everybody's language, such as *omnium gatherum*, (whence Thackeray's bold heading of a chapter 'Snobbium Gatherum'), *circumbendibus* (Goldsmith, Coleridge) and *tandem*, which originated in a University pun on the two senses of English 'at length'.

123. Hybrids, in which one of the component part was French and the other native English, have been mentioned above (§ 106f.). Here we shall give some examples of the corresponding phenomenon with Latin and Greek elements, some of which may, however, have been imported through French. The ending *-ation* is found in *starvation*, *backwardation*, and others; note also the American *thunderation* ("It was an accident, sir." "Accident the thunderation", Opie Read, Toothpick Tales, Chicago 1892, p. 35). *Johnsoniana*, *Miltoniana*, etc., are quite modern; the ending *ana* alone is now also used as a

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1 Dictionaries recognize *punctilio*, a curious transformation of Spanish *puntillo*; there is a late Latin *punctillum*, but not with the meaning of 'punctiliousness'.

detached noun. In *-ist* we have *fightist* and *walkist*, the latter perhaps more American than British, but both interesting as denoting a *professional* fighter or walker and therefore distinguished by the more learned ending. Compare also *turfite* and the numerous words in *-ite* derived from proper names: *Irvingite*, *Ruskinite*, etc. The same ending is frequently used in mineralogy and chemistry, one of the latest addiions to these formations being *fumelessite* = smokeless gunpowder. Hybrids in *-ism* (cf. § 121) abound; *heathenism* has been used by Bacon, Milton, Addison, Freeman and others; *witticism* was first used by Dryden, who asks pardon for this new word; *block-headism* is found in Ruskin; further *funnyism*, *free-lovism*, etc.; *weism* is preferable to the curious *we-gotism*, which may be classed with the jocular *drinkitite* on the analogy of *appetite*. *Girlicide*, after *suicide*, is another jocular formation (Smedley, Frank Fairlegh I 190, not in NED.). To the same sphere belong Byron's *weatherology* and some words in *-ocracy*, such as *landocracy*, *shopocracy*, *barristerocracy*, *squattocracy* and G. Meredith's *snipocracy* (Evan Harrington 174, from *snip* as a nickname for a tailor). On the other hand *squirearchy* (with *squirearchical*) seems to have quite established itself in serious language. Among verbal formations must be mentioned those in *-ize*: he *womanized* his language (Meredith, Egoist 32), *Londonizing* (ibd. 80), *soberize*, etc. Adjectives are formed in *-ative*: *talkative*, *babblative*, and *soothative*, of which only the first is recognized; in *-aceous*: *gossipaceous* (Darwin, Life and Letters I 375), in *-arious*: *burglarious* (Stevenson, Dynamiter 130), and *-iacal*: *dandiacal* (Carlyle, Sartor 188). Even if many of these words are 'nonce-words', it cannot be denied that the process is genuinely English and perfectly legitimate — within reasonable limits at any rate.

124. Some Latin and Greek prepositions have in re-

cent times been extensively used to form new words. *Ex-*, as in *ex-king*, *ex-head-master*, etc.[1], seems first to have been used in French, but it is now common to most or all Germanic languages as well; in English this formation did not become popular till little more than a century ago. *Anti-*: the anti-taxation movement; an anti-foreign party; "Mr. Anti-slavery Clarkson" (De Quincey, Opium-Eater 197); "chairs unpleasant to sit in — anti-caller chairs they might be named" (H. Spencer, Facts and Comments 85). *Co-*: "a friend of mine, co-god-father to Dickens's child with me" (Tennyson, Life II 144); "Wallace, the co-formulator of the Darwinian theory" (Clodd, Pioneers of Evolution 68). *De-*, especially with verbs in *-ize*: de-anglicize, de-democratize, de-provincialize, denationalize; less frequently as in de-tenant, de-miracle (Tennyson). *Inter-*: intermingle, intermix, intermarriage, interbreed, inter-communicate, inter-dependence, etc. *International* was coined by Bentham in 1780; it marks linguistically the first beginning of the era when relations between nations came to be considered like relations between citizens, capable of peaceful arrangement according to right rather than according to might. A great many other similar adjectives have since been formed: intercollegiate, interracial, interparliamentary, etc. Where no adjective existed, the substantive is used unchanged, but the combination is virtually an adjective: interstate affairs; an inter-island steamer; "international, inter-club, inter-team, inter-college or inter-school contests" (quoted in NED.). *Pre-*: the pre-Darwinian explanations; pre-nuptial friendships (Pinero, Second Mrs. Tanqueray, p. 6, what is called on p. 8 'ante-nuptial acquaintance'); "in the pre-railroad, pre-telegraphic period" (G. Eliot); the pre-railway city; the

1 "A pair of ex-white satin shoes" (Thackeray).

pre-board school; a bunch of pre-Johannesburg Transvaals; the pre-mechanical civilized state (all these are quotations from H. G. Wells); in your pre-smoking days (Barrie). *Pro-*: the pro-Boers; pro-foreign proclivities; a pro-Belgian, or rather pro-King Leopold speaker. As any number of such derivatives or compounds can be formed with the greatest facility, the utility and convenience of these certainly not classical expedients cannot be reasonably denied, though it may be questioned whether it would not have been better to utilize English prepositions for the same purposes, as is done with *after-* (an after-dinner speech) and sometimes with *before-* ("the before Alfred remains of our language", Sweet; "smoking his before-breakfast pipe", Conan Doyle). A few words must be added on *re-* which is used in a similar manner in any number of free compounds, such as *rebirth*, and especially verbs: re-organize, re-sterilize, re-submit, re-pocket, re-leather, re-case etc. Here *re-* is always strongly stressed and pronounced with a long vowel [i·], and by that means these recent words are in the spoken language easily distinguished from the older set of *re-*words, where *re* is either weakly stressed or else pronounced with short [e]. We have therefore such pairs as *recollect* = to remember, and *re-collect* = to collect again; he *recovered* the lost umbrella and had it *re-covered; reform* and *re-form* (reformation and re-formation), *recreate* and *re-create, remark* and *re-mark, resign* and *re-sign, resound* and *re-sound, resort* and *re-sort*. In the written language the distinction is not always observed.

125. Latin has influenced English not only in vocabulary, but also in style and syntax. The absolute participle was introduced at a very early period in imitation of the Latin construction.[1] It is comparatively rare in Old

1 Morgan Callaway, The Absolute Participle in Anglo-

English, where it occurs especially in close translations from Latin. In the first period of Middle English it is equally rare, but in the second period it becomes a little more frequent. Chaucer seems to have used it chiefly in imitation of the Italian construction, but this Italian influence died out with him, and French influence did very little to increase the frequency of the construction. In the beginning of the Modern English period the absolute participle, though occurring more often than formerly "had not become thoroughly naturalized. It limited itself to certain favorite authors where the classical element largely predominated, and was used but sparingly by authors whose style was essentially English." (Ross, p. 38.) But after 1660, when English prose style developed a new phase, which was saturated with classical elements, the construction rapidly gained ground and was finally fixed and naturalized in the language. The extensive use of the accusative with the infinitive is another permanent feature of English syntax which is largely due to Latin influence. But there are some other Latin idioms which authors tried to imitate, but which have always been felt as unnatural, so that now they have been dropped, for instance *who* for *he who* or *those who* as in "sleeping found by whom they dread" (Milton, P. L. i. 1333), further such interrogative and relative constructions as those found in the following quotations. "To do what service am I sent for hither?" (Shakesp., R2 IV. 1. 176) and "a right noble and pious lord, who had he not sacrific'd his life ..... we had not now mist and bewayl'd a worthy patron" (Milton, Areop. 51).

126. Latin grammar was the only grammar taught in those days, and the only grammar found worthy of

Saxon. Baltimore 1889. — Charles Hunter Ross, The Absolute Participle in Middle and Modern English, Baltimore 1893.

study and imitation. "That highly disciplined syntax which Milton favoured from the first, and to which he tended more and more, was in fact, the classical syntax, or, to be more exact, an adaptation of the syntax of the Latin tongue," says D. Masson[1], and when he adds "It could hardly fail to be so ..... Even now, questions in English syntax are often settled best practically, if a settlement is wanted, by a reference to Latin construction", he expresses a totally erroneous conception which has been, and is, unfortunately too common, although very little linguistic culture would seem to be needed to expose its fallacy. Nowhere, perhaps, has this misconception been more strongly expressed than in Dryden's preface to "Troilus and Cressida", where he writes: "How barbarously we yet write and speak your Lordship knows, and I am sufficiently sensible in my own English. For I am often put to a stand in considering whether what I write be the idiom of the tongue, or false grammar and nonsense couched beneath that specious name of Anglicism, and have no other way to clear my doubts but by translating my English into Latin, and thereby trying what sense the words will bear in a more stable language." I am afraid that Dryden would never have become the famous writer he is, had he employed this practice as often as he would have us imagine. But it was certainly in deference to Latin syntax that in the later editions of his Essay on Dramatic Poesy he changed such phrases as "I cannot think so contemptibly of the age I live in" to "the age in which I live"; he speaks somewhere[2] of the preposition at the end of the sentence as a common fault with Ben Jonson "and which I have but lately observed in my

1 Poetical Works of Milton, 1890, vol. III, p. 74—5.

2 I quote this second-hand, see J. Earle, English Prose 267; Hales, Notes to Milton's Areopagitica, p. 103.

own writings." The construction Dryden here reprehends is not a 'fault' and is not confined to Ben Jonson, but is a genuine English idiom of long standing in the language and found very frequently in all writers of natural prose and verse. The omission of the relative pronoun, which Dr. Johnson terms 'a colloquial barbarism' and which is found only seven or eight times in all the writings of Milton, and (according to Thum) only twice in the whole of Macaulay's History, abounds in the writings of such authors as Shakespeare, Bunyan, Swift, Fielding, Goldsmith, Sterne, Byron, Shelley, Dickens, Thackeray, Tennyson, Ruskin, etc., etc. In Addison's well-known "Humble Petition of Who and Which"[1] these two pronouns complain of the injury done to them by the recent extension of the use of *that*. "We are descended of ancient Families, and kept up our Dignity and Honour many Years till the Jacksprat *that* supplanted us." Addison here turns all historical truth topsy-turvy, for *that* is much older as a relative pronoun than either *who* or *which*; but the real reason of his predilection for the latter two was certainly their conformance to Latin relative pronouns, and there can be no doubt that his article, assisted by English grammars and teaching given in schoolrooms, has contributed very much to restricting the use of *that* as a relative pronoun — in writing at least. Addison himself, when editing the *Spectator* in book-form, corrected many a natural *that* to a less natural *who* or *which*.

127. As to the more general effect of classical studies on English style, I am very much inclined to think that Darwin and Huxley are right as against most schoolmasters. "Ch. Darwin had the strongest disbelief in the common idea that a classical scholar must write

1 The Spectator, no. 78, May 30, 1711.

good English; indeed he thought that the contrary was the case."[1] Huxley wrote to the *Times*, Aug. 5, 1890[2]: "My impression has been that the Genius of the English language is widely different from that of Latin; and that the worst and the most debased kinds of English style are those which ape Latinity. I know of no purer English prose than that of John Bunyan and Daniel Defoe; I doubt if the music of Keats's verse has ever been surpassed; it has not been my fortune to hear any orator who approached the powerful simplicity, the limpid sincerity, of the speech of John Bright. Yet Latin literature and these masters of English had little to do with one another." As "in diesem bund der dritte" might be mentioned Herbert Spencer who expressed himself strongly to the same effect in his last book.[3]

128. To return to the vocabulary. We may now consider the question: Is the Latin element on the whole beneficial to the English tongue or would it have been better if the free adoption of words from the classical languages had been kept within much narrower limits? A perfectly impartial decision is not easy, but it is hoped that the following may be considered a fair statement of the most important pros and cons. The first advantage that strikes the observer is the enormous addition to the English vocabulary. If the English boast that their language is richer than any other, and that their dictionaries contain a far greater number of words than German and French ones, the chief reason is, of course, the greater number of foreign and especially of French and Latin words adopted. "I trade," says

1 Life and Letters of Ch. Darwin, 1887, I p. 155.
2 Quoted by J. Earle, English Prose, 487.
3 Facts and Comments, 1902, p. 70.

Dryden, "both with the living and the dead for the enrichment of our native language."

129. But this wealth of words has its seamy side too. The real psychological wealth is wealth of ideas, not of mere names. "We have more words than notions, half a dozen words for the same thing", says Selden (Table Talk LXXVI). Words are not material things that can be heaped up like money or stores of food and clothes, from which you may at any time take what you want. A word to be yours must be learnt by you, and possessing it means reproducing it. Both the process of learning and that of reproducing it involve labour on your part. Some words are easy to handle, and others difficult. The number of words at your disposal in a given language is, therefore, not the only thing of importance; their quality, too, is to be considered, and especially the ease with which they can be associated with the ideas they are to symbolize and with other words. Now many of the Latin words are deficient in that respect, and this entails other drawbacks to speakers of English, as will presently appear.

130. It will be argued in favour of the classical elements that many of them fill up gaps in the native stock of words, so that they serve to express ideas which would have been nameless but for them. To this it may be objected that the resources of the original language should not be underrated. In most, perhaps in all cases, it would have been possible to find an adequate expression in the vernacular or to coin one. The tendency to such economy in Old English and the ease with which felicitous terms for new ideas were then framed by means of native speech-material, have been mentioned above. But little by little English speakers lost the habit of looking first to their own language and utilizing it to the utmost before going abroad for new expressions.

People who had had their whole education in Latin and had thought all their best thoughts in that language to an extent which is not easy for us moderns to realize, often found it easier to write on abstract or learned subjects in Latin than in their own vernacular, and when they tried to write on these things in English, Latin words would constantly come first to their minds. Mental laziness and regard to their own momentary convenience therefore led them to retain the Latin word and give it only an English termination. Little did they care for the convenience of their readers, if they should happen to be ignorant of the classics, or for that of unborn generations, whom they forced by their disregard for their own language to carry on the burden of committing to memory words and expressions which were really foreign to their idiom. If they have not actually dried up the natural sources of speech — for these run on as fresh as ever — yet they have accustomed their countrymen to cross the stream in search of water, to borrow an expressive Danish locution.

131. There is one class of words which seems to be rather sparingly represented in the native vocabulary, so that classical formations are extremely often resorted to, namely the adjectives. It is, in fact, surprising how many pairs we have of native nouns and foreign adjectives, e. g. mouth: *oral*; nose: *nasal*; eye: *ocular*; mind: *mental*; son: *filial*; ox: *bovine*; worm: *vermicular*; house: *domestic*; the middle ages: *medieval*; book: *literary*; moon: *lunar*; sun: *solar*; star: *stellar*; town: *urban*; man: *human, virile*, etc., etc. In the same category we may class such pairs as money: *monetary*, *pecuniary*; letter: *epistolary*; school: *scholastic*, as the nouns, though originally foreign, are now for all practical purposes to be considered native. We may note here English proper names and their Latinized adjectives, e. g. Dorset: *Dorsetian*;

Oxford: *Oxonian*; Cambridge: *Cantabrigian*; Gladstone: *Gladstonian*. Lancaster has even two adjectives, *Lancastrian* (in medieval history) and *Lancastrian* (schools, Joseph Lancaster, 1771—1838). It cannot be pretended that all these adjectives are used on account of any real deficiency in the English language, as it has quite a number of endings by which to turn substantives into adjectives: *-en* (silken), *-y* (flowery), *-ish* (girlish), *-ly* (fatherly), *-like* (fishlike), *-some* (burdensome), *-ful* (sinful), and these might easily have been utilized still more than they actually have been. In point of fact, we possess not a few native adjectives by the side of more learned ones, e. g. *fatherly*: *paternal*; *motherly*: *maternal*; *brotherly*: *fraternal* (but only *sisterly*, as *sororal* is so rare as to be left out of account); further *watery*: *aquatic* or *aqueous*; *heavenly*: *celestial*; *earthy*, *earthly*, *earthen*: *terrestrial*; *timely*: *temporal*; *daily*: *diurnal*; *fishlike*: *pisciform*; *truthful*: *veracious*; etc. In some cases the meanings of these have become more or less differentiated, the English words having often lost an abstract sense which they formerly had and which there seemed really to be no gain in giving up. If the word *sanguinary* is now extensively used it is due to the curious twisting of the meaning of *bloody* in vulgar speech (cf. 244). *Kingly*, *royal*, and *regal* have now slightly different applications, but as *royal* in French, *kongelig* in Danish, and *königlich* in German cover them all, English might have been content with one word instead of three.

132. Besides, in a great many cases it is really contrary to the genius of the language to use an adjective at all. Where Romance and Slavonic languages very often prefer a combination of a noun and an adjective the Germanic languages combine the two ideas into a compound noun. *Birthday* is much more English than *natal day* (which is used, for instance, in Words-

worth's 75th Sonnet), and *eyeball* than *ocular globe*, but physiologists think it more dignified to speak of the *gustatory nerve* than of the *taste nerve* and will even say *mental nerve* (Lat. mentum 'chin') instead of *chin nerve* in spite of the unavoidable confusion with the familiar adjective *mental*. Mere position before another noun is really the most English way of turning a noun into an adjective, e. g. the *London* market, a *Wessex* man, *Yorkshire* pudding, a strong *Edinburgh* accent, a *Japan* table, *Venice* glasses, the *Chaucer* Society, the *Droeshout* picture, a *Gladstone* bag, *imitation* Astrachan, "Every *tiger* madness muzzled, every *serpent* passion kill'd" (Tennyson).[1] It is worth noting that the English adjective corresponding to *family* is not *familiar*, which has been somewhat estranged from its kindred, but *family*: family reasons, family affairs, family questions, etc. The unnaturalness of forming Latin adjectives is, perhaps, also shown by the vacillation often found between different endings. Which is correct, *feudatary* or *feudatory*? Is there any difference between *festal*, *festive*, and *festival*? From *labyrinth* no less than six adjectives have been found: *labyrinthal*, *labyrinthean*, *labyrinthian*, *labyrinthic*, *labyrinthical* and *labyrinthine*. Many adjectives are quite superfluous; Shakespeare never used either *autumnal*, *hibernal*, *vernal*, or *estival*, and he probably never missed them. Instead of *hodiernal* and *hesternal* we have luckily other expressions (to-day's post; the questions of the day; yesterday's news). Most of us can certainly do without *gressorial* (birds), *avuncular* (a favourite with Thackeray: "Clive, in the avuncular gig"; "the avuncular banking house"; "the avuncular quarrel", all from *The Newcomes*), *osculatory* (processes = kissing; ib.), *lachrymatory* (he is great in the l. line; ib.),

1 Shakespeare did not scruple to write "the Carthage queen", "Rome gates", "Tiber banks", even "through faire Verona streets". Cf. below, § 210.

aquiline ("What! am I an eagle too? I have no aquiline pretensions at all", ib.)[1] — and a great many similarly purposeless adjectives.

133. More than in anything else the richness of the English language manifests itself in its great number of synonyms, whether we take this word in its strict sense of words of exactly the same meaning or in the looser sense of words with nearly the same meaning. It is evident that the latter class must be the most valuable as it allows speakers to express subtle shades of thought. *Juvenile* does not signify the same thing as *youthful*, *ponderous* as *weighty*, *portion* as *share*, *miserable* as *wretched*. Sometimes the Latin word is used in a more limited, special or precise sense than the English, as is seen by a comparison of *identical* and *same*, *science* and *knowledge*, *sentence* and *saying*, *latent* or *occult* and *hidden*. *Breath* can hardly now be called a synonym of *spirit* ("The spirit does not mean the breath", Tennyson), and similarly *edify*, which is still used by Spenser in the concrete sense of 'building up', is now used exclusively with a spiritual signification, which its former synonym *build* can never have. *Homicide* is the learned, abstract, colourless word, while *murder* denotes only one kind of *manslaughter*, and *killing* is the everyday word with a much vaguer signification (being applicable also to animals); there is a very apposite quotation from Coleridge in the NED.: "(He) is acquitted of murder — the act was manslaughter only, or it was justifiable homicide". The learned word *magnitude* is more specialized than *greatness* or *size* (which is indeed now thoroughly English, but is a very recent development of *assize* in a curiously modified sense.) The Latin *masculine* is more abstract than

[1] Thus used in a different manner from the familiar *aquiline* nose.

the English *manly*, which generally implies an emotional element of praise, the French *male* has not exactly the same import as either, and the Latin *virile* represents a fourth shade, while for the other sex we have *feminine*, *womanly* and *womanish*, the differences between which are not parallel to those between the first series of synonyms.

134. These examples will suffice to illustrate the synonymic relations between classical and other words. It will be seen that it is not always easy to draw a line or to determine exactly the different shades of meaning attached to each word; indeed, a comparison of the definitions given in various essays on synonyms and in dictionaries, and especially a comparison of these definitions with the use as actually found in various writers, will show that it is in many cases a hopeless task to assign definite spheres of signification to these words. Sometimes the only real difference is that one term is preferred in certain collocations and another in others. Still, it is indubitable that very often the existence of a double or triple assortment of expressions will allow a writer to express his thoughts with the greatest precision imaginable. But on the other hand, only those whose thoughts are accurate and well disciplined attain to the highest degree of linguistic precision, and the use in speech and writing of the same set of words by loose and inexact thinkers will always tend to blur out any sharp lines of demarcation that may exist between such synonymous terms as do not belong to their every-day stock of language.

135. However, even where there is no real difference in the value of two words or where the difference is momentarily disregarded, their existence may not be entirely worthless, as it enables an author to avoid a trivial repetition of the same word, and variety of expressions is generally considered one of the felicities of

style. We very often see English authors use a native and a borrowed word side by side with the only apparent purpose of varying the expression without the idea being in the least different. Thus "of blind *forgetfulness* and dark *oblivion*" (Shakespeare, in Buckingham's strongly rhetorical speech, R 3 III. 7. 129). A perfectly natural variation of three expressions is seen in: "the Bushman story is just the *sort* of *story* we *expect* from Bushmen, whereas the Hesiodic story is not at all the *kind* of *tale* we *look for* from Greeks". (A. Lang, Custom and Myth 54). Further examples: "I *went upstairs* with my candle directly. It appeared to my childish fancy, as I *ascended* to the bedroom....." "He asked me if it would suit my convenience to have the light *put out*; and on my answering 'yes', instantly *extinguished* it". "The phantom slowly *approached*. When it *came near* him, Scrooge bent down"; "they are *exactly unlike*. They are *utterly dissimilar* in all respects" (all these from Dickens). "I could not repress a *half smile* as he said this; a similar *demi-manifestation of feeling* appeared at the same moment on Hunsden's lips." This kind of variation evidently does not *always* lead to the highest excellence of style. I quote from Minto[1] Samuel Johnson's comparison between punch and conversation: "The spirit, volatile and fiery, is *the proper emblem* of vivacity and wit; the acidity of the lemon will very *aptly figure* pungency of raillery and acrimony of censure; sugar is the *natural representative* of luscious adulation and gentle complaisance; and water is the *proper hieroglyphic* of easy prattle, innocent and tasteless." This is not far from Mr. Micawber's piling up of words ("to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief..... to wit,

[1] Manual of English Prose Literature, 3d ed. 1896, p. 418.

in manner following, that is to say"), which gives Dickens the occasion for the following outburst:

"In the taking of legal oaths, for instance, deponents seem to enjoy themselves mightily when they come to several good words in succession, for the expression of one idea; as, that they utterly detest, abominate, and abjure, or so forth; and the old anathemas were made relishing on the same principle. We talk about the tyranny of words, but we like to tyrannize over them too; we are fond of having a large superfluous establishment of words to wait upon us on great occasions; we think it looks important, and sounds well. As we are not particular about the meanings of our liveries on state occasions, if they be but fine and numerous enough, so the meaning or necessity of our words is a secondary consideration if there be but a great parade of them. And as individuals get into trouble by making too great a show of liveries, or as slaves when they are too numerous rise against their masters, so I think I could mention a nation that has got into many great difficulties, and will get into many greater, from maintaining too large a retinue of words." (*David Copperfield*, p. 702).

136. No doubt many of the synonymous terms introduced from Latin and Greek had best been let alone. No one would have missed *pharos* by the side of *lighthouse*, or *nigritude* by the side of *blackness*. The native words *cold*, *cool*, *chill*, *chilly*, *icy*, *frosty* might have seemed sufficient for all purposes, without any necessity for importing *frigid*, *gelid*, and *algid*, which, as a matter of fact, are neither found in Shakespeare nor the Authorized Version of the Bible nor in the poetical works of Milton, Pope, Cowper, and Shelley.

137. Apart from the advantage to poets of having constantly the choice between several words of a different

number of syllables and often also with different accents, poets will often find the sonorous Latin words better for their purposes than the short native ones. In some kinds of prose writing too, they are felt to heighten the tone, and add dignity, even majesty, to the structure of the sentence. The chief reason of this seems to be that the long word takes up more time. Instead of hurrying the reader or listener on to the next idea, it allows his mind to dwell for a longer time upon the same idea; it gives time for his reflection to be deeper and especially for his emotion to be stronger. This seems to me more important than the two other reasons given by H. Spencer (Essays, II, p. 14) that "a voluminous, mouth-filling epithet is, by its very size, suggestive of largeness or strength" and that "a word of several syllables admits of more emphatic articulation (?); and as emphatic articulation is a sign of emotion, the unusual impressiveness of the thing named is implied by it." Let me quote here also a quaint passage from Howell (New English Grammar, 1662, p. 40) who looks at the same thing from the speaker's point of view: "The Spanish abound and delight in words of many syllables, and where the English expresseth himself in one syllable, he doth in 5 or 6, as thoughts pensamientos, fray levantamiento &c, which is held a part of wisdom, for while they speak they take time to consider of the matter."

138. It is often said that the classical elements are commendable on the score of international intelligibility, and it is certain that many of them, even of those formed during the last century on more or less exact Latin and Greek analogy, are used in many other civilized countries as well as in England. The utility of this is evident in our days of easy communication between the nations; but on the whole its utility should

not be valued beyond measure. If the thing to be named is one of everyday importance, national convenience should certainly be considered before international ease; therefore *to wire* and *a wire* are preferable to *telegraph* and *telegram.*[1] Scientific nomenclature is to a great extent universal, and there is no reason why each nation should have its own name for *foraminifera* or *monocotyledones.* But so much of science is now becoming more and more the property of everybody and influences daily life so deeply that the endeavour should rather be to have popular than learned names for whatever in science is not intended exclusively for the specialist. *Sleeplessness* is a better name than *insomnia,* and foreigners who know English enough to read a medical treatise in it will be no more perplexed by the word than an Englishman reading German is by *Schlaflosigkeit.* Foreign phoneticians have had no difficulty in understanding Melville Bell's excellent nomenclature and have even to a great extent adopted the English terms of *front, mixed, back,* etc. in preference to the more cumbersome *palatal, gutturopalatal,* and *guttural.* It is a pity that *half-vowel* (Googe 1577) and *half-vowelish* (Ben Jonson) should have been superseded by *semi-vowel* and *semi-vowel-like.* Among English words that have been in recent times adopted by many foreign languages may be mentioned *cheque, box* (in a bank), *trust, film* (in photography), *sport, jockey, sulky, gig, handicap, dock, waterproof, tender, coke* (German and Danish *koks* or sometimes with Pseudo-English spelling *coaks*), so that even to obtain international currency a word need not have a learned appearance or be derived from Greek and Latin roots. Besides, many of the latter class are not quite so inter-

[1] And why not use *wireless* as a verb too? "Admiral N. has wirelessed that a Russian man-of-war is in sight," etc.

national as might be supposed, as their English significations are unknown on the continent (*pathos*, *physics*, *concurrent*, *eventual*, *injury*); sometimes, also, the ending is different, as in *principle* (Fr. principe, etc.), *individual* (Fr. individu, German individ), *chemistry* (chimie, chemie), *botany* (botanique), *fanaticism* (fanatisme).

139. It is possible to point out a certain number of inherent deficiencies which affect parts of the vocabulary borrowed from the classical language. Mention has already been made (§ 26) of the stress-shifting which is so contrary to the general spirit of Germanic tongues and which obscures the relation between connected words, especially in a language where unstressed syllables are generally pronounced with such indistinct vowel sounds as in English. Compare, for instance, *solid* and *solidity*, *pathos* and *pathetic*, *pathology* and *pathologic*, *pacify* and *pacific* (note that the first two syllables of *pacification*, where the strongest stress is on the fourth syllable, vacillate between the two corresponding pronunciations). The incongruity is especially disagreeable when native names are distorted by means of a learned derivative ending, as when *Milton* has the stress shifted on to the second syllable and the vowel changed (in two different ways) in *Miltonic* and *Miltonian*; cf. also *Baconian*, *Dickensian*, *Taylorian*, *Spenserian*, *Canadian*, *Dorsetian*, etc.

140. Another drawback is shown in the relation between *emit* and *immit*, *emerge* and *immerge*. While in Latin *emitto* and *immitto*, *emergo* and *immergo* were easily kept apart, because the vowels were distinct and double consonants were rigorously pronounced double and so kept apart from single ones, the natural English pronunciation will confound them, just as *immediate* and *emotion* begin with the same two sounds. Now, as the meaning of *e-* is the exact opposite of *in-*, the two pairs do not agree well in the same language. The same is true of

illision and *elision*, *illusion* and *elusion*.[1] A still greater drawback arises from the two meanings of initial *in*, which is sometimes the negative prefix and sometimes the preposition. According to dictionaries *invertible* means (1) capable of being inverted, (2) incapable of being changed; *investigable* similarly (1) that may be investigated, (2) incapable of being investigated, and *infusible* (1) that may be infused or poured in, (2) incapable of being fused or melted. *Importable*, which is now only used as derived from *import* (capable of being imported) had formerly also the meaning 'unbearable', and *improvable* similarly had the meaning of 'incapable of being proved' though it only retains that of 'capable of being improved'. *Inexistence* means (1) the fact or condition of existing *in* something, and (2), rarely, the fact or condition of not existing. What Shakespeare in one passage (Temp. II. 1. 37) expresses in accordance with modern usage by the word *uninhabitable* he elsewhere calls *inhabitable* (Even to the frozen ridges of the Alpes, Or any other ground inhabitable, R2 I. 1. 65), and the ambiguity of the latter word has now led to the curious result that the positive adjective corresponding to *inhabit* is *habitable* and the negative *uninhabitable*. The first syllable of *inebriety* is the preposition *in-*, so that it means the same thing as *ebriety* 'drunkenness', but Th. Hook mistook it for the negative prefix and so, subtracting *in-*, made *ebriety* mean 'sobriety'.[2] *Illustrious* is used in Shakespeare's Cymb. I. 6. 109 as the negative of *lustrous*, while elsewhere it has the exactly opposite signification. Fortunately this ambiguity is limited to a comparative small portion of the vocabulary.[3]

[1] Illiterate spellers will often write *illicit* for *elicit*, *enumerable* for *innumerable*, etc. Many words have had, and some still have, two spellings, with *en-* (*em-*) from the French, and with *in-* (*im-*) from the Latin.

[2] See quotation in Davies, Supplementary English Glossary 1881.

[3] If *invaluable* means generally 'very valuable' and sometimes 'valueless', the case is obviously different from the above.

141. Loan-words do not necessarily make a language inharmonious. In Finnish, for instance, in spite of numerous loans from a variety of languages, the prevailing impression is one of unity, apart perhaps from some of the most recent Swedish words. The foreign elements have been so assimilated in sound and inflection as to be recognizable as foreign only to the eye of a philologist. The same may be said of the pre-Conquest borrowings from Latin into English, of the Scandinavian and of the most important among the French loans, nay even of a great many recent loans from exotic languages. *Wine* and *tea*, *bacon* and *eggs*, *orange* and *sugar*, *plunder* and *war*, *prison* and *judge* — all are not only indispensable, but harmonious elements of English. But while most people are astonished on first hearing that such words have not always belonged to their language, no philological training is required to discover that *phenomenon* or *diphtheria* or *intellectual* or *latitudinarian* are out of harmony with the real core or central part of the language. Every one must feel the incongruity of such sets of words as *father — paternal — parricide* or of the abnormal plurals which break the beautiful regularity of nearly all English substantives — *phenomena, nuclei, larvæ, chrysalides, indices*, etc. The occasional occurrence of such blundering plurals as *animalculæ* and *ignorami* is an unconscious protest against the prevalent pedantry of schoolmasters in this respect[1].

1 "He may also see giraffes, lions or rhinoceros. The mention of this last word reminds me of a problem, which has tormented me all the time that I have been in East Africa, namely, what is the plural of rhinoceros? The conversational abbreviations, "rhino," "rhinos," seem beneath the dignity of literature, and to use the sporting idiom by which the singular is always put for the plural is merely to avoid the difficulty. Liddell and Scott seem to authorise "rhinocerotes" which is pedantic, but "rhinoceroses" is not euphonious." Sir Charles Eliot, *The East Africa Protectorate* (1905) p. 266.

142. The unnatural state into which the language has been thrown by the wholesale adoption of learned words is further manifested by the fact that not a few of them have no fixed pronunciation; they are, in fact, eye-words that do not really exist in the language. Educated people freely write them and understand them when they see them written, but are more or less puzzled when they have to pronounce them. Dr. Murray relates how he was once present at a meeting of a learned society, where in the course of discussion he heard the word *gaseous* systematically pronounced in six different ways by as many eminent physicists. (NED., Preface.) *Diatribist* is by Murray and the Century Dictionary stressed on the first, by Webster on the second syllable, and the same hesitation is found with *phlogiston*, *pholades*, *phonotypy*, *photochromy*, and many similar words. This is, however, beaten by two so well-known words as *hegemony* and *phthisis*, for each of which dictionaries record no less than nine possible pronunciations without being able to tell us which of these is the prevalent or preferable one. I doubt very much whether analogous waverings can be found in any other language.

143. The worst thing, however, that can be said against the words that are occupying us here is their difficulty and the undemocratic character which is a natural outcome of their difficulty. A great many of them will never be used or understood by anybody that has not had a classical education.[1] There are usually no associations of ideas between them and the ordinary

1 Sometimes they are not even understood by the erudite themselves. *Gestic* in Goldsmith's "skill'd in gestic lore" (Traveller 253) is taken in all dictionaries as meaning 'legendary. historical' as if from *gest*, OFr. geste 'story, romance'; but the context shows conclusively that 'pertaining to bodily movement, esp. dancing' (NED.) must be the meaning; cf. Lat. *gestus* 'gesture'. *Aristarchy* has been wrongly interpreted in most dictionaries (see Fitzedw. Hall, Modern English 143).

stock of words, and no likenesses in root or in the formative elements to assist the memory. We have here none of those invisible threads that knit words together in the human mind. Their great number in the language is therefore apt to form or rather to accentuate class divisions, so that a man's culture is largely judged of by the extent to which he is able correctly to handle these hard words in speech and in writing — certainly not the highest imaginable standard of a man's worth. No literature in the world abounds as English does in characters made ridiculous to the reader by the manner in which they misapply or distort 'big' words. Shakespeare's Dogberry and Mrs. Quickly, Fielding's Mrs. Slipslop, Smollett's Winifred Jenkins, Sheridan's Mrs. Malaprop, Dickens's Weller senior, Shillaber's Mrs. Partington, and footmen and labourers innumerable made fun of in novels and comedies might all of them appear in court as witnesses for the plaintiff in a law-suit brought against the educated classes of England for wilfully making the language more complicated than necessary and thereby hindering the spread of education among all classes of the population.

144. Different authors vary very greatly with regard to the extent to which they make use of these 'choice words, and measured phrases above the reach of ordinary men'. So much is said on this head in easily accessible textbooks on literature that I need not repeat it here. Unfortunately the statistical calculations given there of the percentage of native and of foreign words in different writers are not quite to the point, for while they generally include Scandinavian loans among native words, they reckon together all words of classical origin, although such popular words as *cry* or *crown* have evidently quite a different standing in the language from learned words like *auditory* or *hymenoptera*. The culmination with regard to the use of learned words in ordinary literary style was

reached in the time of Dr. Samuel Johnson. I can find no better example to illustrate the effect of extreme 'Johnsonese' than the following:

"The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of our fortune is by small expenses, by the profusion of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground."[1]

145. In his Essay on Madame D'Arblay Macaulay gives some delightful samples of this style as developed by that ardent admirer of Dr. Johnson. Sheridan refused to permit his lovely wife to sing in public, and was warmly praised on this account by Johnson. "The last of men," says Madame D'Arblay, "was Doctor Johnson to have abetted squandering the delicacy of integrity by nullifying the labours of talent." An offence punishable with imprisonment is, in this language, an offence "which produces incarceration." To be starved to death is "to sink from inanition into nonentity." Sir Isaac Newton is "the developer of the skies in their embodied movements," and Mrs. Thrale, when a party of clever people sat silent, is said to have been "provoked by the dulness of a taciturnity that, in the midst of such renowned interloculors, produced as narcotic a torpor as could have been caused by a death the most barren of all human faculties." (Macaulay, Essays, Tauchn. ed. V. p. 65.)

1 Minto (Manual of Engl. Prose Lit. 422) translates this as follows: 'Take care of the pennies,' says the thrifty old proverb, 'and the pounds will take care of themselves.' In like manner we might say, 'Take care of the minutes, and the years will take care of themselves.'

146. In the nineteenth century a most happy reaction set in in favor of "Saxon" words and natural expressions; and it is highly significant that Tennyson, for instance, prides himself on having in the "Idylls of the King" used Latin words more sparingly than any other poet. But still the malady lingers on. Even such a master of Saxon English as Charles Lamb begins his "Chapter on Ears" in the following way: "I have no ear. Mistake me not, reader, — nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me. I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those labyrinthine inlets — those indispensable side-intelligencers." O. W. Holmes, in his "Our Hundred Days in Europe" avoids the simple expression "a shaving machine" and "beard", and writes instead "a reaping machine which gathered the capillary harvest of the past twenty-four hours . . . . . in short, a lawn-mower for the masculine growth of which the proprietor wishes to rid his countenance."

147. Of course, the authors of these two samples aim in them at a certain humorous effect, and very often similar circumlocutions are consciously resorted to in conversation to obtain a ludicrous effect, as 'he amputated his mahogany' (cut his stick, went off), 'to agitate the communicator' (ring the bell), 'are your corporeal functions in a condition of solubility?', 'a sanguinary nasal protuberance', 'the Recent Incision' (the New Cut, a street in London), 'the Grove of the Evangelist' (St. John's Wood in London), etc. When Mr. Bob Sawyer asked "I say, old boy, where do you hang out?" Mr. Pickwick replied

that he was at present *suspended* at the George and Vulture. (Dickens, Pickw. II 13). *Punch* gives somewhere the following paraphrases of well-known proverbs: " Iniquitous intercourses contaminate proper habits. In the absence of the feline race, the mice give themselves up to various pastimes. Casualties will take place in the most excellently conducted family circles. More confectioners than are absolutely necessary are apt to ruin the potage." (Quoted in Fitzgerald's Miscellanies, p. 166). Some Latin and Greek words will scarcely ever be used except in jocular or ironical speech, such as *fumigation* (odour, tobacco-smoking), *sapient* (wise), *histrion* (actor), *a virgin aunt* (maiden aunt), *hylactism* (barking), *edacious* (greedy), the *genus Homo* (mankind), etc.

148. But how many words are there not which belong virtually to the same class, but are used in dead earnest by people who know that many big words are found in the best authors and who want to show off their education by avoiding plain everyday expressions and couching their thoughts in a would-be refined style? When Canning wrote the inscription graven on Pitt's monument in the London Guildhall, an Alderman felt much disgust at the grand phrase, "he died poor", and wished to substitute "he expired in indigent circumstances." Mr. Kington Oliphant, who relates this (The New English II 232), justly remarks, "Could the difference between the scholarlike and the vulgar be more happily marked?" James Russell Lowell, in the Introduction to the Second Series of his Biglow Papers, has a list of what he calls the old and the new styles of newspaper writing, which I find so characteristic that I cannot forbear reprinting it, though it is perhaps superfluous after the illustrations of the same tendency already given: —

Old Style.	New Style.
Was hanged.	Was launched into eternity.

Old Style.	New Style.
When the halter was put round his neck.	When the fatal noose was adjusted about the neck of the unfortunate victim of his own unbridled passions.
A great crowd came to see.	A vast concourse was assembled to witness.
Great fire.	Disastrous conflagration.
The fire spread.	The conflagration extended its devastating career.
House burned.	Edifice consumed.
The fire was got under.	The progress of the devouring element was arrested.
Man fell.	Individual was precipitated.
A horse and wagon ran against.	A valuable horse attached to a vehicle driven by J. S., in the employment of J. B., collided with.
The frightened horse.	The infuriated animal.
Sent for the doctor.	Called into requisition the services of the family physician.
The mayor of the city in a short speech welcomed.	The chief magistrate of the metropolis, in well chosen and eloquent language, frequently interrupted by the plaudits of the surging multitude, officially tendered the hospitalities.
I shall say a few words.	I shall, with your permission, beg leave to offer some brief observations.
Began his answer.	Commenced his rejoinder.
Asked him to dine.	Tendered him a banquet.

Old Style.	New Style.
A bystander advised.	One of those omnipresent characters who, as if in pursuance of some previous arrangement, are certain to be encountered in the vicinity when an accident occurs, ventured the suggestion.
He died.	He deceased, he passed out of existence, his spirit quitted its earthly habitation, winged its way to eternity, shook off its burden, etc.

149. I do not deny that somewhat parallel instances of stilted language might be culled from the daily press of most other nations, but nowhere else are they found in such plenty as in English, and no other language lends itself by its very structure to such vile stylistic tricks as English does. Is not even such a simple thing as a child's carriage (kinderwagen, barnevogn, voiture de bébé) here termed a *perambulator*? And did not little Thomas Babington Macaulay, when four years old, reply to a lady who took pity on him after he had spilt some hot coffee over his legs, "Thank you, madam, the agony is abated"? And does not a language which possesses, besides the natural expression for each thing, two or three sonorous equivalents, tempt a writer into what Lecky hits off so well when he says of Gladstone: "He seemed sometimes to be labouring to show with how many words a simple thought could be expressed or obscured"? (Democracy and Liberty I p. XXI.)

150. To sum up: the classical words adopted since the Renaissance have enriched the English language very

considerably and have especially increased its number of synonyms. But it is not every "enrichment" that is an advantage, and this one comprises much that is really superfluous, or worse than superfluous, and has, moreover, stunted the growth of native formations. The international currency of many words is not a full compensation for their want of harmony with the central part of the language and for the undemocratic character they give to the vocabulary. While the composite character of the language gives variety and to some extent precision to the style of the greatest masters, on the other hand it encourages an inflated turgidity of style. Without siding completely with Milton's teacher Alexander Gill, who says that classical studies have done the English language more harm than ever the cruelties of the Danes or the devastations of the Normans[1], we shall probably be near the truth if we recognize in the latest influence from the classical languages 'something between a hindrance and a help.'

1 Ad Latina venio. Et si uspiam querelæ locus, hîc est; quòd otium, quòd literæ, maiorem cladem sermoni Anglico intulerint quam ulla Danorum sævitia, ulla Normannorum vastitas unquam inflixerit. *Logonomia Anglica* 1621 (Jiriczek's reprint, Strassburg 1903, p. 43.)

Chapter VII.

Various Sources.

151. Although English has borrowed a great many words from other languages than those mentioned in the preceding chapters, these borrowings need not occupy us long here. For only Scandinavian, French, and Latin have left a mark on English deep enough to modify its character and to change its structure, and numerous as are the words it has borrowed from Dutch, Italian, Spanish, German, etc., the English language would remain the same in every essential respect even were they all to disappear to-morrow. Many of the words taken over from other languages are indeed extremely interesting from many points of view, and the student who should go through the lists given by Skeat[1] with a view to arranging them in groups according to their signification would be able to draw many important inferences with regard to England's commercial and other relations with many nations. Attention has already been called to the musical terms derived from Italian (§ 31), and a similar list of terms of architecture and art in general taken from the same language (*e. g.* colonnade, cornice, corridor, grotto, niche, parapet, pilaster, profile; miniature, fresco; improvisatore, motto) could be made the basis of an interesting chapter in a history of European civilization. A considerable number of military words (*e. g.* alarm

1 In his *Etymological Dictionary* and *Principles of English Etymology*.

or alarum, cartridge, corporal, cuirass, pistol, sentinel) carry us back to wars between Italy and France; and still other lessons in military history might be learnt from the existence in English of two synonyms, *plunder*, a German word introduced in the middle of the seventeenth century by soldiers who had served under Gustavus Adolphus, and *loot*, a Hindi word learnt by English soldiers in India about a hundred years ago. But it would lead us too far if we were to give many such instances.

152. There is, of course, nothing peculiarly English in the adoption of such words as *maccaroni* and *lava* from Italian, *steppe* and *verst* from Russian, *caravan* and *dervish* from Persian, *hussar* and *shako* from Hungarian, *bey* and *caftan* from Turkish, *harem* and *mufti* from Arabic, *bamboo* and *orang-outang* from Malay, *chocolate* and *tomato* from Mexican, *moccassin* and *tomahawk* from other American languages. As a matter of fact, all these words now belong to the whole of the civilized world; like such classical or pseudo-classical words as *nationality*, *telegram*, and *civilization* they bear witness to the sameness of modern culture everywhere: the same products and to a great extent the same ideas are now known all over the globe and many of them have in many languages identical names.

153. And yet, English differs from most other languages in that it is more inclined than they are to swallow foreign words raw, so to speak, instead of preferring to translate the foreign expression into some native equivalent. Thus English has taken over the German word *kindergarten* unchanged, while for the same institution Danish has the literal translation *börnehave* and Norwegian *barnehave*.

154. An interesting contrast may be seen between the behaviour in this respect of the Dutch and the English

in South Africa. The former, finding there a great many natural objets which were new to them, designated them either by means of existing Dutch words whose meanings were, accordingly, more or less modified, or else by coining new words, generally compounds. Thus *sloot* 'ditch' was applied to the peculiar dry rivers of that country, *veld* 'field' to the open pasturages, and *kopje* 'a little head or cup' to the hills, etc.; different kinds of animals were called *roodebok* ('red-buck'), *steenbok* ('stone-buck'), *springbok* ('hop-buck'), *springhaas* ('hop-hare'), *hartebeest* ('hart-beast'); a certain bird was called *slangvreter* ('serpent-eater'), a certain large shrub *spekboom* ('bacon-tree'), etc. The English, on the other hand, instead of imitating this principle, have simply taken over all these names into their own language, where they now figure[1] together with some other South African Dutch words, among which may be mentioned *trek* and *spoor*, in the special significations of 'colonial migration' and 'track of wild animal', while the Dutch words are much less specialized (*trekken* 'to draw, pull, travel, move'; *spoor* 'trace, track, rail'). These examples of borrowings might easily be multiplied from other domains, and we may say of the English what Moth says of Holofernes and Sir Nathaniel that "they have been at a great feast of languages, and stolne the scraps" (Love's L. L. V. 1. 39). It will therefore be natural to inquire into the cause of this linguistic omnivorousness.

155. It would, of course, be irrational to ascribe the phenomenon to a greater natural gift for learning languages, for in the first place, the English are not usually credited with such a gift, and secondly the best linguists

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1 *Roodebok* often spelt in accordance with the actual Dutch pronunciation *rooibok*, *rooyebok*. *Sloot* often appears in the un-Dutch spelling *sluit*.

are generally inclined to keep their own language pure rather than adulterate it with scraps of other languages. Consequently, we should be nearer the truth if we were to give as a reason the linguistic incapacity of the average Englishman. As a traveller and a colonizer, however, he is thrown into contact with people of a great many different nations and thus cannot help seeing numerous things and institutions unknown in England. R. L. Stevenson says somewhere about the typical John Bull, that "his is a domineering nature, steady in fight, imperious to command, but neither curious nor quick about the life of others".[1] And perhaps the loan-words we are considering, testify to nothing but the most superficial curiosity about the life of other nations and would not have been adopted if John Bull had really in his heart cared any more than this for the foreigners he meets. He is content to pick up a few scattered fragments of their speech—just enough to impart a certain local colouring to his narratives and political discussions, but he goes no further.

156. A rather different attitude towards foreign words seems to have been taken in former times. On the one hand, some foreign place-names of obvious etymology were translated; the *Black Forest* is one of these translations which has been retained, while now the *Siebengebirge* and the *Riesengebirge* are terms more commonly used than the *Seven Mountains* and the *Giant Mountains*. On the other hand, the title *signior* was in the times of Shakespeare used very frequently in speaking about others than Italians, while now such titles are only applied to natives of the country the titles are borrowed from. It is, indeed, a characteristic feature that foreigners are mentioned in England as Signor Manfredini, Herr Schultze,

1 Memories and Portraits, p. 3.

Fräulein Adler, etc., who in France would be simply Monsieur or Mademoiselle So-and-so. This may be interpreted as a sign of a great respect for or deference to foreigners, and perhaps that is true in the case of foreign musicians or teachers of languages, but in other cases, the use of foreign titles may be an outcome of a certain unwillingness to recognize them as entitled to the same standing as natives, and a consequent inclination to mark them off as un-English.

157. The tendency to adopt words from other languages is due, then, probably to a variety of causes. Foremost among these I think it is right to place the linguistic laziness mentioned in § 130 and fostered especially by the preference for words from the classical languages. That the borrowing is not occasioned by an inherent deficiency in the *language* itself, is shown by the ease with which new terms actually *are* framed whenever the need of them is really felt, especially by uneducated people who are not tempted to go outside their own language to express their thoughts. Interesting examples of this natural inventiveness may be found in Mr. Edward E. Morris's "Austral English, A dictionary of Australasian words, phrases and usages". As Mr. Morris says in his preface, "Those who, speaking the tongue of Shakespeare, of Milton, and of Dr. Johnson, came to various parts of Australasia, found a Flora and a Fauna waiting to be named in English. New birds, beasts and fishes, new trees, bushes and flowers, had to receive names for general use. It is probably not too much to say that there never was an instance in history when so many new names were needed, and that there never will be such an occasion again, for never did settlers come, nor can they ever again come, upon Flora and Fauna so completely different from anything seen by them before". The gaps were filled partly by adopting words from the

aboriginal languages, *e. g. kangaroo*, *wombat*, partly by applying English words to objects bearing a real or fancied resemblance to the objects denoted by them in England, *e. g. magpie*, *oak*, *beech*, but partly also by new English formations. Accordingly, in turning over the leaves of Mr. Morris's Dictionary we come across numerous names of birds like *friar-bird*, *frogsmouth*, *honey-eater*, *ground-lark*, *forty-spot*[1], of fishes like *long-fin*, *trumpeter*, of plants like *sugar-grass*, *hedge-laurel*, *ironheart*, *thousand-jacket*. Most of these show that "the settler must have had an imagination. Whip-bird, or Coach-whip, from the sound of the note, Lyre-bird from the appearance of the outspread tail, are admirable names." (Morris, *l. c.*) It certainly seems a pity that book-learned people when wanting to enrich their mother tongue have not, as a rule, drawn from the same source or shown the same talent for picturesque and "telling" designations.

158. A great many words are now-a-days coined by tradespeople to designate new articles of merchandise. Very little regard is generally paid to correctness of formation, the only essential being a name which is good for advertizing purposes. Sometimes a mere arbitrary collection of sounds or letters is chosen, as in the case of *kodak*, and sometimes the inventor contents himself with some vague resemblance to some other word, which may assist the buyer to remember the name. In one single number of one of the illustrated magazines

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1 One story of a curious change of meaning must be recounted in Mr. Morris's words: "The settler heard a bird laugh in what he thought an extremely ridiculous manner, its opening notes suggesting a donkey's bray — he called it the 'laughing jackass'. His descendants have dropped the adjective, and it has come to pass that the word 'jackass' denotes to an Australian something quite different from its meaning to other speakers of our English tongue".

I find the following trade names. I add the probable source of any name for which I have been able to imagine one —: *Larola*, *luxette* [luxe], *koko*, *Diano* [makes women beautiful: Diana], *melodeon* [a musical instrument: melody], *bath-eucryl* [soap, one of the ingredients is *eucalyptus*], *oktis*, *trilene* [tablets to cure fat people, try? or Latin *tri* as in tricolour? + lean], *vapo-cresolene* [cresolene vaporized], *harlene* [hair], *stenotyper* [sort of typewriter for stenography], *datura*, *antexema* [anti + eczema], *mene*, *vive* [a photographic camera, cf. vivid], *kals* [underclothing, cf. caleçon], *nonalton* [a tonic, which may be indicated by the ending], *onomosto*, *haydal*, *wincarnis* [a tonic: wine, caro?], *vinolia* [vinum, oleum], *bovril* [bos, vril, an electric fluid in Lytton's novel *The Coming Race*, or according to others from the name of the manufacturer].[1] As the list dates from January 1900, a great many of the names will probably be extinct before my book sees the light. Others may live and even pass into common use outside the sphere for which they were originally invented; this is the case with *kodak*.

159. It once occurred to M. Leon Mead to ask a great number of the best known American authors and men of science what words, if any, they had ever coined. The answers he received are very curious[2]. A great many of his correspondents distinctly repudiated the idea of having ever done such a thing as to coin a word, some explicitly declaring that they looked upon the coining of words as a crime to be classed with the coining of false money, others saying simply that they had always

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1 Sometimes these trade names are half-disguised by fancy spellings, the *Phiteesi* boot, *Stickphast*, *Uneeda* cigar [= you need a cigar] in England, *Uneeda* biscuit in America.

2 Leon Mead, Word-Coinage. New York, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. 1902.

found the language of Shakespeare – or some other great author they chose to mention — sufficient to express all their thoughts. On the other hand, some persons seemed to be proud of their coinages and sent Mr. Mead lists of them or regretted not being able to remember them. When we examine these coined words, we find that by far the greater number of them are framed on classical lines, for instance *lyronym*, *metropoliarchy*, *cynophiles*, *feminology*, *societology*, *monopolian*, *hippopœan*, to *hermetize* oneself, and *deanthropomorphization;* I leave out a great many that seem still more ugly and unnecessary. Only rarely do we come across some word formed by a specifically English process, such as *densen* ("As the spring comes on and the densening outlines of the elm give daily a new design for a Grecian urn," Th. W. Higginson), *viewpoint* and *watchpoint* (Fawcett), which are, however, only translations from German. Professor Van Dyke says that there was once a little river that could not be described by any other adjective than *waterfally*, and a bird whose song seemed to him *wild-flowery*. The proof-reader objected to both of these words, but Dr. Van Dyke withstood him. This latter remark is highly characteristic of the attitude taken by most professional champions of correctness of language towards anything a little out of the common, however justifiable the innovation may be. Very few people have the courage to say, as Mr. Edgar Fawcett says (p. 82): "I think every writer ought to have on his conscience the coining of at least five good [monosyllables] each year". It may be doubted indeed if the result would always be "good" words, if authors sat down consciously to fulfil the duty here prescribed to them, for the secret of the thing is that most new words which have come to be approved were framed without their originators being aware at the moment that they were creat-

ing anything. There is an interesting passage on p. 80 of the book mentioned: "He [A. T. Mahan] used once by chance the word *eventless* — 'dull, weary, eventless month'. The word slipped without premeditation off his pen. He immediately thought it without authority and found it not in Worcester. Nevertheless he stuck to it" as briefer, stronger and much more significant than the 'stupid' *uneventful*. Now, if people better realized the necessary shortcomings and deficiencies of dictionaries, they would not go to them as authorities *with regard to such questions*[1]. A word may have been used scores of times without finding its way into any dictionary, — and a word may be an excellent one even if it has never been used before by any human being. If at its first appearance it is just as intelligible as if it had been in constant use for centuries, why should the first occurrence be more faulty than the three-thousandth?

160. As already hinted, the chief enrichment of the language has taken place through those regular processes which are so familiar that any new word formed by means of them seems at once an old acquaintance. The whole history of English word-formation may be summed up thus — that some formative adjuncts have been gradually discarded, especially those that presented some difficulty of application, while others have been continually gaining ground, because they have admitted of being added to all or nearly all words without occasioning any change in the kernel of the word. Among the former I shall mention *-en* to denote female beings (cf. German *-in*). In Old English this had already be-

1 As a matter of fact, Bradley in the N. E. D. quotes Mad. D'Arblay (1815), Morris (1868), Stanley (1878) and Sherer (1880) for *eventless*, Post (1888) for *eventlessly*, and Howells (1872) for *eventlessness*.

come very impracticable because sound changes had occurred which obscured the connection between related words. Corresponding to the masculine *þegn*, *þeow*, *wealh*, *sealc*, *fox* we find the feminine *þignen*, *þiewen*, *wielen*, *scielcen*, *fyxen*. It seems clear that new generations would find some difficulties in forming new feminines on such indistinct analogies, so we cannot wonder that the ending ceased to be productive. Of the words mentioned, *fyxen* is the only one surviving, and every trace of its connection with *fox* is now lost, both the form *vixen* and the meaning being now too far from the origin.

161. A much more brilliant destiny was reserved for the Old English ending *-isc*. At first it was added only to nouns indicating nations, whose vowel it changed by mutation; thus *Englisc*, now *English*, from *Angle*, etc. In some adjectives, however, no mutation was possible, *e. g. Irish*, and by analogy the vowel of the primitive word was soon introduced into some of the adjectives, *e. g. Scottish* (earlier *Scyttisc*), *Danish* (earlier *Denisc*). The ending was extended first to words whose meaning was cognate to these national names, *heathenish*, OE. *folcisc* or *þeodisc* 'national' (from folc or þeod 'people'); then gradually came *childish*, *churlish* etc. Each century added new extensions, *foolish* and *feverish*, for instance, date from the fourteenth, and *boyish* and *girlish* from the sixteenth century, until now *-ish* can be added to nearly any noun and adjective (swinish, bookish, greenish, biggish, etc.), nay even to whole phrases. Among recent nonce-formations recorded in the NED. may be mentioned "an I-dont-know-howishness", "a clean-cravatish formality of manners", "Miss Martineauish".

162. We shall see in a later section (§ 200) that the ending *-ing* has still more noticeably broken the bounds of its originally narrow sphere of application. Another

case in point is the verbal suffix *-en*. It is now possible to form a verb from any adjective fulfilling certain phonetic conditions by adding *-en* (harden, weaken, sweeten, sharpen, lessen). But this suffix was not used very much before 1500, indeed most of the verbs formed in *-en* belong to the last three centuries. Another extensively used ending is *-er*. Old English had various methods of forming nouns to denote agents; from the verb *huntan* 'hunt' it had the noun *hunta* 'hunter'; from *beodan* 'announce', *boda* 'messenger, herald'; from *wealdan* 'rule', *wealda*; from *beran* 'bear', *bora*; from *sceþþan* 'injure', *sceaþa*; from *weorcan* 'work', *wyrhta* 'wright' (in wheelwright, etc.), though some of these were used in compounds only; some nouns were formed in *-end*: *rædend, scieppend,* and others in *-ere*: *blawere, blotere*, etc. But it seems as if there were many verbs from which it was impossible to form any agent-noun at all, and the reader will have noticed that even the formation in *a* presented some difficulties as the vowel was modified according to complicated rules. When the want of new nouns was felt, it was, therefore, more and more the ending *-ere* that was resorted to. But the curious thing is that the function of this ending was at first to make nouns, not from verbs, but from other nouns, thus OE. *bocere* 'scribe' from *boc* 'book', compare modern *hatter, tinner, Londoner, New Englander, first-nighter*. As, however, such a word as *fisher*, OE. *fiscere*, which is derived from the noun a *fish*, OE. *fisc*, might just as well be analyzed as derived from the corresponding verb to *fish*, OE. *fiscian*, it became usual to form new agent-denoting nouns in *-er* from verbs, and in some cases these supplanted older formations (OE. *hunta*, now *hunter*). *Now* we do not hesitate to make new words in *er* from any verb, *e. g.* a *snorer*, a *sitter*, a *telephoner*, a total *abstainer*, etc. Combinations with an adverb (a *diner-out*,

a *looker-on*) go back to Chaucer (A somnour is a renner up and down With mandements for fornicacioun, D 1284), but do not seem to be very frequent before the Elizabethan period. Note also the extensive use of the suffix to denote instruments and things, as in *slipper*, *rubber*, *typewriter*, *sleeper* (American = sleeping car). Other much-used suffixes for nouns are: *-ness* (goodness, truthfulness), *-dom* (Christendom, boredom, "Swelldom", Thackeray), *-ship* (ownership, companionship, horsemanship), for adjectives: *-ly* (lordly, cowardly), *-y* (fiery, churchy, creepy), *-less* (powerless, dauntless), *-ful* (powerful, fanciful), and *-ed* (blue-eyed, goodnatured, renowned, conceited, talented; "broad-breasted; level-browed, like the horizon;—thighed and shouldered like the billows;—footed like their stealing foam", Ruskin). Prefixes of wide application are *mis-*, *un-*, and *be-* and others. By means of these formatives the English vocabulary has been and is constantly being enriched with thousands and thousands of useful new words.

163. There is one manner of deriving verbs from nouns and vice versa which is specifically English and which is of the greatest value on account of the ease with which it is managed, namely that of making them exactly like one another. In Old English there were a certain number of verbs and nouns of the same "root", but distinguished by the endings. Thus "I love" through the three persons singular ran *lufie lufast lufaþ*, plural *lufiaþ;* the infinitive was *lufian*, the subjunctive *lufie*, pl. *lufien*, and the imperative was *lufa*, pl. *lufiaþ*.[1] The noun "love" on the other hand was *lufu*, in the other cases *lufe*, plural *lufa* or *lufe*, *lufum*, *lufena* or *lufa*. Similarly 'to sleep' was *slæpan*, pres. *slæpe slæpest slæp(e)þ, slæpaþ*, subjunctive *slæpe*, *slæpen*, imperative *slæp*,

1 We need here only regard the present of the verbs.

slæpaþ, while the noun had the forms *slæp*, *slæpe*, and *slæpes* in the singular, and *slæpas*, *slæpum*, *slæpa* in the plural. If we were to give the corresponding forms used in the subsequent centuries, we should witness a gradual simplification which had as a further consequence the mutual approximation of the verbal and nominal forms. The *-m* is changed into *-n*, all the vowels of the weak syllables are levelled to one uniform *e*, the plural forms of the verbs in *-þ* give way to forms in *-n*, and all the final *n*'s eventually disappear, while in the nouns *s* is gradually extended so that it becomes the only genitive and almost the only plural ending. The second person singular of the verbs retains its distinctive *-st*, but towards the end of the Middle English period *thou* already begins to be less used, and the polite *ye*, *you*, which becomes more and more universal, claims no distinctive ending in the verb. In the fifteenth century, the *e* of the endings which had hitherto been pronounced, ceased to be sounded, and somewhat later *s* became the ordinary ending of the third person singular instead of *th*. These changes brought about the modern scheme:—

noun: *love loves—sleep sleeps*,
verb: *love loves—sleep sleeps*,

where we have perfect identity of the two parts of speech, only with the curious cross-relation between them that *s* is the ending of the plural in the nouns and of the singular (third person) in the verbs—an accident which might almost be taken as a device for getting an *s* into all indicative sentences containing no pronoun (the lover loves; the lovers love) and for showing by the place of the *s* which of the two numbers is intended.

164. As a great many native nouns and verbs had thus come to be identical in form (*e. g.* blossom, care, deal, drink, ebb, end, fathom, fight, fish, fire), and as the same thing happened with numerous originally French

words (*e. g.* accord, O. Fr. acord and acorder, account, arm, blame, cause, change, charge, charm, claim, combat, comfort, copy, cost, couch), it was quite natural that the speech-instinct should take it as a matter of course that whenever the need of a verb arose, the corresponding noun might be used unchanged, and vice versa. Among the innumerable nouns from which verbs have been formed in this manner, we may mention a few: ape, awe, cook, husband, silence, time, worship. Nearly every word for the different parts of the body has given rise to a homonym verb though it is true that some of them are rarely used: to eye, to nose (you shall nose him as you go up the staires, Hamlet), to lip (= kiss, Shakesp.), to beard, to tongue and to brain (such stuffe as madmen tongue and braine not; Shakesp. Cymbeline), to jaw (= boast, etc.), to ear (rare, = give ear to), to chin (American = to chatter), to arm (= put one's arm round), to shoulder (arms), to elbow (one's way through the crowd), to hand, to fist (fisting each others throat, Shakesp.), to breast (= to oppose), to body (forth), to skin, to stomach, to limb (they limb themselves, Milton), to knee (= to kneel, Shakesp.), to foot, to toe (= reach with the toes), to tail. It would be possible in a similar way to go through a great many other categories of words; everywhere we should see the same facility of forming new verbs from nouns.

165. The process is also very often resorted to for 'nonce-words' in speaking and in writing. Thus, a common form of retort is exemplified by the following quotations: "Trinkets! a bauble for Lydia! . . . So this was the history of his trinkets! I'll *bauble* him!" (Sheridan, Rivals V. 2). "I was explaining the Golden Bull to his Royal Highness." "I'll *Golden Bull* you, you rascal!" roared the Majesty of Russia (Macaulay, Biographical Ess.). "Such a savage as that, as has just come home

from South Africa. Diamonds indeed! I'd *diamond* him" (Trollope, Old Man's Love)—and in a somewhat different manner: "My gracious Uncle.—Tut, tut, Grace me no Grace, nor Uncle me no Uncle" (Shakesp., R 2, cf. also Romeo III. 5. 143). "I heartily wish I could, but—" "Nay, but me no buts—I have set my heart upon it" (Scott, Antiq. ch. XI). "Advance and take thy prize, The diamond; but he answered, Diamond me No diamonds! For God's love, a little air! Prize me no prizes, for my prize is death" (Tennyson, Lancelot and Elaine).

166. A still more characteristic peculiarity of the English language is the corresponding freedom with which a form which was originally a verb is used unchanged as a noun. This was not possible till the disappearance of the final *-e* which was found in most verbal forms, and accordingly we see an ever increasing number of these formations from about 1500. I shall give some examples in chronological order, adding the date of the earliest quotation for the noun in the N. E. D.: glance 1503, bend 1529, cut 1530, fetch 1530, hearsay 1532, blemish 1535, gaze 1542, reach 1542, drain 1552, gather 1555, burn 1563, lend 1575, dislike 1577, frown 1581, dissent 1585, fawn (a servile cringe) 1590, dismay 1590, embrace 1592, hatch 1597, dip 1599, dress (personal attire) 1606, flutter 1641, divide 1642, build 1667 (but before the 19th century apparently used by Pepys only), harass 1667, haul 1670, dive 1700, go 1727 (many of the most frequent applications date from the nineteenth century), hobble 1727, lean (the act or condition of leaning) 1776, bid 1788, hang 1797, dig 1819, find 1825 (in the sense of that which is found, 1847), crave 1830, kill (the act of killing) 1852, (a killed animal) 1878. It will be seen that the sixteenth century is very fertile in these nouns, which is only a natural

consequence of the phonological reason given above. As, however, some of the verb-nouns found in Elizabethan authors have in modern times disappeared or become rare, some grammarians have inferred that we have here a phenomenon peculiar to that period and due to the general exuberance of the Renaissance which made people more free with their language than they have since been. A glance at our list will show that this is a wrong view; indeed, we use a great many formations of this kind which were unknown to Shakespeare; he had only the noun a *visitation*, where we say *a visit*, nor did he know our *worries*, our *kicks*, and *moves*, etc., etc.

167. In some cases a noun is formed in this manner in spite of there being already another noun derived from the same verb; thus *a move* has nearly the same meaning as *removal*, *movement* or *motion* (from which latter a new verb *to motion* is formed); a *resolve* and *resolution*, a *laugh* and *laughter* are nearly the same thing (though an *exhibit* is only one of the things found at an *exhibition*). Hence we get a lively competition started between these nouns and the nouns in *-ing*: *meet* (especially in the sporting world) and *meeting*, *shoot* and *shooting*, *read* (in the afternoon I like a rest and a read) and *reading*[1], *row* (let us go out for a row) and *rowing* (he goes in for rowing), *smoke* and *smoking*, *mend* and *mending*, *feel* (there was a soft feel of autumn in the air, Hall Caine) and *feeling*. The *build* of a house and the *make* of a machine are different from the *building* of the house and the *making* of the machine. The *sit* of a coat may sometimes be spoilt at one *sitting*, and we speak of *dressing*, not of *dress*, in

1 Darwin says in one of his letters: "I have just finished, after several reads, your paper"; this implies that he did not read it from beginning to end at one sitting; if he had written "after several readings" he would have implied that he had read it through several times.

connection with a salad, etc. The enormous development of these convenient differentiations belongs to the most recent period of the language. Compared with the sets of synonyms mentioned above (§ 133: one word borrowed from Latin, etc.) this class of synonyms will show a decided superiority, because here small differences in sense are expressed by small differences in sound, and because all these words are formed in the most regular and easy manner; consequently there is the least possible strain put on the memory.

168. In early English a noun and the verb corresponding to it were often similar, although not exactly alike, some historical reason causing a difference in either the vowel or the final consonant or both. In such pairs of words as the following the old relation is kept unchanged: a *life*, to *live;* a *calf*, to *calve;* a *grief*, to *grieve;* a *cloth*, to *clothe;* a *house*, to *house;* a *use*, to *use* —in all these the noun has the voiceless and the verb the voiced consonant. The same alternation has been imitated in a few words which had originally the same consonant in the noun as in the verb; thus *belief*, *proof*, and *excuse* (with voiceless *s*) have supplanted the older nouns in *-ve* and voiced *-se*, and inversely the verb *grease* has now voiced *s* [z] where it had formerly a voiceless *s*. But in a far greater number of words the tendency to have nouns und verbs of exactly the same sound has prevailed, so that we have to *knife*, to *roof*, to *scarf* (Shakesp.), to *elf* (id.), to *roof*, and with voiceless *s* to *loose*, to *race*, to *ice*, to *promise*, while the nouns *repose*, *cruise* (at sea), *reprieve*, owe their voiced consonants to the corresponding verbs. In this way we get some interesting doublets. Besides the old noun *bath* and verb *bathe* we have the recent verb to *bath* (will you bath baby to-day?) and the noun *bathe* (I walked into the sea by myself and had a very decent bathe, Tennyson).

Besides *glass* (noun) and *glaze* (verb) we have now also *glass* as a verb and *glaze* as a noun; so also in the case of *grass* and *graze*, *price* and *prize* (where *praise* verb and noun should be mentioned as etymologically the same word).

169. The same forces are at work in the smaller class of words, in which the distinction between the noun and the verb is made by the alternation of *ch* and *k*, as in *speech — speak*. Side by side with the old *batch* we have a new noun a *bake*, besides the noun *stitch* and the verb *stick* we have now also a verb to *stitch* (a book, etc.) and the rare noun a *stick* (the act of sticking); besides the old noun *stench* we have a new one from the verb *stink*. The modern word *ache* (in toothache, etc.) is a curious cross of the old noun, whose spelling has been kept, and the old verb, whose pronunciation (with k) has prevailed. Baret (1573) says expressly, "*Ake* is the verb of this substantive *ache*, *ch* being turned into *k*". In the Shakespeare folio of 1623 the noun is always spelt with *ch* and the verb with *k*; the verb rhymes with *brake* and *sake*. The noun was thus sounded like the name of the letter *h*; and Hart (An Orthographie, 1569, p. 35) says expressly "We abuse the name of h, calling it ache, which sounde serveth very well to expresse a headache, or some bone ache." Indeed, the identity in sound of the noun and the name of the letter gave rise to one of the stock puns of the time; see for instance Shakespeare (Ado III. 4. 56): "by my troth I am exceeding ill, hey ho. — For a hauke, a horse, or a husband? — For the letter that begins them all, H," and a poem by Heywood "It is worst among letters in the crosse row, For if thou finde him other [= either] in thine elbow, In thine arme, or leg . . . . . Where ever vou find ache, thou shalt not like him."

170. Numerous nouns and verbs have the same consonants, but a difference in the vowels, due either to

gradation or mutation. But here, too, the creative powers of language may be observed. Where in old times there was only a noun *bit* and a verb to *bite*, we have now in addition not only a verb to *bit* (a horse, to put the bit into its mouth) as in Carlyle's "the accursed hag 'dyspepsia' had got me bitted and bridled" and in Coleridge's witty remark (quoted in the N.E.D.) "It is not women and Frenchmen only that would rather have their tongues bitten than bitted", — but also a noun *bite* in various meanings, *e. g.* in "his bite is as dangerous as the cobra's" (Kipling) and "she took a bite out of the apple" (Anth. Hope). From the noun *seat* (see above, § 72) we have the new verb to *seat* (to place on a seat), while the verb to *sit* has given birth to the noun *sit* (cf. § 167). No longer content with the old *sale* as the noun corresponding to *sell*, in slang we have the new noun *a* (fearful) *sell* (an imposition); cf. also the American substantive *tell* (according to their tell, see Farmer and Henley). As *knot* (n.) was to *knit* (v.), so was *coss* to *kiss*, but while of the former pair both forms have survived and have given rise to a new verb to *knot* and a new noun a *knit* (he has a permanent knit of the brow, N.E.D.), from the latter the *o*-form has disappeared, the noun being now formed from the verb: a *kiss*. We have the old *brood* (n.) and *breed* (v.), and the new *brood* (v.) and *breed* (n.); a new verb to *blood* exists by the side of the old to *bleed*, and a new noun *feed* by the side of the old *food*. It is obvious that the language has been enriched by acquiring all these newly formed words; but it should also be admitted that there has been a positive gain in ease and simplicity in all those cases where there was no occasion for turning the existing phonetic difference to account by creating new verbs or nouns in new significations, and where, accordingly, one of the phonetic forms has simply disappeared, as when

the old verbs *sniwan*, *scrydan*, *swierman* have given way to the new *snow*, *shroud*, *swarm*, which are like the nouns, or when the noun *swat*, *swot* (he swette blodes swot, Ancrene Riwle) has been discarded in favour of *sweat*, which has the same vowel as the verb. So far from the older school of philologists being right when they maintained that the formal distinction between verbs and nouns was characteristic of the highest stage of linguistic development[1], we see that the steadily continued approximation of the two classes of words has been in English a great aid to linguistic progress.

171. Among the other points of interest presented by the formations occupying us here[2] I may mention the curious oscillation found in some instances between noun and verb. *Smoke* is first a noun (the smoke from the chimney), then a verb (the chimney smokes, he smokes a pipe); then a new noun is formed from the verb in the last sense (let us have a smoke). Similarly *gossip* (a) noun: godfather, intimate friend, idle talker, (b) verb: to talk idly, (c) new noun: idle talk; *dart* (a) a weapon, (b) to throw (a dart), to move rapidly (like a dart), (c) a sudden motion; *brush* (a) an instrument, (b) to use that instrument, (c) the action of using it: your hat wants a brush; *sail* (a) a piece of canvas, (b) to sail, (c) a sailing excursion; *wire* (a) a metallic thread, (b) to telegraph, (c) a telegram; so also *cable*; in vulgar language a verb is formed to *jaw* and from that a second noun a *jaw* ("what speech do you mean?" "Why that grand jaw that you sputtered forth just now about reputation," F. C. Philips). Sometimes the starting point is a verb, *e. g. frame* (a) to

1 See especially Aug. Schleicher, Die unterscheidung von nomen und verbum, 1865.

2 Note the shifting of the accent in *conduct*, to *conduct*; an *object*, to *object*, etc.

form, (b) noun: a fabric, a border for a picture, etc., (c) verb: to set in a frame; and sometimes an adjective, *e. g. faint* (a) weak, (b) to become weak, (c) a fainting fit.

172. To those who might see in the obliteration of the old distinctive marks of the different parts of speech a danger of ambiguity, I would answer that this danger is more imaginary than real. I open at random a modern novel (The Christian, by Hall Caine) and count on one page (173) 34 nouns which can be used as infinitives without any change, and 38 verbs the infinitives of which are used unchanges as nouns[1], while only 22 nouns and 9 verbs cannot be thus used. As some of the ambiguous nouns and verbs occur more than once, and as the same page contains adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions[2] which can be used as nouns (adjectives) or verbs, or both, the theoretical possibilities of mistakes arising from confusion of parts of speech would seem to be very numerous. And yet no one reading that page would feel the slightest hesitation about understanding every word correctly, as either the ending or the context shows at once whether a verb is meant or not. Even such an extreme case as this line, which is actually found in a modern song, "Her eyes like angels watch them still" is not obscure, although *her* might be both accusative and possessive, *eyes* both noun and verb, *like* adjective, con-

1 Answer, brother, reply, father, room, key, haste, gate, time, head, pavement, man, waste, truth, thunder, clap, storey, bed, book, night, face, point, shame, while, eye, top, hook, finger, bell, land, lamp, taper, shelf, church, — whisper, wait, return, go, keep, call, look, leave, reproach, do, pass, come, cry, open, sing, fall, hurry, reach, snatch, lie, regard, creep, lend, say, try, steal, hold, swell, wonder, interest, see, choke, shake, place, escape, ring, take, light. (I have not counted auxiliary verbs.)

2 Back, down, still, out, home, except, like, while, straight.

junction, and verb, *watch* noun and verb, and *still* adjective and adverb. A modern Englishman, realizing the great advantage his language possesses in its power of making words serve in new functions, might make Shakespeare's lines his own in an different sense:

"So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what has been spent before[1]."

173. Having thus considered the modes of forming new words by adding something to existing words and by adding to them nothing at all, we shall end this chapter by some remarks on the formation of new words by subtracting something from old ones.[2] Such 'back-formations', as they are very conveniently termed by Dr. Murray, owe their origin to one part of a word being mistaken for some derivative suffix (or, more rarely, prefix). The adverbs *sid(e)ling*, *groveling* and *darkling* were originally formed by means of the adverbial ending *-ling*, but in such phrases as *he walks sideling*, *he lies groveling*, etc., they looked exactly like participles in *-ing*, and the consequence was that the new verbs to *sidle*, to *grovel*, and to *darkle* were derived from them by the subtraction of *-ing*. The *Banting* cure was named after one Mr. Banting; the occasional verb to *bant* is, accordingly, a back-formation. The ending *-y* is often subtracted; from *greedy* is thus formed the noun *greed* (about 1600), from *lazy* and *cosy* the two verbs *laze* and *cose* (Kingsley), and from *jeopardy* (French jeu parti) the verb *jeopard*. The old adjective corresponding to *difficulty* was *difficile* as in French, but about 1600 the adjective *difficult* (= the noun minus *y*) makes its appearance. *Puppy* from French *poupée* was thought to be formed by

1 Sonnet 76.

2 Otto Jespersen, Om subtraktionsdannelser, særligt på dansk og engelsk, in *Festskrift til Vilh. Thomsen*. Copenhagen 1894. On the subtraction of *s*, as if it were a plural sign, see below, § 188.

means of the petting suffix *y*, and thus *pup* was created; similarly *cad* may be from *caddy*, *caddie* = Fr. *cadet* (a youngster) and *pet* from *petty* = Fr. *petit*, the transition in meaning from 'little' to 'favourite' being easily accounted for. Several verbs originate from nouns in *-er* (*-ar*, *-or*), which were not originally 'agent nouns'; *butcher* is the French *boucher*, derived from *bouc* 'a buck, goat' with no corresponding verb, but in English it has given rise to the rare verb to *butch* and to the noun a *butch-knife*. Similarly *harbinger*, *rover*, *pedlar*, *burglar*, *hawker*, and probably *beggar*, call into existence the verbs to *harbinge* (Whitman), *rove*, *peddle*, *burgle*, *hawk*, and *beg*; and the Latin words *editor*, *donator*, *vivisector*, the un-Latin verbs to *edit*, *donate* (American), *vivisect* (Meredith), etc. which look as if they came from Latin participles.[1] Some of these back-formations have been more successful than others in being generally recognized in Standard English.

174. It is not usual in Germanic languages to form compounds with a verb as the second, and an object, an adverb, etc. as the first, part. Hence, when we find such verbs as to *housekeep* (Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Kipling, Merriman), the explanation must be that *-er* has been subtracted from the perfectly legitimate noun a *housekeeper* (or *-ing* from *housekeeping*). The oldest examples I know of this formation are to *partake* (parttake) and to *conycatch* (Shakesp.); others are to *hutkeep*, common in Australia, to *soothsay* (rare), to *thoughtread* (Why don't they thought-read each other? H. G. Wells), to *typewrite* (I could typewrite if I had a machine, id., also in B. Shaw's Candida), to *merrymake* (you merrymake together, Du Maurier). The verbs to *henpeck* and to *sunburn* are similarly abstracted from the participles *henpecked* and

1 Cf. however, my paper quoted above, p. 173.

sunburnt; and Browning even says "moonstrike him!" (Pippa Passes) for "let him be moonstruck."

175. We have seen (§ 7 ff.) that monosyllabism is one of the most characteristic features of modern English, and this chapter has shown us some of the morphological processes by which the original stock of monosyllables has been in course of time considerably increased. It may not, therefore, be out of place here briefly to give an account of some of the other modes by which such short words have been developed. Some are simply longer words which have been shortened by regular phonetic development (cf. *love* § 163); *e. g. eight* O.E. *eahta*, *dear* O.E. *deore*, *fowl* O.E. *fugol*, *hawk* O.E. *hafoc*, *lord* O.E. *hlaford*, *not* and *nought* O.E. *nawiht*, *pence* O.E. *peningas*, *ant* O.E. *æmette*, etc. *Miss* before the names of unmarried ladies is a somewhat irregular shortening of "missis" (mistress); though found here and there in the seventeenth century, *Miss* was not recognized in the middle of the eighteenth century (cf. Fielding's Mrs. Bridgit, Mrs. Honour, etc.).

176. This leads us to the numerous popular clippings of long foreign words, of which rarely the middle (as in *Tench* 'the House of *Detention*' and *teck* 'detective') or the end (as in *bus* 'omnibus', *baccer*, *baccy* 'tobacco', *phone* 'telephone'), but more often the beginning only subsists. Some of the short forms have never passed beyond slang, such as *sov* 'sovereign', *pub* 'public-house', *confab* 'confabulation', *pop* 'popular concert', *vet* 'veterinary surgeon', *Jap* 'Japanese', *guv* 'Governor', *Mods* 'Moderations', an Oxford examination, *matric* 'matriculation', *prep* 'preparation' and *impot* or *impo* 'imposition' in schoolboys' slang, *sup* 'supernumerary', *props* 'properties' in theatrical slang, *perks* 'perquisites', *comp* 'compositor', *caps* 'capital letters', etc. etc. Some are perhaps now in a fair way to become recognized in ordinary speech, such as

exam 'examination', and *bike* 'bicycle'; and some words have become so firmly established as to make the full words pass completely into oblivion, *e. g. cab* (cabriolet), *fad* (fadaise), *navvy* (navigator) and *mob* (mobile vulgus).

177. A last group of English monosyllables comprises a certain number of words the etymology of which has hitherto baffled all the endeavours of philologists. At a certain moment such a word suddenly comes into the language, nobody knowing from where, so that we must feel really inclined to think of a creation *ex nihilo*. I am not particularly thinking of words denoting sounds or movements in a more or less onomatopoetic way, for their origin is psychologically easy to account for, but of such words as the following, some of which belong now to the most indispensable speech material: *bad*[1], *big*[2], *lad* and *lass*, all appearing towards the end of the thirteenth century; *fit* adjective and *fit* substantive, probably two mutually independent words, the adjective dating from 1440, the substantive in the now current sense from 1547; *dad* 'father', *jump*, *crease* 'fold, wrinkle', *gloat*, and *bet* from the sixteenth century; *job*, *fun* (and *pun*?), *blight*, *chum* and *hump* from the seventeenth century; *fuss*, *jam* verb and substantive, and *hoax* from the eighteenth, and *slum* perhaps from the nineteenth century. Anyone who has watched small children carefully must have noticed that they sometimes create some such word without any apparent reason; sometimes they stick to it only for a day or two as the name of some plaything, etc., and then forget it; but sometimes a funny sound takes

1 See Zupitza's attempt at an explanation in the NED., which does not account for the origin of *bæddel*.

2 The best explanation is Björkman's, see Scand. Loan-Words p. 157 and 259; but even he does not claim to have solved the mystery completely.

lastingly their fancy and may even be adopted by their playmates or parents as a real word. Without pretending that such is the origin of all the words just mentioned I yet venture to throw out the suggestion that some of them may be due to children's playful inventiveness.

Chapter VIII.

Grammar.

178. The preceding chapter has already brought us near to our present province or rather has crossed its boundary, for word-formation is rightly considered one of the main divisions of grammar. In the other divisions a survey of the historical development shows us the same general tendency as word-formation does (§ 160), the tendency, as we might call it, from chaos towards cosmos. Where the old language had a great many endings, most of them with very vague meanings and applications, Modern English has but few, and their sphere of signification is more definite. The number of irregularities and anomalies, so considerable in Old English, has been greatly reduced so that now the vast majority of words are inflected regularly. It may be objected that most of the old strong verbs are still strong, and that this means irregularity in the formation of the tenses: *shake shook shaken* is just as irregular as Old English *scacan scoc scacen*. But it must be remembered, first, that there is a complete disappearance of a great many of those details of inflection, which made every Old English paradigm much more complicated than its modern successor, such as distinctions of persons and numbers, and nearly all differences between the infinitive, the imperative, the indicative, and the conjunctive, — secondly that the number of distinct vowels has been reduced in many verbs; compare thus *beran bireþ bær bæron boren* with *bear bears bore bore born*, *feohtan* (*fieht*) *feaht fuhton*

fohten with *fight* (*fights*) *fought fought fought*, *bindan band bunden* with *bind bound bound*, *berstan bærst burston borsten* with *burst burst burst burst*, — and thirdly that the consonant change found in many verbs (ceas curon, snaþ snidon, teah tugon) has been abolished altogether except in the single case of *was were*. The greatest change towards simplicity and regularity is seen in the adjectives, where one form now represents the eleven different forms used by the contemporaries of Alfred.

179. It would take up too much space here to expound in detail the whole process of grammatical development and simplification. It has taken place not suddenly and from one cause, but gradually and from a variety of causes. Even such a seemingly small step as that by which the inflection with nominative *ye*, accusative and dative *you* has given way to the modern use of *you* in all cases, has been the result of the activity of many moving forces.[1] Nor must it be imagined that the development has in every minute particular made for progress; nothing has been gained, for instance, by the modern creation of *mine* and *thine* as absolute possessive pronouns by the side of *my* and *thy*.[2] Sometimes the ways by which new grammatical expressions are won are rather roundabout, and it is only when we compare the entire linguistic structure of some remote period with the structure in modern times that we observe that the gain in clearness and simplicity has really been enormous. I shall select a few points of grammar, which seem to me illustrative of the processes of change in general, and (as regards some of them) of the progressive tendency I have mentioned. The first point is the development of the *s*-ending in nouns (where it is now the usual mark

1 Progress in Language, chapter VII.

2 Ib. p. 68.

of the genitive case and of the plural number) and in verbs (where it indicates the third person singular of the present tense); as the latter ending has prevailed in competition with the *th*-ending, the history of *th* in the formation of ordinal numerals will next be considered. Then the wonderful enrichment of the language due to the extended use of the *ing*-ending will be considered, and finally some other points will be treated with the greatest briefness possible.

180. (I. The *s*-ending in nouns): In Old English the genitive was formed in *es* in most masculines and neuters, but beside this a variety of other endings were in use with the different stems, in *-e*, in *-re*, in *-an*; some words had no separate ending in the genitive, and some formed a mutation-genitive (*boc* 'book', gen. *bec*). Besides the genitive of the plural never ended in *-s*, but in *-a* or *-ra* or *-na* (*-ena*, *-ana*). With regard to syntax, the genitive case filled a variety of functions, possessive, subjective, objective, partitive, definitive, descriptive, etc. It was used not only to connect two substantives, but also after a great number of verbs and adjectives (rejoice at, fear, long for, remember, fill, empty, weary, deprive of, etc.); it sometimes stood before and sometimes after the governing word. In short, the rules for the formation as well as for the employment of that case were complicated to a very high degree. But gradually a greater regularity and simplicity prevailed in accidence as well as in syntax; the *s*-ending was extended to more and more nouns and to the plural as well as the singular number, and now it is the only genitive ending used in the language, though in the plural it is in the great majority of cases hidden away behind the *s* used to denote the plural number (*kings'*, cf. *men's*).

The position of the genitive is now always immediately before the governing word, and this in connection with the regularity of the formation of the case has been instrumental in bringing about the modern group-genitive, where the *s* is tacked on to the end of a word-group with no regard to the logic of the older grammar: *the King of England's power* (formerly "the kinges power of England"), *the bride and bridegroom's return*, etc.[1]

181. As for the use of the genitive, it has been in various ways encroached upon by the combination with *of*. First, its use is now in ordinary prose almost restricted to personal beings, and even such phrases as "society's hard-drilled soldiery" (Meredith), where *society* is personified, are felt as poetical; still more so, of course, "thou knowst not golds effect" (Sh.) or "setting out upon life's journey" (Stevenson). But in some set phrases the genitive is still established, *e. g.* out of *harm's* way; he is at his *wits'* (or *wit's*) end; so also in the stock quotation from Hamlet, in my *mind's* eye, etc. Then to indicate measure, etc.: at a *boat's* length from the ship, and especially time: an *hour's* walk, a good *night's* rest, *yesterday's* post; and this is even extended to such prepositional combination as *to-day's* adventures, *to-morrow's* papers.

182. Secondly, the genitive (of names of persons) is now chiefly used possessively, though this word must be taken in a very wide sense, including such cases as "Shelley's works," "Gainsborough's pictures," "Tom's enemy", "Tom's death," etc. The subjective genitive, too, is in great vigour, for instance in "the King's arrival," "the Duke's invitation," "the Duke's inviting him," "Mrs. Poyser's repulse of the squire" (G. Eliot). Still there is, in quite

1 See the detailed historical account of the group-genitive, Progress in Language p. 279—318.

recent times, a tendency towards expressing the subject by means of the preposition *by*, just as in the passive voice, for instance in "the accidental discovery by Miss Knag of some correspondence" (Dickens); "the appropriation by a settled community of lands on the other side of an ocean" (Seeley), "the massacre of Christians by Chinese." — "Forster's Life of Dickens" is the same thing as "Dickens's Life, by Forster". The objective genitive was formerly much more common than now, the ambiguity of the genitive being probably the reason of its decline. Still, we find, for instance "his expulsion from power by the Tories" (Thackeray), "What was thy pity's recompence?" (Byron). "England's wrongs" generally means the wrongs done to England; thus also "my cosens wrongs" in Shakespeare's R 2 II. 3. 141, but "your foule wrongs" (in the same play, III. 1. 15) means the wrongs committed by you. In "my sceptre's awe" (ib. I. 1. 118) we have an objective, but in "thy free awe pays homage to us" (Hamlet IV. 3. 63) a subjective genitive. But on the whole such obscurity will occur less frequently in English than in other languages, where the genitive is more freely used.

183. Now, *of* has so far prevailed that there are very few cases where a genitive cannot be replaced by it, and it is even used to supplant a possessive pronoun in such stock phrases as "not for the death of me" (cf. Chaucer's "the blood of me," LGW. 848). *Of* is required in a great many cases, such as "I come here at the instance of your colleague, Dr. H. J. Henry Jekyll" (Stevenson), and it is often employed to avoid tacking on the *s* to too long a series of words, as in "Will Wimble's is the case of many a younger brother of a great family" (Addison) or "the wife of a clergyman of the Church of England" (Thackeray), where most Englishmen will resent the iteration of *of*'s less than they do the repeated *s*'es in Mrs. Browning's "all the hoofs Of King Saul's father's asses".

Even long strings of prepositions are tolerated, as in "on the occasion of the coming of age of one of the youngest sons of a wealthy member of Parliament", or "Swift's visit to London in 1707 had for its object the obtaining for the Irish Church of the surrender by the Crown of the First-Fruits and Twentieths" (Aitken) or "that sublime conception of the Holy Father of a spiritual kingdom on earth under the sovereignty of the Vicar of Jesus Christ himself" (Hall Caine). I suppose that very few readers of the original books have found anything heavy or cumbersome in these passages, even if they may here, where their attention is drawn to the grammatical construction.

184. Speaking of the genitive, we ought also to mention the curious use in phrases like "a friend of my brother's". This began in the fourteenth century with such instances as "an officere of the prefectes" (Chaucer G 368), where *officers* is readily supplied (= one of the prefect's officers) and "if that any neighebor of mine (= any of my neighbours) Wol nat in chirche to my wyf enclyne" (id. B 3091); compare also "ne no-thing of hise thinges is out of my power" (id. I 879). In the course of a few centuries, the construction became more and more frequent, so that it has now long been one of the fixtures of the English language. The partitive sense is still conceivable in such phrases as "an olde religious unckle of mine" (Sh., As III. 3. 362) = one of my uncles, though it will be seen that is impossible to analyze it as being equal to "one of my old religious uncles". The feeling of the partitive origin of the construction must, indeed, soon have been lost, and the construction was employed chiefly to avoid the juxtaposition of two pronouns, "this hat of mine, that ring of yours" being preferred to "this my hat, that your ring", or of a pronoun and a genitive, as in

"any ring of Jane's", where "any Jane's ring" or "Jane's any ring" would be impossible; compare also "I make it a rule of mine", "this is no fault of Frank's", etc. In all such cases the construction was found so convenient that it is no wonder that it should soon be extended analogically where no partitive sense is logically possible, as in "nor shall [we] ever see That face of hers againe" (Shakespeare, Lear I. 1. 267), "that flattering tongue of yours" (As IV. 1. 188), "Time hath not yet so dried this bloud of mine" (Ado IV. 1. 195), "If I had such a tyre, this face of mine Were full as lovely as is this of hers" (Gent. IV. 4. 190), "this uneasy heart of ours" (Wordsworth), "that poor old mother of his", etc. When we now say, "he has a house of his own", no one ever thinks of this as meaning "he has one of his own houses", so that the meaning of the idiom has changed completely — a phenomenon of very frequent occurrence in the history of all languages.

185. In the nominative plural the Old English declensions present the same motley spectacle as the genitive singular. Most masculines have the ending *as*, but some have *e* (Engle, etc.), some *a* (suna, etc.) and a great many *an* (guman, etc); some nouns have no ending at all, and most of these change the vowel of the kernel (fet, etc.), while a few have the plural exactly like the singular (hettend). Feminine words formed their plural in *a* (giefa), in *e* (bene), in *an* (tungan) or without any ending (sweostor; with mutation bec). Neuters had either no ending (word) or else *u* (hofu) or *an* (eagan). From the oldest period the ending *as* (later *es*, *s*) has been continually gaining ground, first among those masculines that belonged to other declensional classes, later on also in the other genders. The *an*-ending, which was common to a very great number of substantives from the very beginning,

also showed great powers of expansion and at one time seemed as likely as *(e)s* to become the universal plural ending. But finally *(e)s* carried the day, probably because it was the most distinctive ending.[1] In the beginning of the modern period *eyen*, *shoon*, and *hosen*, *housen*, *peasen* still existed, but they were doomed to destruction, and now *oxen* is the only real plural in *n* surviving, for *children* as well as the biblical *kine* and *brethren* are too irregular to count as plurals made by the addition of *n*. The mutation plural has survived in some words whose signification causes the plural to occur more frequently than, or at least as frequently as, the singular: *geese*, *teeth*, *feet*, *mice*, *lice*, *men* and *women*. In all other words the analogy of the plurals in *s* was too strong for the old form to be preserved.

186. Instead of the ending *-ses* we often find singly *s*; in some cases this may be the continued use of the French plural form without any ending (*cas* sg. and pl.), as in *sense* (their sense are shut, Sh.), *corpse* (pl. Sh.) etc. In Coriolanus III. 1. 118 *voyce* and *voyces* occur, both of them to be read as one syllable: "Why shall the people give One that speakes thus, their voyce? — Ile give my reasons, More worthier than their voyces. They know the corne." But when Shakespeare uses *princesse*, *balance*, or *merchandize* as plurals (Tp. I. 2 173; Merch. IV. 1. 255; Ant. II. 5. 104), the forms admit of no other explanation than that of haplology (pronouncing the same sound once instead of twice). Thus also in the genitive case: "his mistresse eye-brow" (As II. 7. 149), "your Highness' pleasure", etc. Now it is more usual to give the full form *mistress's*, etc., yet in *Pears' soap* the juxtaposition of three *s*'es is avoided by means of the apostrophized form. The genitive of the plural is now always haplo-

1 Progress in Language, p. 178 ff.

logized: "the Poets' Corner", except in some dialects: "other folks's children" (George Eliot), "the bairns's clease" (Murray, Dial. of Scotl. 164). Wallis (1653) expressly states that the gen. pl. in *the Lords' House* (by him written *Lord's*) stands instead of *the Lords's House* (duo *s* in unum coincidunt). A phenomenon of the same order is the omission of the genitive sign before a word beginning with *s*, now chiefly before *sake*: for fashion sake, etc.

187. Sometimes an *s* belonging to the stem of the word is taken by the popular instinct to be a plural ending. Thus in *alms*, (ME. *almesse*, *elmesse*, pl. *almesses;* OE. *ælmesse* from Gr. *eleemosune*); it is significant that the word is very often found in connections where it is impossible from the context to discover whether a singular or a plural is intended (ask alms, give alms, etc.). In the Authorized Version the word occurs eleven times, but eight of these are ambiguous, two are clearly singular (asked an almes, gave much almes) and one is probably plural (Thy praiers and thine almes are come up). Nowadays the association between the *s* of the *alms* and the plural ending has become so firm that *an alms* is said and written very rarely indeed, though it is found in Tennyson's Enoch Arden. *Riches* is another case in point; Chaucer still lays the stress on the second syllable (*richesse* as in French) and uses the plural *richesses*; but as subsequently the final *e* disappeared, and as the word occurred very often in such a way that the context does not show its number ("Thou bearst thy heavie riches but a journie", Sh. Meas. III. 1. 27; thus in fourteen out of the 24 places where Shakespeare uses it), it is no wonder that the form was generally conceived as a plural, thus "riches are a power" (Ruskin). The singular use (the riches of the ship is come on shore, Sh. Oth. II. 1. 83,

too much riches, R 2 III. 4. 60) is now wholly obsolete.

188. A further step is taken in those words that lose the *s* originally belonging to their stem, because it is mistakenly apprehended as the sign of plural.[1] Latin *pisum* became in OE. *pise*, in ME. *pese*, pl. *pesen*; Butler (1633) still gives *peas* as sg. and *peasen* as pl., but he adds, "the singular is most used for the plural: as . . a peck of peas; though the Londoners seem to make it a regular plural, calling a *peas* a *pea*". In compounds like *peaseblossom*, *peaseporridge* and *pease-soup* (Swift, Ch. Lamb) the old form was preserved long after *pea* had become the recognized singular. Similarly *a cherry* was evolved from a form in *s* (French *cerise*), *a riddle* from *riddles*; *an eaves* (OE. *efes*, cf. Got. *ubizwa*, ON. *ups*) is often made *an eave*, and vulgarly *a pony shay* is said for *chaise*; compare also Bret Harte's "heathen *Chinee*" and the parallel forms *a Portuguee*, *a Maltee*. An interesting case in point is *Yankee*, according to the highly probable explanation recently set forth by H. Logeman. The term was originally applied to the inhabitants of the Dutch colonies in North America (New Amsterdam, now New York, etc.). Now *Jan Kees* is a nickname still applied in Flanders to people from Holland proper. *Jan* of course is the common Dutch name corresponding to English John, and *Kees* may be either the usual pet-form of the name Cornelis, another Christian name typical of the Dutch, or else a dialectal variation of *kaas* 'cheese' in allusion to that typically Dutch product, or — what is most probable — a combination of both. *Jankees* in English pronunciation became *Yankees*, where the *s* was taken as the plural ending and eventually disappeared,

1 Cf. the other back-formations mentioned above, § 173. Other instances will be found in the paper there quoted.

and *Yankee* became the designation of any inhabitant of New England and even sometimes of the whole of the United States.

189. We have a different class of back-formations in those cases in which the *s* that is subtracted is really the plural ending, while one part of the word is retained which is logically consistent with the plural idea only. It is easily conceivable that most people ignorant of the fact that the first syllable of *cinque-ports* means 'five', have no hesitation in speaking of Hastings as a *cinque-port*; but it is more difficult to see how the signification of the numeral in *ninepins* should be forgotten, and yet sometimes each of the "pins" used in that play is called *a ninepin* and Gosse writes "the author sets up his four ninepins".

190. In some words the *s* of the plural has become fixed, as if it belonged to the singular, thus in *means*. As is shown by the pun in Shakespeare's Romeo "no sudden meane of death, though nere so meane" the old form was still understood in his time, but the modern form too is used by him (*by that meanes*, Merch.; *a means*, Wint.) Similarly: *too much pains*, *an honourable amends*, *a shambles*, *an innings*, etc., sometimes *a scissors*, *a tweezers*, *a barracks*, *a golf links*, etc., where the logical idea of a single action or thing has proved stronger than the original grammar.

191. It is not, however, till a new plural has been formed on such a form that the transformation from plural to singular has been completed. This phenomenon, which might be termed plural raised to the second power, will naturally occur with greater facility when the original singular is not in use or when the manner of forming the plural is no longer perspicuous. Thus OE. *broc* formed its plural *brec* (cf. *gos ges* goose geese), but *broc* became obsolete, and *brec*, *breech* was free to become

a singular and to form a new plural *breeches*. Similarly *invoices, quinces, bodices* and a few others have a double plural ending; but then the unusual sound of the first ending (voiceless *s*, where the ordinary ending is voiced, as in *joys, sins*) facilitated the forgetting of the original function of the *s* (written *-ce*). *Bodice* is really nothing but a by-form of *bodies*. The old pronunciation of *bellows* and *gallows* had also a voiceless *s*, which helps to explain the vulgar plurals *bellowses* and *gallowses*. But in the occasional plural *mewses* (from *a mews*, orig. *a mue*) the new ending has been added in spite of the first *s* being voiced. These plurals raised to the second power, to which must be added *sixpences, threepences*, etc., are particularly interesting because there really are cases where the want is felt of expressing the plural of something which is in itself plural, either formally or logically; cf. *many* (*pairs of*) *scissors*. Generally one plural ending only is used[1], but occasionally the logically correct double ending is resorted to, especially among uneducated persons; Thackeray makes his flunkey write: "there was 8 sets of chamberses" (Yellowplush Papers, p. 39), and a London schoolboy[2] once wrote: "cats have clawses" (one cat has claws!) and again "cats have 9 liveses" (each cat has nine lives!). Dr. Murray[3] mentions a double plural sometimes formed in Scotch dialect from such words as *schuin* (one person's shoes), *feit* 'feet' and *kye* 'cows', *schuins* meaning more than one pair of shoes, and he ingeniously suggests that this may illustrate such plurals as *children, brethren, kine*; the original plurals

1 "Then ensued one of the most lively ten minutes that I can remember" (Conan Doyle), plural of "one ten minutes".

2 *Very Original English*, ed. by Barker (London 1889), p. 71.

3 Dialect of the Southern Countries of Scotland (London 1873) p. 161.

were *childer*, *brether*, *ky* (still preserved in the northern dialect), which may have "come to be used collectively for the offspring or members of a single family, the herd of a single owner, so that a second plural inflection became necessary to express the *brethren* and *children* of many families, the *ky-en* of many owners . . . In modern English we restrict *brothers*, which replaces *brether*, to those of one family, using *brethren* for those who call each other *brother*, though of different families."

192. Most of the words that make their plural like the singular are old neuters, the *s*-ending belonging originally to masculines only and having gradually only been extended to the other two genders; thus *swine*, *deer*, *sheep*. But as the unchanged plurals were used chiefly in a collective sense, a difference sprang up between a collective plural (unchanged) and an individual plural (in *-s*), as seen most clearly in Shakespeare's "Shee hath more *haire* then wit, and more faults then *hairs*" (Gent. III. 1. 362) and Milton's "which thou from Heaven Feigndst at thy birth was giv'n thee in thy *hair*, Where strength can least abide, though all thy *hairs* Were bristles" (Sams. Ag. 1136). This difference was transferred to some old masculines, like *fish*, *fowl*; and a great many names of particular fishes and birds, especially those generally hunted and used for food, are now often unchanged in the plural (*snipe*, *plover*, *trout*, *salmon*, etc.), though with a great deal of vacillation. It is also noticeable that *much fruit* = *many fruits* and *much coal* = *many coals*. When we say "four *hundred* men", but "*hundreds* of men", "two *dozen* collars", but "*dozens* of collars" and similarly with *couple*, *pair*, *score* and some other words, we have an approach to the rule prevailing in many languages, *e. g.* Magyar, where the plural ending is not added after a numeral, because that suffices in itself to show that a plural is intended.

193. (II) We proceed to that verbal ending which is now identical in form with the ordinary genitival and plural ending in the nouns, namely *s* (he loves, etc.). In Old-English *-th* (þ) was used in the ending of the third person singular and in all persons in the plural of the present indicative, but the vowel before it varied, so that we have for instance

infinitive	*3d sg.*	*pl.*
sprecan	spricþ	sprecaþ
bindan	bindeþ, bint	bindaþ
nerian	nereþ	neriaþ
lufian	lufaþ	lufiaþ.

But in the Northumbrian dialect of the tenth century *s* was substituted to þ (singular *bindes*, plural *bindas*), and as all unstressed vowels were soon after levelled, the two forms became identical (*bindes*). As in the same dialect the second person singular too ended in *s* (as against the *-st* of the South), all persons sounded alike except the first singular. But the development was not to stop there. In Old English a difference is made in the plural, according as the verb precedes *we* or *ge* ('ye') or not (*binde we*, *binde ge*, but *we bindaþ*, *ge bindaþ*). This is the germ of the more radical difference now carried through consistently in the Scotch dialect, where the *s* is only added when the verb is not accompanied by its proper pronoun, — but in that case it is used in all persons. Dr. Murray gives the following sentences among others[1]:

1 Dial. of the Southern Countries of Scotland, 1873, p. 212, where quotations from the earlier literature are also given.

aa *cum* fyrst — yt's mey at *cums* fyrst.
wey *gang* theare — huz tweae quheyles *gangs* theare.
they *cum* an' *teake* them — the burds *cums* an' *pæcks* them.
(I come first; it is I that come first; we go there; we two sometimes go there; they come and take them; the birds come and pick them).

In the other parts of the country the development was different. In the Midland dialect the *-en* of the subjunctive and of the past tense was transferred to the present of the indicative, so that we have the following forms in the standard language

14th century	*16th cent.*
I falle	I fall
he falleth	he fall(e)th
we fallen (falle)	we fall.

This is the only dialect in which the third person singular is kept clearly distinct from the other persons.

In the South of England, finally, the *th* was preserved in the plural, and was even extended to the first person singular. Old people in the hilly parts of Somersetshire and Devonshire still say not only [i wo·kþ] 'he walks', but also [ðei zeþ, ai zeþ] 'they say, I say'. In most cases, however, *do* is used, which is made [də] without any *th* through the whole singular as well as plural.[1]

194. But the northern *s*'es wandered southward. A solitary precursor is found in Chaucer, who writes once *telles* instead of the usual *telleth* for the sake of the rhyme (:elles, Duchesse 73).[2] A century later Caxton

1 Elworthy, Grammar of the Dialect of West Somerset, p. 191 ff.

2 In the Reves Tale the *s*-forms are used to characterize the North of England dialect of the two students (*gas* for Chaucer's ordinary *gooth,* etc.)

used the *th*-ending (eth, ith, yth) exclusively, and this remained the usual practice till late in the 16th century, when *s* was first introduced by the poets. In Marlowe *s* is by far the commoner ending, except after hissing consonants (passeth, opposeth, pitcheth, presageth, etc., Tamburlaine 68, 845, 1415, 1622). Spenser prefers *s* in poetry. In the first four cantos of the *Faerie Queene* I have counted 94 *s*'es as against 24 *th*'s (besides 8 *has*, 18 *hath*, 15 *does*, and 31 *doth*). But in his prose *th* predominates even much more than *s* does in his poetry. In the introductory letter to Sir W. Raleigh there is only one *s* (it needs), but many *th*'s; and in his book on "the Present State of Ireland" all the third persons singular end in *th*, except a small number of phrases (*me seems*, several times, but *it seemeth; what boots it; how comes it*, and perhaps a few more) that seem to be characteristic of a more colloquial tone than the rest of the book. Shakespeare's practice is not easy to ascertain. In a great many passages the folio of 1623 has *th* where the earlier quartos have *s*. In the prose parts of his dramas *s* prevails[1], and the rule may be laid down that *th* belongs more to the solemn or dignified speeches than to everyday talk, although this is by no means carried through everywhere. In Macbeth I. 7. 29 ff. Lady Macbeth is more matter-of-fact than her husband (Lady: He *has* almost supt .... Macb.: *Hath* he ask'd for me? Lady: Know you not he *ha's*. Macb. .... He *hath* honour'd me of late ....), but when his more solemn mood seizes her, she too puts on the buskin (Was the hope drunke, Wherein you drest your selfe?

1 Franz, *Shakespeare-Grammatik*, p. 2: In Much Ado (Q 1600) *th* is not found at all in the prose parts and only twice in the poetical parts; the Merry Wives, which is chiefly in prose, has only one *th*.

Hath it slept since?). — Where Mercutio mocks Romeo's love-sickness (II. 1. 15), he has the line: He *heareth* not, he *stirreth* not, he *moveth* not, but in his famous description of Queen Mab (I. 4. 53 ff.) he has 18 verbs in *s* and only two in *th*, *hath* and *driveth*, of which the latter is used for the sake of the metre.

195. Contemporary prose has nearly exclusively *th*; the *s*-ending is not at all found in the Authorized Version of 1611, nor in Bacon's *Atlantis* (though in his *Essays* there are some *s*'es), and the conclusion with regard to Elizabethan usage as a whole seems to be that the form in *s* was a colloquialism and as such was allowed in poetry and especially in the drama. This *s* must, however, be considered a poetical licence wherever it occurs in that period. But in the first half of the seventeenth century *s* must have been the ending universally used in ordinary conversation, and we have evidence that it was even usual to read *s* where the book had *th*, for Rich. Hodges (1643) gives in his list of words pronounced alike though spelt differently among others *boughs boweth bowze; clause claweth claws; courses courseth corpses; choose cheweth*[1], and in 1649 he says "howsoever wee write them thus, leadeth it, maketh it, noteth it, we say lead's it, make's it, note's it." The only exceptions seem to have been *hath* and *doth*, where the frequency of occurrence protected the old forms from being modified analogically[2], so that they were prevalent till about the middle of the eighteenth century. Milton, with the exceptions just mentioned, always writes *s* in his prose as well as in his poetry, and so does Pope. No difference was then felt to be necessary between even the most elevated poetry and ordinary

1 See Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, 1018.

2 This applies, partially at least, to *saith* as well.

conversation in that respect. But it is well worth noting that Swift, in the Introduction to his "Polite Conversation", where he affects a quasi scientific tone, writes *hath* and *doth*, while in the conversations themselves *has* and *does* are the forms constantly used.[1]

196. At church, however, people went on hearing the *th*-forms, although even there the *s*'es began to creep in.[2] And it must certainly be ascribed to influence from biblical language that the *th*-forms began again to be used by poets towards the end of the eighteenth century; at first this was apparently done rather sparingly, but nineteenth century poets employ *th* to a greater extent. This revival of the old form affords the advantage from the poet's point of view of adding at discretion a syllable, as in Wordsworth's

In gratitude to God, Who *feeds* our hearts
For His own service; *knoweth*, *loveth* us (Prelude 13. 276)

or in Byron's

Whate'er she *loveth*, so she *loves* thee not,
What can it profit thee? (Heaven and Earth I sc. 2).

Sometimes the *th*-form comes more handy for the rhyme (as when *saith* rhymes with *death*), and sometimes the following sound may have induced a poet to prefer one or the other ending, as in

. . . . . Coleridge *hath the* sway,
And Wordsworth *has supporters*, two or three[3]

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1 In the *Journal to Stella* all verbs have *s*, except *hath*, which is, however, less common than *has*.

2 See the Spectator, no. 147 (Morley's ed. p. 217) "a set of readers [of prayers at church] who affect, forsooth, a certain gentleman-like familiarity of tone, and mend the language as they go on, crying instead of pardoneth and absolveth, pardons and absolves."

3 *Don Juan* XI. 69.

but in a great many cases individual fancy only decides which form is chosen. In prose, too, the *th*-form begins to make its re-appearance in the nineteenth century, not only in biblical quotations, etc., but often with the sole view of imparting a more solemn tone to the style, as in Thackeray's "Not always *doth* the writer know whither the divine Muse *leadeth* him." Some recent novelists affect this archaic trick *usque ad nauseam*.

197. The nineteenth century has even gone so far as to create a double-form in one verb, making a distinction between *doth* [pronounced dʌþ] as an auxiliary verb and *doeth* [pronounced du·iþ] as an independent one. The early printers used the two forms indiscriminately, or rather preferred *doth* where *doeth* would make the line appear too closely packed, and *doeth* where there was room enough. Thus in the Authorized Version of 1611 we find "a henne *doeth* gather her brood under her wings" (Luke XIII. 34) and "he that *doth* the will of my father" (Matth. VII. 21), where recent use would have reversed the order of the forms, but in "whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and *doeth* them" (Matth. VII. 24) the old printer happens to be in accordance with the rule of our own days. When the *th*-form was really living, *doeth* was certainly always pronounced in one syllable (thus in Shakespeare). I give a few examples of the modern differentiation.[1] J. R. Lowell writes (My Love, Poems 1849, I 129 = Poetical Works in one volume p. 6) "She *doeth* little kindnesses . . . Her life *doth* rightly harmonize . . . And yet *doth* ever flow aright." Rider Haggard has both forms in the same sentence (She 199) "Man *doeth* this and

1 Which has not been noticed in Murray's Dictionary, though he mentions the corresponding difference between *dost* and *doest* as 'in late use'.

doeth that, but he knows not to what ends his sense *doth* prompt him"; cf. also Tennyson's *The Captain*: "He that only rules by terror, *Doeth* grievous wrong."

198. To sum up. If the *s* of the third person singular comes from the North, this is true of the outer form only; the 'inner form', to use the expression of some German philologists, is the Midland one, that is to say, *s* is used in those cases only where the Midland dialects had *th*, and is not extended according to the northern rules. In vulgar English of the last two centuries *s* has been used in the first person singular: *I wishes*; *says I*, etc. The oldest instance I have noted is from the Rehearsal (1671): "I makes 'em both speak fresh" (Arber's reprint, p. 53). But it will be seen that this is in direct opposition to the northern usage where the *s* is never found by the side of the personal pronoun.[1]

199. (III. The ending *th* in ordinals). While the cardinal numerals show very little change during the whole life of the language except what is a consequence of ordinary phonetic development[2], the ordinals have been much more changed so that their formation is now completely regular, with the exception of the first three. *First* has ousted the old *forma* (corresponding to Latin *primus*), and the French *second* has been called in to relieve *other* of one of its significations, so that a useful

1 I leave out of consideration the occasional Shakespearian *s* in the plural of the verb as too dubious to be treated in a work of this character.

2 Note that in Old and Middle English the cardinals had an *-e* when used absolutely (*fif* men; they were *five*), and that it is this form that has prevailed. If the old conjoint form had survived, *five*, and *twelve* would have ended in *f*, and *seven, nine, ten* and *eleven* would have had no *-n*.

distinction has been created between the definite and the indefinite numeral, the want of which is often felt in those languages (Danish, German, etc.) which like Old English use the same word for both. As for the numbers from 4 upwards, the regularization has affected both the stem and the ending of the numeral. In Old English the *n* had disappeared from *seofoða*, *nigoða* and *teoða* (*feowerteoða*, etc.), but now it has been analogically reintroduced: *seventh*, *ninth*, *tenth* (*fourteenth*, etc.), the only survival of the older forms being *tithe*, which is now a substantive differentiated from the numeral, as seen particularly clearly in the phrase "a tenth part of the tithe" (Auth. Version, Num. 18. 26). In *twelfth* and *fifth* we have the insignificant anomaly of *f* (which in the former is often mute) instead of *v*, and the consonant-group in the latter has shortened the vowel, but elsewhere there is complete correspondence between each cardinal and its ordinal. As for the ending, it used according to a well-known phonetic rule to be *-ta* (later *-te*, *t*) after voiceless open consonants, thus *fifta fift*, *sixta sixt*, *twelfta twelft*; and these are still the only forms in Shakespeare (Henry the Fift, etc.)[1] and Milton. The regular forms in *th* evidently were used in writing before they became prevalent in speaking, for Schade in 1765 laid down the rule that *th* was to be pronounced *t* in *twelfth* and *fifth*. *Eighth*, which would be more adequately written *eightth*, is also a modern form; the old editions of Shakespeare have *eight*. The formation in *-th*, which is now beautifully regular, has also been extended in recent times to a few substantives: *the hundredth*, *thousandth*, *millionth*, and *dozenth*.

1 *Twelfth Night* is in the folio of 1623 called *Twelfe Night* and similarly we have *twelfe day*, where the middle consonant of a difficult group has been discarded, just as in *the thousand part* (As IV. 1. 46).

200. (IV) The history of the forms in *ing* is certainly one of the most interesting examples of the growth from a very small beginning of something very important in the economy of the language. The 'ing', as I shall for shortness call the form with that ending, began as a pure noun[1], restricted as to the number of words from which it might be formed and restricted as to its syntactical functions. It seems to have been originally possible to form it only from nouns, cf. modern words like *schooling*, *shirting*, *stabling*; as some of the nouns from which ings were derived, had corresponding weak verbs, the ings came to be looked upon as derived from these verbs, and new ings were made from other weak verbs. (Also from French verbs, cf. above § 106.) But it was a long time before ings were made from strong verbs; a few occur in the very last decades of the Old English period, but most of them did not creep into existence till the twelfth or thirteenth century or even later, and it is not, perhaps, till the beginning of the fifteenth century that the formation had taken such a firm root in the language that an ing could be formed unhesitatingly from any verb whatever (apart from the auxiliaries *can*, *may*, *shall*, *need*, etc., which have no ings).

201. With regard to its syntactical use the old ing was a noun and was restricted to the functions it shared with all other nouns. While keeping all its substantival qualities, it has since gradually acquired most of the functions belonging to a verb. It was, and is, inflected like a noun; now the genitive case is rare and scarcely occurs outside of such phrases as "reading for reading's sake"; but the plural is common: his comings and

1 The Old English ending was *ung* as well as *ing*.

goings; feelings, drawings, leavings, weddings, etc. Like any other noun it can have the definite or indefinite article and an adjective before it: a beginning, the beginning, a good beginning, etc., so also a genitive: Tom's savings. It can enter into a compound noun either as the first or as the second part: a walking-stick; sight-seeing. The ing can be used in a sentence in every position occupied by an ordinary noun. It is the subject and the predicative nominative in "complimenting is lying", the object in "I hate lying"; it is governed by an adjective in "worth knowing", and governed by a preposition in "before answering", etc. But we shall now see how several of the peculiar functions of verbs are extended to the ing. The coalescence in form of the verbal noun and of the present participle is, of course, one of the chief factors of this development.

202. When the ing was a pure noun the object of the action it indicated could be expressed in one of three ways: it might be put in the genitive case ("sio feding þara sceapa", the feeding of the sheep, Alfred), or it might form the first part of a compound (bloodletting) or — the usual construction in Middle English — it might be added after *of* (in magnifying of his name, Chaucer). The first of these constructions has died out; the last is in our days especially frequent after the article (since the telling of those little fibs, Thackeray). But from the fourteenth century we find a growing tendency to treat the ing like a form of the verb and, accordingly, to put the object in the accusative case. Chaucer's words "in getinge of your richesses and in usinge hem" (B 2813) show both constructions in juxtaposition; so also "Thou art so fat-witted with drinking of olde sacke, and unbuttoning thee after supper" (Henry IV, A. I. 2. 2). Chaucer's "In liftinge up his hevy dronken cors" (H 67) shows a double deviation from the old

substantival construction, for an ordinary noun cannot in this way be followed by an adverb, and in the old language the adverb was joined to the ing in a different way (up-lifting, in-coming, down-going). In course of time it became more and more usual to join any kind of adverbs to the ing, *e. g.* "a man shal not wyth *ones* [once] over redyng fynde the ryght understandyng" (Caxton), "he proposed our *immediately* drinking a bottle together" (Fielding), "nothing distinguishes great men from inferior men more than their *always*, whether in life or in art, knowing the ways things are going" (Ruskin).

203. A noun does not admit of any indication of time; *his movement* may correspond in meaning to "he moves (is moving)", "he moved (was moving)", or "he will move." Similarly the ing had originally, and to a great extent still has, no reference to time: "on account of his coming" may be equal to "because he comes" or "because he came" or "he will come", according to the connection in which it occurs. "I intend seeing the king" refers to the future, "I remember seeing the king" to the past, or rather the ing as such implies neither of these tenses. But since the end of the sixteenth century the ing has still further approximated to the character of a verb by developing a composite perfect. Shakespeare, who uses the new tense in a few places, *e. g.* Gent. I. 3. 16 ("To let him spend his time no more at home; Which would be great impeachment to his age, In *having knowne* no travaile in his youth") does not always use it where it would be used now; for in "Give orders to my servants that they take No note at all of our *being* absent hence" *being* corresponds in meaning to *having been*, as shown by the context (Merch. of Ven. V. 120). — Like other nouns the ing was also at first incapable of expressing the verbal distinction between the active and the passive voice.

The simple ing is still often neutral in this respect, and in some connections assumes a passive meaning, as in "it wants mending", "the story lost much in the telling". This is extremely frequent in old authors, e. g. "Use everie man after his desart, and who should scape whipping" (Hamlet II. 2. 554), "Shall we . . . excuse his throwing into the water?" (Wiv. III. 3. 206 = his being, or having been, thrown), "An instrument of this your calling backe" (Oth. IV. 2. 45). But about 1600 a new form came into existence, as the old one would often appear ambiguous, and it was felt convenient to be able to distinguish between "foxes enjoy hunting" and "foxes enjoy being hunted". The new passive is rare in Shakespeare ("I spoke . . . of being taken by the insolent foe", Oth. I. 3. 136), but has now for a long time been firmly established in the language.

204. The last step in this long development of a form at first purely substantival to one partly substantival and partly verbal in function was taken about two hundred years ago. The subject of the ing, like that of any verbal noun (for instance *Cæsar's* conquests, *Pope's* imitations of Horace) is for the most part put in the genitive case — nearly always when it is a personal pronoun (in spite of *his* saying so), and generally when it indicates a person (in spite of *John's* saying so). But a variety of circumstances led to the adoption in many instances of a new construction, which is wrongly taken by most grammarians as containing the present participle and not the 'gerund'. I shall give elsewhere my reasons for not accepting that view and here content myself with quoting a few instances of the new construction out of several hundreds which I have collected: "When we talk of this man or that woman being no longer the same person" (Thackeray), "besides the fact of those three being there, the drawbridge is kept up" (Anth. Hope),

"When I think of this being the last time of seeing you" (Miss Austen), "the possibility of such an effect being wrought by such a cause" (Dickens), "he insisted upon the Chamber carrying out his policy" (Lecky), "I have not the least objection in life to a rogue being hung" (Thackeray; here evidently no participle), "no man ever heard of opium leading into delirium tremens" (De Quincey), "the suffering arises simply from people not understanding this truism" (Ruskin). These examples will show that the construction is especially useful in those cases where from some reason or other it is impossible to use the genitive case, but that it is also found where no such reason could be adduced. Let me sum up by saying that when an Englishman now says "There is some probability of the place having never been inspected by the police" he deviates in four points from the constructions of the ing that would have been possible to one of his ancestors six hundred years ago: *place* is in the crude form, not in the genitive; the adverb; the perfect; and the passive. Thanks to these extensions the ing has clearly become a most valuable means of expressing tersely and neatly relations that must else have been indicated by clumsy dependent clauses.

205. (V. Disappearance of the old word-gender). Anyone acquainted with the intricacies of gender in modern German will feel how much English gained when inanimate objects ceased to be referred to one or other of the three gender-classes. The distinction has been kept up only in the pronouns, and there it has been made more rational, since *he* is now applied only to male, and *she* only to female, living beings, whereas in Old English *he* was used in speaking of a

great many things that had nothing masculine in their actual nature (e. g. horn, ende 'end', ebba 'ebb', dæg 'day') and the feminine pronoun (heo) in regard to many which in their nature were not feminine (e. g. sorh 'sorrow', glof 'glove', plume 'plum', pipe). The distinction between animate and inanimate is therefore much more accentuated than it used to be, and this has led to some other changes, of which the two most important are the creation (about 1600) of the form *its* (before that time *his* was neuter as well as masculine) and the restriction of the relative pronoun *which* to things: its old use alike for persons and things is seen in "Our father *which* art in Heaven".

206. (VI) A notable feature of the history of the English language is the building up of a rich system of tenses on the basis of the few possessed by Old English, where the present was also a sort of vague future, and where the simple past was often employed as a kind of pluperfect, especially when supported by *ær* 'ere, before'. The use of *have* as an auxiliary for the perfect (have) and pluperfect (had) began in the Old English period, but it was then only found with transitive verbs, and the real perfect-signification had scarcely yet been completely evolved from the original meaning of the connection: *ic hæbbe þone fisc gefangenne* meant at first 'I *have* the fish (as) caught' (note the accusative ending in the participle). By and by a distinction was made between 'I had mended the table' and 'I had the table mended', 'he had left nothing' and 'he had nothing left'. In Middle English *have* came to be used in the perfect of intransitive verbs as well as transitive; *I have been* does not seem to occur earlier than 1200. With such verbs as *go* and *come*, *I am*

was used in the perfect for several centuries, and *I have gone* and *I have come* are recent formations. The use of *will* and *shall* as signs of the future gradually developed from the original meaning of 'will' and 'obligation'. The periphrastic tenses *I am reading*, *I was reading*, *I have been reading*, *I shall be reading*, etc. were not fully developed even in Shakespeare's time and seem to have little, if anything, to do with the Old English *he wæs feohtende* 'he used to fight'; the modern forms are aphetic for *I am a-reading*, where *a* represents the preposition *on* and the form in *ing* is not the participle, but the noun. The extension of the construction to the passive (the house is being built) is an innovation dating from the end of the eighteenth century. According to Fitzedward Hall the oldest example known is found in a letter from Southey (1795). Before that time the phrase was *the house is building*, *i. e. is a-building* 'is in construction', and the new phrase had to fight its way against much violent opposition in the nineteenth century before it was universally recognized as good English. — While the number of tenses has been increased, the number of moods has tended to diminish, the subjunctive having now very little vital power left. Most of its forms have become indistinguishable from those of the indicative, but the loss is not a serious one, for the thought is just as clearly expressed in "if he died", where *died* may be either indicative or subjunctive, as in "if he were dead", where the verb has a distinctively subjunctive form. The verbal system has undergone one more important change by the extensive use of *do* as an auxiliary, especially in negative and interrogative sentences. This use was not regularized in the modern way till the eighteenth century.

207. (VII) The regularization of the word order (cf. § 14) has been very useful in bringing about clearness in sentence-construction, and has at the same time facilitated many of the simplifications which have taken place in the form system and which would otherwise have been attended by numerous ambiguities.[1]

208. (VIII) The pronominal system has been reinforced by some new applications of old material. *Who* and *which*, originally interrogative pronouns only, are now used also as relatives. *Self* has entered into the compounds *myself*, *himself*, etc., and has developed a plural, *ourselves*, *themselves*, which was new in the beginning of the sixteenth century. With regard to the use of these *self*-forms it may be remarked that their frequency first increased and then in certain cases decreased again: *he dressed him* became *he dressed himself* and this is now giving way to *he dressed*. *One* has come to serve several purposes; as an indefinite pronoun (in "one never can tell") it dates from the fifteenth century, and as a prop-word ("a little one", "the little ones") the full modern usage goes back only to the sixteenth century.

209. (IX) New conjunctions have come into existence such as *supposing* (supposing he comes, what am I to do?), *provided* (I have no objection, provided the benefit is mutual), *in case* (have it ready, in case she should send for it, Swift), *for fear* (they were obliged to drive very fast, for fear they should be too late, Dickens), *grant that* (Grant that one has good food . . . is that all the

1 Cf. Progress in Language p. 89ff.

pay one ought to have for one's work? Ruskin), *like* (through which they put their heads, like the Guachos do through their cloaks, Darwin), *directly* (Oh! yes, yes, said Kate, directly the whole figure of the singular visitor appeared, Dickens), *once* (once that decision was taken his imagination became riotous, H. G. Wells; once you are married, there is nothing left for you, not even suicide, but to be good, R. L. Stevenson, Virg. Puerisque 34). It is evident that all these new conjunctions serve to vary the modes of joining sentences together and express *nuances* that the old *if*, *when*, etc., cannot render in so vivid a way; but I am bound to admit that a great many Englishmen object to some of them, especially *like* and *once*.

210. (X) The manner in which compound nouns are built up has been modified. In compounds of the old type the close combination of both nouns is shown by the accentual subordination of the second element, cf. *housekeeper*, *godson*, *footstep*, *leapyear*; and very often one part, or both, may be phonetically changed, sometimes even past recognition, cf. *postman*, *waistcoat*, *husband*, *hussy* (= housewife). But in recent times a new type has sprung up in which the second part is not thus accentually subordinated to the first, but is stressed at least nearly as much as, and sometimes even more than the first component. Examples are *snow ball*, *tooth brush*, *lead pencil*, *headmaster*. Each part thus is more independent of the other than in the old type, and as an adjective is now just as uninflected as a noun forming the first part of a compound, the combinations adjective + noun and noun + noun are felt to be nearly equivalent. This has in recent times led to some curious consequences, some examples of which may be here given. We see

coordination with a true adjective in "the sepulcher Hath op'd his ponderous and *marble* jawes" (Hamlet), "with thin and *rainbow* wings" (Tennyson), and still more in "*home* and foreign affairs", "on some *Cumberland* or other affair" (Carlyle), and in "a *school* Latin dictionary", "an *evening* radical paper". The use of the prop-word *one* is interesting: "This umbrella, said Mr. L., producing a fat green *cotton* one" (Dickens), "most of the mountain flowers being lovelier than the *lowland* ones" (Ruskin). So is the use of a qualifying adverb in "from a too exclusively *London* standpoint", "in purely *Government* work" (Lecky), "the most *everyday* occurrences" (Dobson). Thus nouns in composition are assuming more and more of the properties of the adjectives, and some, as a matter of fact, have already become adjectives so completely that they are recognized as such by all grammarians: *bridal* (originally *brid-ealu* 'bride-ale') and *dainty* (Old French daintie 'a delicacy', from Latin dignitatem), both assisted by their seemingly adjectival endings, further *cheap*, *chief*, *choice*, etc.

211. (XI) There are some important innovations in the syntax of the infinitive. Such sentences as "I don't know what is worse than *for such wicked strumpets to lay* their sins at honest men's doors" (Fielding) would be sought in vain before the eighteenth century, though the way was paved for them in Shakespearian sentences like "For us to levy power Proportionate to th'enemy, is all impossible". The noun (pronoun) with *for* was originally in the closest connection with the adjective in "it is impossible for us | to levy", but by a natural shifting this came to be apprehended as "it is impossible | for us to levy", so that *for us* was felt to be the subject of the

infinitive, and this manner of indicating the subject is now often employed where the original construction is excluded. Thus, "What I like best, is for a nobleman to marry a miller's daughter. And what I like next best, is for a poor fellow to run away with a rich girl" (Thackeray), "it is of great use to healthy women for them to cycle". Another recent innovation is the use of *to* as what might be called a pro-infinitive instead of the clumsy *to do so*: "Will you play". "Yes, I intend to". "I am going to". This is one among several indications that the linguistic instinct now takes *to* to belong to the preceding verb rather than to the infinitive, a fact which explains the phenomenon usually mistermed 'the split infinitive'. This name is bad because we have many infinitives without *to*, as "I made him go". *To* therefore is no more an essential part of an infinitive than the definite article is an essential part of a nominative, and no one would think of calling "the good man" a split nominative. Although examples of an adverb between *to* and the infinitive occur as early as the fourteenth century, they do not become very frequent till the latter half of the nineteenth century. In some cases they decidedly contribute to the clearness of the sentence by showing at once what word is qualified by the adverb. Thackeray's and Seeley's sentences "she only wanted a pipe in her mouth *considerably* to resemble the late Field Marshal" and "the poverty of the nation did not allow them *successfully* to compete with the other nations" are not very happily built up, for the reader at the first glance is inclined to connect the adverb with what precedes. The sentences would have been clearer if the authors had ventured to place *to* before the adverb, as Burns does in "Who dar'd to nobly stem tyrannic pride", and Carlyle in "new Emissaries are trained, with new

tactics, to, if possible, entrap him, and hoodwink and handcuff him".

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212. This rapid sketch of grammatical changes, though necessarily giving only a fraction of the material on which it is based, has yet, I hope, been sufficiently full to show that such changes are continually going on and that it would be a gross error to suppose that any deviation from the established rules of grammar is necessarily a corruption. Those teachers who know least of the age, origin, and development of the rules they follow, are generally the most apt to think that whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil, while he who has patiently studied the history of the past and trained himself to hear the linguistic grass grow in the present age will generally be more inclined to see in the processes of human speech a wise natural selection, through which while nearly all innovations of questionable value disappear pretty soon, the fittest survive and make human speech ever more varied and flexible and yet ever more easy and convenient to the speakers. There is no reason to suppose that this development has come to a stop with the close of the nineteenth century: let us hope that in the future the more and more almighty schoolmaster may not nip too many beneficial changes in the bud.

Chapter IX.

Shakespeare and the Language of Poetry.

213. In this chapter I shall endeavour to characterize the language of the greatest master of English poetry and make some observations in regard to his influence on the English language as well as in regard to poetic and archaic language generally. But it must be distinctly understood that I shall concern myself with *language* and not with literary *style*. It is true that the two things cannot be completely kept apart, but as far as possible I shall deal only with what are really philological as opposed to literary problems.

214. Shakespeare's vocabulary is often stated to be the richest ever employed by any single man. It has been calculated to comprise 21,000 words ("rough calculation, found in Mrs. Clarke's Concordance . . . without counting inflected forms as distinct words", Craik), or, according to others 24,000 or 15,000. In order to appreciate what that means we must look a little at the various statements which have been given of the number of words used by other authors and by ordinary beings, educated and not educated. Unfortunately these statements are in many cases given and repeated without any indication of the manner in which they have been arrived at.[1]

1 Max Müller, Wissenschaft der Sprache I 360 and Lectures on the Science of Language 6th ed. I 309. Elze, William Shakespeare, Halle 1876, 449. Wundt, Völkerpsychologie,

Milton's vocabulary is said to comprise 7000 or 8000 words, that of the Iliad and Odyssey taken together 9000, that of the Old Testament 5642 and that of the New Testament 4800.

215. Max Müller says that a farm-labourer uses only 300 words, and Wood that "the average man uses about five hundred words" (adding "it is appalling to think how pitiably we have degenerated from the copiousness of our ancestors"). But both figures are obviously wrong. One two-year-old girl had 489 and another 1121 words (see Wundt), while Mrs. Winfield S. Hall's boy used in his 17th mouth 232 different words and, when six years old, 2688 words — at least, for it is probable that the mother and her assistants who noted down every word they heard the child use, even so, did not get hold of its whole vocabulary. Now, are we really to believe, with Wundt, that the linguistic range of a grown-up man, however humble, is considerably smaller than that of a two-year-old child of educated parents or is only one-seventh of that of a six-year-old boy! Any one going through the lists given by Mrs. Hall will feel quite certain that no labourer contents himself with so scanty a vocabulary. Schoolbooks for teaching foreign languages often include some 700 words in the first year's course; yet on how few subjects of everyday occurrence are our

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Sprache II, Leipz. 1900, 308. Wood, Journal of Germanic Philology I 294. Craik, Engl. Language and Literature 264. Emerson, History of the Engl. Language, 1894, 114. Le Maître Phonétique 1888, 47. Smedberg, Svenska landsmålen XI, 9 (57) 1896. Marius Kristensen, Aarbog for dansk kulturhistorie 1897. Babbitt, Common Sense in Teaching Modern Languages, New York 1895, 11. Sweet, History of Language, 1900, 139. Weise, Unsere Muttersprache, 1897, 205. Dewischeit, Shakespeare-Jahrbuch XXXIV (1898) 190. Mrs. Winfield S. Hall, Child Study, Monthly, March 1897 and Journal of Childhood and Adolescence, January 1902.

pupils able to converse after one year's teaching. Sweet also contradicts the statement about 300 words, saying, "When we find a missionary in Tierra del Fuego compiling a dictionary of 30,000 words in the Yaagan language — that is, a hundred times as many — we cannot give any credence to this statement, especially if we consider the number of names of different parts of a waggon or a plough, and all the words required in connection even with a single agricultural operation, together with names of birds, plants, and other natural objects". Smedberg, who has investigated the vocabulary of Swedish peasants and who emphasizes its richness in technical terms, arrives at the result that 26,000 is probably too small a figure, and the Danish dialectologist Kristensen completely endorses this view. Professor E. S. Holden tested himself by a reference to all the words in Webster's Dictionary, and found that his own vocabulary comprised 33,456 words. And E. H. Babbitt writes: "I tried to get at the vocabulary of adults and made experiments, chiefly with my students, to see how many English words each knew . . . My plan was to take a considerable number of pages from the dictionary at random, count the number of words on those pages which the subject of the experiment could define without any context, and work out a proportion to get an approximation of the entire number of words in the dictionary known. The results were surprising for two reasons. In the size of the vocabulary of such students the outside variations were less than 20 per cent., and their vocabulary was much larger than I had expected to find. The majority reported a little below 60,000 words".

216. These statements are easily reconciled with the ascription of 20,000 words to Shakespeare. For it must be remembered that in the case of each of us there is a great difference between the words *known* (especially

those of which he has a reading knowledge) and the words actually *used* in conversation. And then, there must always be a great many words which a man will use readily in conversation, but which will never occur in his writings, simply because the subjects on which a man addresses the public are generally much less varied than those he has to talk about every day.[1] How many authors have occasion to use in their books even the most familiar names of garden tools or common dishes or kitchen implements? When Milton as a poet uses only 8,000 against Shakespeare's 20,000 words, this is a natural consequence of the narrower range of his subjects, and it is easy to prove that his vocabulary really contained many more than the 8,000 words found in a Concordance to his poetical works. We have only to take any page of his prose writings, and we shall meet with a great many words not in the Concordance.[2]

217. The greatness of Shakespeare's mind is therefore not shown by the fact that he was acquainted with 20,000 words, but by the fact that he wrote about so great a variety of subjects and touched upon so many human facts and relations that he needed this number

1 Inversely, many authors will use some (learned or abstract) words in writing which they do not use in conversation; their number, however, is rarely great.

2 Thus, on p. 30 of *Areopagitica* I find the following 21 words, which are not in Bradshaw's Concordance: churchman, competency, utterly, mercenary, pretender, ingenuous, evidently, tutor, examiner, scism, ferular, fescu [festu?], imprimatur, grammar, pedagogue, cursory, temporize, extemporize, licencer, commonwealth, foreiner. And p. 50 adds 18 more words to the list: writing, commons, valorous, rarify, enfranchise, founder, formall, slavish, oppressive, reinforce, abrogate, mercilesse, noble (n.), Danegelt, immunity, newnes, unsutablenes, customary.

of words.[1] His remarkable familiarity with technical expressions in many different spheres has often been noticed, but there are other facts with regard to his use of words that have not been remarked, or not sufficiently remarked. His reticence about religious matters, which has given rise to the most divergent theories of his religious belief, is shown strikingly in the fact that such words as *Bible*, *Holy Ghost*, and *Trinity* do not occur at all in his writings, while *Jesus* (Jesu), *Christ* and *Christmas* are found only in some of his earliest plays; *Saviour* occurs only once (in Hamlet), and *Creator* only in two of the dubious plays (H6C and Troilus).[2]

218. Of far greater importance is his use of language to individualize the characters in his plays. In this he shows a much finer and subtler art than some modern novelists who make the same person continually use the same stock phrase or phrases. Even where he resorts to the same tricks as other authors he varies them more; Mrs. Quickly and Dogberry do not misapply words from the classical languages in the same way. The everyday speech of the artisans in A Midsummer Night's Dream is comic in a different manner from the diction they use in their comedy, which serves Shakespeare to ridicule some linguistic artifices employed in good faith by many of his contemporaries (alliteration, bombast). Shakespeare is not entirely exempt from the fashionable affectation of his days known as Euphuism,

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1 I have amused myself with making up the following sentences of words not used by Shakespeare though found in the language of that time: In Shakespeare we find no *blunders*, although *decency* and *delicacy* have *disappeared*; *energy* and *enthusiasm* are not in *existence*, and we see no *elegant expressions* nor any *gleams* of *genius*, etc.

2 The act against profane language on the stage (see below, § 244) is not sufficient to explain this reticence.

but it must be noticed that he is superior to its worst aberrations and he satirizes them, not only in *Love's Labour's Lost*, but also in many other places. Euphuistic expressions are generally put in the mouth of some subordinate character who has nothing to do except to announce some trifling incident, relate a little of the circumstances that lead up to the action of the play, deliver a message from a king, etc. It is not improbable that the company possessed some actor who knew how to make small parts funny by imitating fashionable affectation, and we can imagine that it was he who acted Osric in *Hamlet*, and by his vocabulary and appearance exposed himself to the scoffs of the Danish prince, the Captain in *Twelfth Night* I, sc. 2, the Second Gentleman in *Othello* II, sc. 1, the first Lord in *As You Like It* II, sc. 2 ("They found the bed *untreasur'd* of their mistris"). But the messenger from Antony in *Julius Cæsar* (III. 1. 122) speaks in a totally different strain and gives us a sort of foretaste of Antony's eloquence. And how different again — I am speaking here of subordinate parts only — are the gardeners in *Richard the Second* (III, sc. 4) with their characteristic application of botanical similes to politics and vice versa. And thus one might go on, for no author has shown greater skill in adapting language to character.

219. A modern reader, however, is sure to miss many of the *nuances* that were felt instinctively by the poet's contemporaries. A great many words have now another value than they had then; in some cases it is only a slightly different colouring, but in others the diversity is greater, and only a close study of Elizabethan usage can bring out the exact value of each word. A *bonnet* then meant a man's cap or hat; Lear walks unbonneted. To *charm* always implied magic power, to make invulnerable by witchcraft, to call forth by spells etc.; "charm-

ing words" were magic words and not simply delightful words as in our days. *Notorious* might be used in a good sense as 'well-known'; *censure*, too, was a colourless word ("And your name is great In mouthes of wisest censure" Oth. II. 3. 193). The same is true of *succeed* and *success*, which now imply what Shakespeare several times calls 'good success', whereas he also knows 'bad success'; cf." the effects he writes of succeede unhappily" Lear I. 2. 157. *Companion* was often used in a bad sense, like *fellow* now, and inversely *sheer*, which is now used with such words as 'folly, nonsense', had kept the original meaning of 'pure', as in "thou sheere, immaculate, and silver fountaine" (R 2 V. 3. 61). *Politician* seems always to imply intriguing or scheming, and *remorse* generally means pity or sympathy. *Accommodate* evidently did not belong to ordinary language, but was considered affected; *occupy* and *activity* were at least half-vulgar, while on the other hand *wag* (vb.) was then free from its present trivial or ludicrous associations ("Untill my eielids will no longer wag", Hamlet V. 1. 290, see Dowden's note to this passage). *Assassination* (only Macbeth I. 7. 2) would then call up the memory of the "Assasines, a company of most desperat and dangerous men among the Mahometans" (Knolles, Hist. Turks 1603) or "That bloudy sect of Sarazens, called Assassini, who, without feare of torments, undertake . . . the murther of any eminent Prince, impugning their irreligion" (Speed, 1611, quoted N. E. D.)

220. Even adverbs might then have another colouring from their present signification. *Now-a-days* was a vulgar word; it is used by no one in Shakespeare except Bottom, the grave-digger in Hamlet, and a fisherman in Pericles. The adverb *eke*, in the nineteenth century a poetic word, seems to have been a comic expression; it occurs only three times in Shakespeare (twice in the

Merry Wives, used by Pistol and the Host, once by Flute in *Mids. N. Dr.*); Milton and Pope avoid the word. The synonym *also* is worth noticing. Shakespeare uses it only 22 times, and nearly always puts it in the mouth of vulgar or affected persons (Dogberry twice in *Ado*, the Clown once in *Wint.*, the Second Lord in *As* II. sc. 2, the Second Lord in *Tim.* III. sc. 6, the affected Captain in *Tw.* I. sc. 2; the knight in Lear I. 4. 66 may belong here too; further Pistol twice in grandiloquent speeches, H 4 B II. 4. 171 and V. 3. 145, and two of Shakespeare's Welshmen, Evans three times, and Fluellen twice). It is used twice in solemn and official speeches (H 5 I. 2. 77, where Canterbury expounds lex Salica, and IV. 6. 10), and it is, therefore, highly characteristic that Falstaff uses the word twice in his Euphuistic impersonation of the king (H 4 A II. 4. 440 and 459) and twice in similar speeches in the *Merry Wives* (V. 1. 24 and V. 5. 7).[1]

221. Shylock is one of Shakespeare's most interesting

1 The only passages not accounted for above are Gent. III. 2. 25, where the metre is wrong, Hamlet V. 2. 402, where the folios have *always* instead of *also*, and Cæs. II. 1. 329. — Shakespeare's sparing use of *also* would in itself suffice to disprove the Baconian theory if any proof were needed beyond the evidence of history and of psychology. For in Bacon, *also*'s abound, and I have counted on four successive small pages of Moore Smith's edition of the *New Atlantis* 22 instances, exactly as many as are found in the whole of Shakespeare. *Might* and *mought* seem to be nearly equally frequent in Bacon, but *mought* is found only once in Shakespeare, in the third part of *Henry VI*, a play which many competent judges are inclined not to ascribe to Shakespeare at all. At any rate, this one instance in one of his earliest works weighs nothing as against the thousands of times *might* is found. Shakespeare uses *among* and *amongst* indiscriminately, Bacon seems to use *amongst* exclusively. Shakespeare has *scarcely* as well as *scarce*, but Bacon has only *scarce*; Bacon frequently employs the conjunction *whereas*, which is not found at all in the undoubtedly genuine Shakespearian plays, etc.

creations, even from the point of view of language. Although Sidney Lee has shown that there were Jews in England in those times and that, consequently, Shakespeare need not have gone outside his own country in order to see models for Shylock, the number of Jews cannot have been sufficient for his hearers to be very familiar with the Jewish type, and no Anglo-Jewish dialect or mode of speech had developed which Shakespeare could put into Shylock's mouth and so make him at once recognizable for what he was. I have not, indeed, been able to discover a single trait in Shylock's language that can be called distinctly Jewish. And yet Shakespeare has succeeded in creating for Shylock a language different from that of anybody else. Shylock has his Old Testament at his fingers' ends, he defends his own way of making money breed by a reference to Jacob's thrift in breeding parti-coloured lambs, he swears by Jacob's staff and by our holy sabbath, and he calls Lancelot "that foole of Hagars off-spring".[1] We have an interesting bit of Jewish figurative language in "my houses eares, I meane my casements" (II. 5. 34). Shylock uses some biblical words which do not occur elsewhere in Shakespeare: *pilled* (The skilful shepheard pil'd me certain wands, cf. Genesis XXX. 37), *synagogue*, *Nazarite*, and *publican*. But more often Shylock is characterized by being made to use words or constructions a little different from the accepted use of Shakespeare's time.[2] He dislikes the word *interest* and prefers calling it *advantage* or *thrift* (my well-worne thrift, which he cals interrest, I. 3. 52), and instead of *usury* he says *usance*. Furness quotes Wylson On Usurye 1572, p. 32

1 Contrast with this trait the fondness for classical allusions found in Marlowe's Barrabas.

2 He says *Abram*, but *Abraham* is the only form found in the rest of Shakespeare's works.

"usurie and double usurie, the merchants termyng it *usance* and double usance, by a more clenlie name" — this word thus ranks in the same category as *dashed* or *d-d* for *damned*: instead of pronouncing an objectionable word in full one begins as if one were about to pronounce it and then shunts off on another track (see other examples below, § 244). Shylock uses the plural *moneys*, which is very rare in Shakespeare, he says an *equal* pound for 'exact', *rheum* (rume) for 'saliva', *estimable* for 'valuable', *fulsome* for 'rank' (the only instance of that signification discovered by the editors of the N. E. D.); he alone uses the words *eaneling* and *misbeliever* and the rare verb *to bane*. His syntax is peculiar: we *trifle* time; *rend out*, where Shakespeare has elsewhere only *rend*; I have no mind *of* feasting forth to-night (always *mind to*); *and so following*, where *and so forth* is the regular Shakespearian phrase. I have counted some forty such deviations from Shakespeare's ordinary language and cannot dismiss the thought that Shakespeare made Shylock's language peculiar on purpose, just as he makes Caliban and the witches in *Macbeth* use certain words and expressions used by none other of his characters in order to stamp them as beings out of the common sort.

222. Shakespeare's vocabulary was not the same in all periods of his life. I have counted between two and three hundred words which he used in his youth, but not later, while the number of words peculiar to his last period is much smaller. Sarrazin[1] mentions as characteristic of his first period a predilection for picturesque adjectives that appeal immediately to the outward senses (bright, brittle, fragrant, pitchy, snow-white), while his later plays are said to contain more adjectives of psychological importance. But even apart from the fact that

1 Shakespeare-Jahrbuch XXXIII, 122.

some of the adjectives instanced are really found in later plays (*bright* in Cæs., Ant., Oth., Cymb., Wint. T., etc.), this statement would account for only a small part of the divergencies. Probably no single explanation can account for them all, not even that of the natural buoyancy of youth and the comparative austerity of a later age. It is noteworthy that in some instances he ridicules in later plays words used quite seriously in earlier ones. Thus *beautify*, which is found in Lucrece, Henry VI B, Titus Andr., Two Gentlemen, and Romeo, is severely criticized by Polonius when he hears it in Hamlet's letter: "That's an ill phrase, a vilde phrase, beautified is a vilde phrase". Similarly *cranny*, which Shakespeare used in *Lucrece* (twice) and in the *Comedy of Errors*, is not found in any play written later than *Mids N. D.*, where Shakespeare takes leave of the word by turning it to ridicule in the mouth of Bottom and in the artisans' comedy. The fate of *foeman*, *aggravate*, and *homicide* is nearly the same. Perhaps some of the words avoided in later life were provincialisms (thus possibly *pebblestone*, *shore* in the sense of 'bank of a river', *wood* 'mad', *forefather* 'ancestor', the pronunciation of *marriage* and of *Henry* in three syllables). In the first period Shakespeare used *perverse* with the unusual signification 'cold, unfriendly, averse to love', later he avoids the word altogether. In such instances he may have been criticized by his contemporaries (we know from the *Poetaster* how severe Ben Jonson was in these matters), and that may have made him avoid the objectionable words altogether.

223. One of the most characteristic features of Shakespeare's use of the English language is his boldness. His boldness of metaphor has often been pointed out in books of literary criticism, and the boldness of his sentence structure, especially in his last period, is so obvious that no instances need be adduced here. He

does not always care for grammatical parallelism, witness such a sentence as "A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part *wisedom* And ever three parts *coward*" (Haml. IV. 4. 42). He does not always place the words where they would seem properly to belong, as in "we send, To know what willing ransome he will give" for "what ransom he will willingly give" (H 5 III. 5. 63), "dismist me Thus with his speechlesse hand" (Cor. V. 1. 68), "the whole eare of Denmarke Is by a forged processe of my death Rankly abus'd" (the ear of all Denmark, Haml. I. 5. 36), "lovers absent howres" (the hours when lovers are absent, Oth. III. 4, 174) etc. He is not afraid of writing "wanted lesse impudence" for "had less impudence" or "wanted impudence more" (Wint. III. 2. 57) and "a begger without lesse quality" (Cymb. I. 4. 23), nor of mixing his negatives as he does in many other passages.[1] Al. Schmidt, who collects many instances of such negligence, rightly remarks: "Had he taken the pains of revising and preparing his plays for the press, he would perhaps have corrected all the quoted passages. But he did not write them to be read and dwelt on by the eye, but to be heard by a sympathetic audience. And much that would blemish the language of a logician, may well become a dramatic poet or an orator".[2] There is an excellent paper by C. Alphonso Smith in the Englische Studien, vol. XXX, on "The Chief Difference between the First and Second Folios of Shakespeare", in which he shows that "the supreme syntactic value of Shakespeare's work as represented in the First Folio is that it shows us the English language unfettered by bookish impositions.

1 Besides using such double negatives as were regular in all the older periods of the language (*nor never*, etc.)

2 Shakespeare-Lexicon, p. 1420.

Shakespeare's syntax was that of the speaker, not that of the essayist; for the drama represents the unstudied utterance of people under all kinds and degrees of emotion, ennui, pain, and passion. Its syntax, to be truly representative, must be familiar, conversational, spontaneous; not studied and formal." But "the Second Folio is of unique service and significance in its attempts to render more "correct" and bookish the unfettered syntax of the First. The First Folio is to the Second as spoken language is to written language". The 'bad grammar' of the First Folio (1623) may not *always* be due to Shakespeare himself, but at any rate we have in that edition more of his own language than in the 'correctness' of the Second Folio (1632).

224. Shakespeare's boldness with regard to language is less conspicuous, though no less real, in the instances I shall now mention. In turning over the pages of the New English Dictionary, where every pains has been taken to ascertain the earliest occurrence of each word and of each signification, one is struck by the frequency with which Shakespeare's name is found affixed to the earliest quotation for words or meanings. In many cases this is no doubt due to the fact that Shakespeare's vocabulary has been registered with greater care in Concordances and in Al. Schmidt's invaluable Shakespeare-Lexicon than that of any other author, so that his words cannot escape notice, while the same words may occur unnoticed in the pages of many an earlier author. But even if future research may somewhat reduce the number of these words, the fact will remain that Shakespeare was in no way afraid of adopting into his immortal pages a great many words which were new in his times, whether absolutely new or new only to the written language, while living colloquially on the lips of the people. My list includes the following words: *aslant* as a

preposition, *assassination* (see above), *barefaced, beguile* in two of the significations now most current (win the attention by wiling means, and charm away), the plural *brothers* (found also in Layamon's *Brut*, but seemingly not between that and Shakespeare's *Titus Andron.* and Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*), *call* 'to pay a short visit', *courtship, dwindle, enthrone* (earlier. enthronize), *eventful, excellent* in the current sense 'extremely good', *fount* 'spring', *fretful, get* intransitive with an adjective, 'become' (only in "get clear"), *I have got* for 'I have', *hint, hurry, indistinguishable, laughable, leap-frog, loggerhead* and *loggerheaded, lonely* (but Sydney has *loneliness* some years before Shakespeare began writing), *lower* verb. Further the following verbs (formed from nouns that are found before Shakespeare's time): *bound, hand, jade*, and nouns (formed from already existing verbs): *dawn, dress, hatch, import, indent.* Among other words which were certainly or probably new when Shakespeare used them, may be mentioned *acceptance, gull* 'dupe', *rely, scarcely*, and *summit.* I shall give below (§ 228) a list of words and expressions the existence of which in the English language is due to Shakespeare. The words here given would probably have found their way into the language even had Shakespeare never written a line, though he may have accelerated the date of their acceptance. But at any rate they show that he was exempt from that narrowness which often makes authors shy of using new or colloquial words in the higher literary style. Let me add another remark apropos of a list of hard words needing an explanation which is found in Cockeram's *Dictionarie* (1623). Dr Murray writes[1]: "We are surprised to find among these hard words *abandon, abhorre, abrupt, absurd, action, activitie*, and *actresse*,

1 The Evolution of English Lexicography. Romanes Lecture, Oxford and London 1900, p. 29.

explained as 'a woman doer', for the stage actress had not yet appeared". Now, with the exception of the last one, all these words are found in Shakespeare's plays.

225. Closely connected with this trait in Shakespeare's language is the proximity of his poetical diction to his ordinary prose. He uses very few 'poetical' words or forms. He does not rely for his highest flights on the use of words and grammatical forms not used elsewhere, but knows how to achieve the finest effects of imagination without stepping outside his ordinary vocabulary and grammar. It must be remembered that when he uses *thou* and *thee*, *'tis*, *e'en*, *ne'er*, *howe'er*, *mine eyes*, etc., or when he construes negative and interrogative verbs without *do*, all these things which are now parts of the conventional language of poetry, were everyday colloquialisms in the Elizabethan period. There are, it is true, certain words and forms which he never uses except in poetry, but their number is extremely small. I do not know of any besides *host* 'army', *vale*, *sire*, and *morn*. As for the synonym *morrow*, apart from its use in the sense of 'next day' and in the salutation *good morrow*, which was then colloquial, it occurs only four times, and only in rime. There are some verb forms which only occur in rime, but the number of occasions on which Shakespeare was thus led to deviate from his usual grammar is very small: *begun* (past tense) 8 times, *flee* once (the usual present is *fly*), *gat* once (in the probably spurious Pericles), *sain* once, *sang* once, *shore* participle once, *strown* once (the usual form is *strewed*), *swore* participle once — fifteen instances in all, to which must be added eleven instances of the plural *eyen*. Rhythmical reasons seem to make *do* more frequent in Shakespeare's verse than in his prose[1], and rhythm and

1 W. Franz, Shakespeare-Grammatik, 1900, 320. His statistics might be more comprehensive.

rime sometimes make him place a preposition after instead of before the noun (*e. g.* go the fools among.[1]) All these things are rare enough to justify the statement that a peculiar poetical diction is practically non-existent in Shakespeare.

226. In the Old English period the language of poetry differed, as we have seen (cf. § 53), very considerably from the language of ordinary prose. The old poetical language was completely forgotten a few centuries after the Norman Conquest, and a new one did not develop in the Middle English period, though there were certain conventional tricks used by many poets, such as those ridiculed in Chaucer's *Sir Thopas*. Chaucer himself had not two distinct forms of language, one for verse and the other for prose, apart from those unavoidable smaller changes which rhythm and rime are always apt to bring about. We have now seen that the same is true of Shakespeare; but in the nineteenth century we find a great many words and forms of words which are scarcely ever used outside of poetry. This, then, is not a survival of an old state of things, but a comparatively recent phenomenon, whose causes are well worth investigating. At first it might be thought that the regard for sonority and beauty of sound would be the chief, or one of the chief agents in the creation of a special poetical dialect. But very often poetical forms are, on the contrary, less euphonious than everyday forms; compare for example *break'st thou* with *do you break*. Those who imagine that *gat* sounds better than *got* will scarcely admit that *spat* or *gnat* sounds better than *spot* or *not*: non-phonetic associations are often more powerful than the mere sounds.

227. More frequently it is the desire to leave the

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1 Franz, p. 270.

beaten track that leads to the preference of certain words in poetry. Words that are too well known and too often used do not call up such vivid images as words less familiar. This is one of the reasons which impel poets to use archaic words; they are 'new' just on account of their being old, and yet they are not so utterly unknown as to be unintelligible. Besides they will often call up the memory of some old or venerable work in which the reader has met with them before, and thus they at once secure the reader's sympathy. If, then, the poetical language of the nineteenth century contains a great many archaisms, the question naturally presents itself, from what author or authors do most of them proceed? And many people who know the pre-eminent position of Shakespeare in English literature will probably be surprised to hear that his is not the greatest influence on English poetic diction.

228. Among words and phrases due to reminiscences of Shakespeare may be mentioned the following: *antre* (Keats, Meredith), *atomy* in the sense 'atom, tiny being', *beetle* (the dreadfull summit of the cliffe, That beetles o'er his base into the sea), it *beggars all description*, *broad-blown*, *charactery* (Keats, Browning), *coign of vantage* (*coign* is another spelling of *coin* 'corner'), *cudgel one's brain(s)*, *daff* the world aside, *eager* 'cold' (a nipping and an eager ayre), *eld* (superstitious eld), nine *farrow*, *fitful* (Lifes fitfull fever), *forcible feeble*, *a foregone conclusion*, *forgetive* (Falstaff; "of uncertain formation and meaning. Commonly taken as a derivation of *forge* v., and hence used by writers of the 19th c. for: apt at forging, inventive, creative" N.E.D.), a *forthright* (rare), *gaingiving* (Coleridge), *gouts* of blood, *gravelblind*, *head and front* ("A Shaksperian phrase, orig. app. denoting 'summit, height, highest extent or pitch'; sometimes used by modern writers in other senses". N.E.D), *lush* (in the sense 'luxuriant in growth'),

in my *mind's eye*, the *pink* (of perfection, in Shakespeare only "I am the very pinck of curtesie"; George Eliot has "Her kitchen always looked the pink of cleanliness"), *silken dalliance*, *single blessedness*, *that way madness lies* ("Too kind! Insipidity lay that way", Mrs. Humphrey Ward), *weird*. The last word is interesting; originally it is a noun and means 'destiny, fate'; the three *weird sisters* means the fate sisters or Norns. Shakespeare found this expression in Holinshed and used it in speaking of the witches in Macbeth, and only there. From that play it entered into the ordinary language, but without being properly understood. It is now used as an adjective and generally taken to mean 'mystic, mysterious, unearthly'. Another word that is often misunderstood is *bourne* from Hamlet (The undiscovered countrey, from whose borne No traveller returnes); it means 'limit', but Keats and others use it in the sense 'realm, domain' (In water, fiery realm, and airy bourne; quoted N.E.D.). There are two things worth noting in this list. First, that it includes so many words of vague or indefinite meaning, which were not perhaps even clearly understood by the author himself. This explains the fact that some of them have apparently been used in modern times in a different sense from that intended by Shakespeare. Second, that the re-employment of these words nearly always dates from the nineteenth century and that the present currency of some of them is due just as much to Sir Walter Scott or Keats as to the original author. *To cudgel one's brains* is now more of a literary phrase than when Shakespeare put it in the mouth of the gravedigger (Hamlet V. 1. 63), evidently meaning it to be a rude or vulgar expression. Inversely, *single blessedness* is now generally used with an ironical or humorous tinge which it certainly had not in Shakespeare (Mids. I. 1. 78).

229. It must be noted also that none of the words

thus traceable to Shakespeare belong now to what might be called the technical language of poetry. Modern archaizing poetry owes its vocabulary more to Edmund Spenser than to any other poet. Pope and his contemporaries made a very sparing use of archaisms, but when poets in the middle of the eighteenth century turned from his rationalistic and matter-of-fact poetry and were eager to take their romantic flight away from everyday realities, Spenser became the poet of their heart, and they adopted a great many of his words which had long been forgotten. Their success was so great that many words which they had to explain to their readers are now perfectly familiar to every educated man and woman. Gilbert West, in his work "On the Abuse of Travelling, in imitation of Spenser" (1739) had to explain in footnotes such words as *sooth*, *guise*, *hardiment*, *Elfin*, *prowess*, *wend*, *hight*, *dight*, *paramours*, *behests*, *caitiffs*[1]. William Thompson, in his "Hymn to May" (1740?) explains *certes* surely, certainly, *ne* nor, *erst* formerly, long ago, *undaz'd* undazzled, *sheen* brightness, shining, *been* are, *dispredden* spread, *meed* prize, *ne recks* nor is concerned, *affray* affright, *featly* nimbly, *defftly* finely, *glenne* a country borough, *eld* old age, *lusty-head* vigour, *algate* ever, *harrow* destroy, *carl* clown, *perdie* an old word for asserting anything, *livelood* liveliness, *albe* altho', *scant* scarcely, *bedight* adorned.

230. In later times, Coleridge, Scott, Keats, Tennyson, William Morris, and Swinburne must be mentioned as those poets who have contributed most to the revival of old words. Coleridge in the first edition of the *Ancient Mariner* used so many archaisms in spelling, etc., that he had afterwards to reduce the number in order to

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1 W. L. Phelps, Beginnings of the Romantic Movement, p. 63.

make his poem more palatable to the reading public. Sometimes *pseudo*-antique formations have been introduced; *anigh*, for instance, which is frequent in Morris, is not an old word, and *idlesse* is a false formation after the legitimate old *noblesse* and *humblesse* (O. Fr. noblesse, humblesse). But on the whole, many good words have been recovered from oblivion, and some of them will doubtless find their way into the language of ordinary conversation, while others will continue their life in the regions of higher poetry and eloquence. On the other hand, many pages in the works of Shakespeare, of Shelley, and of Tennyson show us that it is possible for a poet to reach the highest flights of eloquent poetry without resorting to many of the conventionally poetical terms.

231. As for the technical grammar of modern poetry, the influence of Shakespeare is not very strong, in fact not so strong as that of the Authorized Version of the Bible. The revival of *th* in the third person singular was due to the Bible, as we have seen above (§ 196)[1]. *Gat* is a frequent form in the Bible, while Shakespeare's ordinary past of the verb to *get* is *got*; the solitary instance of *gat* (see § 225) only serves to confirm the rule[2]. The past tense of *cleave* 'to sever' in Shakespeare is *clove* or *cleft; clave* does not occur in his writings at all, but

1 When modern clergymen in reading the Bible pronounce *lovèd, dancèd*, etc., they are reproducing a language about two hundred years earlier than the Authorized Version.

2 *Gat* is the only form of this verb admitted by some modern poets, who avoid *get* and *got* altogether. Shakespeare uses the verb hundreds of times. Milton makes a very sparing use of the verb (which he inflects *get got got*, never *gat* in the past or *gotten* in the participle); all the forms of the verb only occur 19 times in his poetical works, while, for instance, *give* occurs 168 times and *receive* 73 times. The verb is rare in Pope too. Why is this verb tabooed in this way?

is the only biblical past of this verb. *Brake* is the only preterite of *break* found in the Bible; in Shakespeare *brake* is rarer than *broke*; Milton and Pope have only *broke*; Tennyson, Morris, and Swinburne prefer *brake*.

232. But on the whole, modern poets do not take their grammar from any one old author or book, but are apt to use any deviation from the ordinary grammar they can lay hold of anywhere. And thus it has come to pass in the nineteenth century that while the languages of other civilized nations have the same grammar for poetry as for prose, although retaining here and there a few archaic forms of verbs, etc., in English a wide gulf separates the grammar of poetry from that of ordinary life. The pronoun for the second person is in prose *you* for both cases in both numbers, while in many works of poetry it is *thou* and *thee* for the singular, *ye* for the plural (with here and there a rare *you*); the poetical possessives *thy* and *thine* never occur in everyday speech. The usual distinction between *my* and *mine* does not always obtain in poetry where it is thought refined to write *mine ears*, etc. For *they sat down* the poetical form is *they sate them down*; for *it's* poets write *'tis*, and for *whatever* either *whatso* or *whatsoever* (or *whate'er*), for *does not mend* they often write *mends not*, etc. Sometimes they gain the advantage of having at will one syllable more or less than common people: *taketh* for *takes*, *thou takest* for *you take*, *movèd* for *moved*, *o'er* for *over*, etc.; compare also *morn* for *morning*. But in other cases the only thing gained is the impression, produced by uncommon forms, that we are in a sphere different from or raised above ordinary realities. As a matter of course, this impression is weakened in proportion as the deviations become the common property of any rimer, when a reaction will probably set in in favour of more natural forms. The history of some of the poetical forms is

rather curious: *howe'er*, *e'er*, *o'er*, *e'en* were at first vulgar or familiar forms, used in daily talk. Then poets began to spell these words in the abbreviated fashion whenever they wanted their readers to pronounce them in that way, while prose writers, unconcerned about the pronunciation given to their words, retained the full forms in spelling. The next step was that the short forms were branded as vulgar by schoolmasters with so great a success that they disappeared from ordinary conversation while they were still retained in poetry. And now they are distinctly poetic and as such above the reach of common mortals.

233. Among the elements of ordinary language, some can be traced back to individual authors. Besides those already mentioned I shall cite only a few. *Surround* originally meant to overflow (Fr. sur-onder, Lat. super-undare); but according to Skeat, both the modern signification, which implies an erroneous reference to *round*, and the currency of the word are due to Milton. *The soft impeachment* is one of Mrs. Malaprop's expressions (in Sheridans's *Rivals*, act V, sc. 3). *Henchman* was made generally known by Scott, and *to croon* by Burns. Burke originated the expression "the Great Unwashed". A certain number of proper names in works of literature have been popular enough to pass into ordinary language as appelatives[1], as for instance *pander* or *pandar* from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, *Abigail* 'a servant-girl' from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*, *Mrs. Grundy* as a personification of middle-class ideas of propriety from Morton's *Speed the Plough*, *Paul Pry* 'a meddlesome busy-body' from Poole's comedy of

1 Aronstein, Englische Studien XXV, p. 245 ff., Josef Reinius, On Transferred Appellations of Human Beings, Göteborg 1903, p. 44 ff.

that name, *Sarah Gamp* 'sick nurse of the old-fashioned type' and 'big umbrella' from Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Pecksniff* 'hypocrite' from the same novel, *Sherlock Holmes* 'acute detective' from Conan Doyle's stories.

234. Ordinary language sometimes makes use of the same instruments as poetry. Above (§ 56) we have seen a number of alliterative formulas; here I shall give some instances of riming locutions: *highways* and *byways*, *town* and *gown*, it will neither *make* nor *break* me (cf. the alliterative *make . . . mar*), *fairly* and *squarely*, *toiling* and *moiling*, as *snug* as a *bug* in a *rug* (Kipling), *rough* and *gruff*, "I mean to take that girl — *snatch* or *catch*" (Meredith), *moans* and *groans*[1]. Compare also such popular words as *handy-dandy*, *hanky-panky*, *namby-pamby*, *hurly-burly*, *hurdy-gurdy*, *hugger-mugger*, *hocus pocus*, *hoity toity* or *highty tighty*, *higgledy-piggledy* or *higglety-pigglety*, *hickery-pickery*. *Hotchpot* (from French *hocher* 'shake together' and *pot*) was made *hotchpotch* for the sake of the rime; then the final *tch* was changed into *dge* (cf. *knowledge* from *knowleche*): **hotchpodge*, and the rime was re-established: *hodgepodge*.

235. Rhythm undoubtedly plays a great part in ordinary language, apart from poetry and artistic (or artificial) prose. It may not always be easy to demonstrate this; but in combinations of a monosyllable and a disyllable by means of *and* the practice is always to place the short word first, because the rhythm then becomes the regular ˈaa ˈaa instead of ˈaaa ˈa (ˈbefore the *a* denotes the strongly stressed syllable). Thus we say "bread and butter", not "butter and bread"; further: bread and water, milk and water, cup and saucer, wind

1 As Old English has *mænan* 'moan', the modern verb may have derived its vowel from the frequent collocation with *groan*, OE. *granian*. *Square* may owe one of its significations to the collocation with *fair*.

and weather, head and shoulders, by fits and snatches, from top to bottom, rough and ready, rough and tumble, free and easy, dark and dreary, high and mighty, up and doing[1]. It is probable that rhythm has also played a great part in determining the order of words in other fixed groups of greater complexity.

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1 Compare also such titles of books as Songs and Poems, Men and Women, Past and Present, French and English, Night and Morning. In some instances, rhythm is obviously not the only reason for the order, but in all I think it has been at least a concurrent cause.

Chapter X.

Conclusion.

236. In the preceding chapters we have considered the early vicissitudes of the English language, the various foreign influences brought from time to time to bear on it, its inner growth, lexical and grammatical, and the linguistic tendencies of its poets. It now remains to look at a few things which have contributed towards shaping the language, but which could find no convenient place in any of the preceding chapters, and then to say something about the spread and probable future of the language.

237. Aristocratic and democratic tendencies in a nation often show themselves in its speech; indeed, we have already regarded the adoption of French and Latin words from that point of view. It is often said, on the Continent at least, that the typical Englishman's self-assertion is shown by the fact that his is the only language in which the pronoun of the first person is written with a capital letter, while in some other languages it is the second person that is honoured by this distinction, especially the pronoun of courtesy (Germain *Sie*, often also *Du*, Danish *De* and in former times *Du*, Italian *Ella*, *Lei*, Spanish *V.* or *Vd.*, Finnish *Te*). Weise goes so far as to say that "the Englishman, who as the ruler of the seas looks down in contempt on the rest of Europe, writes in his language nothing but the beloved *I*

with a big letter".[1] But this is little short of calumny. If self-assertion had been the real cause, why should not *me* also be written *Me*? The reason for writing *I* is a much more innocent one, *viz.* the orthographic habit in the middle ages of using a "long i" (that is, j or I), whenever the letter was isolated or formed the last letter of a group; the numeral one was written j or I (and three, iij, etc.) just as much as the pronoun. Thus no sociological inference can be drawn from this peculiarity.

238. On the other hand, the habit of addressing a single person by means of a plural pronoun was decidedly in its origin an outcome of an aristocratic tendency towards class-distinction. The habit originated with the Roman Emperors, who desired to be addressed as beings worth more than a single ordinary man; and French courtesy in the middle ages propagated it throughout Europe. In England as elsewhere this plural pronoun (*you, ye*) was long confined to respectful address. Superior persons or strangers were addressed as *you*; *thou* thus becoming the mark either of the inferiority of the person spoken to, or of familiarity or even intimacy or affection between the two interlocutors. English is the only language that has got rid of this useless distinction. The Quakers (the Society of Friends) objected to the habit as obscuring the equality of all human beings; they therefore *thou*'d (or rather *thee*'d) everybody. But the same democratic levelling that they wanted to effect in this way, was achieved a century and a half later in society at large, though in a roundabout manner, when the pronoun *you* was gradually extended to lower classes and thus lost more and more of its previous character of deference. *Thou* then for some time was reserved for religious and literary use as well as for foul abuse, until

1 Charakteristik der lateinischen Sprache. 1899, p. 21.

finally the latter use was discontinued also and *you* became the only form used in ordinary conversation.

239. Apart from the not very significant survival of *thou*, English has thus attained the only manner of address worthy of a nation that respects the elementary rights of each individual. People who express regret at not having a pronoun of endearment and who insist how pretty it is in other languages when, for instance, two lovers pass from *vous* to the more familiar *tu*, should consider that no other language has really a pronoun exclusively for the most intimate relations. Where the two forms of address do survive, *thou* is very often, most often perhaps, used without real affection, nay very frequently in contempt or frank abuse. Besides, it is often painful to have to choose between the two forms, as people may be offended, sometimes by the too familiar, and sometimes by the too distant mode. Some of the unpleasant feeling of Helmer towards Krogstad in Ibsen's *Dukkehjem* ("A Doll's House" or "Nora") must be lost to an English audience because occasioned by the latter using an old schoolfellow's privilege of *thou*-ing Helmer. In some languages the pronoun of respect has been the cause of ambiguity, in German and Danish by the identity in form of *Sie* (*De*) with the plural of the third person, in Italian and Portuguese by the identity with the singular (feminine) of the third person. When all the artificialities of the modes of address in different nations are taken into account — the *Lei*, *Ella*, *voi* and *tu* of the Italians, the *vossa mercê* ('your grace', to shopkeepers) and *você* (shortened form of the same, to people of a lower grade) of the Portuguese (who in addressing equals or superiors use the third person singular of the verb without any pronoun or noun), the *gij*, *jij*, *je* and *U* of the Dutch, not to mention the eternal use of titles as pronouns in German and, still more, in Swedish ('What does Mr.

Doctor want?' 'The gracious Miss is probably aware', etc.) — the English may be justly proud of having avoided all such mannerisms and ridiculous extravagances, though the simple Old English way of using *thou* in addressing one person and *ye* in addressing more than one would have been still better.

240. Religion has had no small influence on the English language. The Bible has been studied and quoted in England more than in any other Christian country, and a great many Biblical phrases have passed into the ordinary language as household words. The style of the Authorized Version has been greatly admired by many of the best judges of English style, who — with some exaggeration — recommend an early familiarity with and a constant study of the English bible (and of that great imitator of Biblical simplicity and earnestness, John Bunyan) as the best training in the English language.[1]

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1 See the long series of quotations given in Albert S. Cook's little book "The Bible and English Prose Style" (Boston, 1892). On the other hand, Fitzedward Hall says, "To Dr. Newman, and to the myriads who think as he does about our English Bible, one would be allowed to whisper, that the poor "Turks" of the Prayer Book talk exactly in their own fashion, and for reasons strictly analogous to theirs, about the purity of diction, and what not, of "the Blessed Koran" . . . . Ever since the Reformation, the ruling language of English religion has been, with rare exception, an affair either of studied antiquarianism or of nauseous pedantry. Simplicity, and little more, was aimed at, originally; and it sufficed for times of real earnestness. But the very quaintness of phrase which King James countersigned has attained to be canonized, till a *hath*, or a *thou*, delivered with conventional unction, now well nigh inspires a sensation of solemnity in its hearer, and a persuasion of the sanctanimity of its utterer". (Modern English, p. 16—17.)

Tennyson found that parts of *The Book of the Revelation* were finer in English than in Greek, and he said that "the Bible ought to be read, were it only for the sake of the grand English in which it is written, an education in itself".[1] The rhythmical character of the Authorized Version is seen, for instance, in the well-known passage (Job III. 17) "There the wicked cease from troubling: and there the wearie be at rest", which Tennyson was able to use as the last line of his "May Queen" with scarcely any alteration: "And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest".

241. C. Stoffel has collected quite a number of scriptural phrases and allusions used in Modern English[2], such as "Tell it not in Gath", "the powers that be", "olive branches" (children), "strain at (*or* out) a gnat", "to spoil the Egyptians", "he may run that readeth it", "take up his parable", "wash one's hands of" something, "a still small voice", "thy speech bewrayeth thee". Some which Stoffel does not mention may find their place here. The modern word a *helpmate* is a corruption of the two words in Gen. II. 18: "I will make him an *helpe meet* for him" (*meet* 'suitable'); the slang word a *rib* 'a wife' is from Genesis, too, and so is the expression "the lesser lights". "A howling wilderness" is from Deuteron. XXXII. 10. "My heart was still hot within me; then spake I with my tongue" (used, for instance, in Charlotte Brontë's "The Professor", p. 161) is from Psalms XXXIX. 3, and "many inventions" from Ecclesiastes VII. 29. From the New Testament may be mentioned "to kill the fatted calf" (while the phrase *prodigal son* is not found in the Bible itself), "whited sepulchres", "of the earth, earthy", and "to comprehend

1 Life and Letters, II. 41 and 71.
2 Studies in English, Written and Spoken, 1894, p. 125.

with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth and height".

242. The scriptural "holy of holies", which contains a Hebrew manner of expressing the superlative[1], has given rise to a great many similar phrases in English, such as "in my heart of hearts" (Shakesp. Hamlet, III. 2. 78; Wordsw. Prelude XIV. 281), "the place of all places" (Miss Austen, Mansf. P. 71), "I remember you a buck of bucks" (Thackeray, Newc. 100), "every lad has a friend of friends, a crony of cronies, whom he cherishes in his heart of hearts" (ib. 148), "the evil of evils in our present politics" (Lecky, Democr. and Lib. I. 21), "the woman is a horror of horrors" (H. James, Two Magics 60), "that mystery of mysteries, the beginning of things" (Sully, Study of Childh. 71), "she is a modern of the moderns" (Mrs. H. Ward, Eleanor 265), "love like yours is the pearl of pearls, and he who wins it is prince of princes" (Hall Caine, Christian 443), "chemistry had been the study of studies for T. Sandys" (Barrie, Tommy and Grizel 6). Compare also "I am sorrowful to my tail's tail" (Kipling, Sec. Jungle B. 160).

243. Some scriptural proper names have often been used as appellatives, such as *Jezebel* and *Rahab*; when a driver is called a *jehu* in slang, the allusion is to 2 Kings IX. 20, where Jehu's furious driving is mentioned[2]. There is an American slang expression "to give a person *jessie*" meaning, 'to beat him soundly', which is not explained in the Dictionaries (quotations may be found in Bartlett and in Farmer and Henley). Is it not in allusion to the *rod* mentioned in Isa. II. 1? ("There

1 Cf. 1 Timothy VI. 15 "the King of kings, and Lord of lords".

2 For *joram* or *jorum* 'drinking bowl' and *jerry* see N.E.D., where 2 Sam. VIII. 10, and Stoffel, Studies in Engl. 138, where 1 King XIV. 10 is quoted.

shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse.") The N. E. D. has the spelling *jesse* with the meaning 'a genealogical tree representing the genealogy of Christ . . . a decoration for a wall, window, vestment, etc., or in the form of a large branched candlestick'.

244. The influence of Puritans, though not strong enough to proscribe such words as *Christmas*, for which they wanted to substitute *Christtide* in order to avoid the Catholic *mass*, was yet strong enough to modify the custom of swearing. In Catholic times all sorts of fantastic oaths were fashionable:

> Hir othes been so grete and so dampnable,
> That it is grisly for to here hem swere;
> Our blissed lordes body they to-tere;
> Hem thoughte Jewes rente him noght ynough.[1]

This practice was continued after the Reformation, and all sorts of alterations were made in the name of *God* in order to soften down the oaths: *gog*, *cocke*, *gosse*, *gom*, *Gough*, *Gad* etc. Similarly instead of (the) *Lord* people would say something like *Law*, *Lawks*, *Losh*, etc. Sometimes only the first sound was left out (Odd's lifelings, Shakesp. Tw. V. 187), more often only the genitive ending survived: 'Sblood (God's blood), 'snails, 'slight, 'slid, 'zounds (God's wounds). The final sound of the nominative is kept in *'drot it* (God rot it), which was later made *drat it* (or with a playful corruption *rabbit it*). Many of these disguised oaths were extremely popular, and some survive to this day. *Goodness gracious me*, which defies all grammatical analysis, is one among numerous compromises between the inclination to swear and the fear of swearing; note also Rosalind's words: "By my troth, and in good earnest, and so God mend

1 Chaucer C. T., C. 472 ff., also see Skeat's note to this passage, Chaucer's Works V p. 275.

mee, and by all pretty oathes that are not dangerous". (As IV. 1. 192.)

245. The Puritans caused a law to be enacted in 1606 by which profane language was prohibited on the stage (3 James I. chap. 21), and consequently words like *'zounds* were changed or omitted in Shakespearian plays, as we see from a comparison of the folio of 1623 and the earlier quartos; *Heaven* or *Jove* was substituted for *God*, and *'fore me* (*afore me*) or *trust me* for (*a*)*fore God*; "God give thee the spirit of persuasion" (H 4 A I. 2. 170) was changed to "Maist thou have the spirit of perswasion", etc. But in ordinary life people went on swearing, and from the comedies of the Restoration period a rich harvest may be reaped of all sorts of curious oaths. By little and little, however, the Puritan spirit conquered, and now there can be little doubt that the English swear less than other European nations and that when they do swear the expressions are more innocent than elsewhere. Even the usual terms for oaths, — "profane language" and "expletives" — point to a greater purity in this respect. Where a French or German or Scandinavian lady will express surprise or a little fright by exclaiming (My) God!, an Englishwoman will say *Dear me*! or *Oh my*! or *Good gracious*! Note also euphemisms like "deuce" for devil and "the other place" or "a very uncomfortable place" for hell[1]. Among tabooed words in English one finds a great number which in other countries would be considered quite innocent, and the English have shown a really astonishing inventiveness in "apologies" for strong words of every kind. *Damn* is now considered extremely objectionable, and even such a mild substitute for it as *confound* is scarcely allowed in polite

1 Compare also "I will see you *further*".

society[1]. In Bernard Shaw's *Candida* Morell is provoked into exclaiming "Confound your impudence!", whereupon his vulgar father-in-law retorts, "Is that becomin language for a clorgyman?" and Morell replies, "No, sir, it is not becoming language for a clergyman. I should have said damn your impudence: thats what St. Paul or any honest priest would have said to you". Other substitutes for *damned* are *hanged*, *somethinged* (much rarer)[2] and a few that originate in the manner in which the objectionable word is — *not* printed: *dashed* (a — or 'dash' being put instead of it), *blanked* (from the same manner), *deed* (from the abbreviation d — d; sometimes the verb is printed *to D*). *Darned* must be explained as a purely phonetical development of *damned*, which is not without analogies, while *danged*, which occurs in Tennyson, is a curious blending of *damned* and *hanged*[3]. Thus we have here a whole family of words with an initial *d*, allowing the speaker to begin as if he were going to say the prohibited word, and then to turn off into more innocent channels. The same is the case with the *bl*-words. *Blessed* by a process which is found in other similar cases[4] came to mean the opposite of the original meaning and became a synonym of cursed; *blamed* had the same signification[5]. Instead of these strong expressions people began to use other ad-

1 In the original sense it has often to be accompanied by *together* to avoid misunderstanding.

2 Cf. the similar use of *something* in "Where the something are you coming to?" (Pett Ridge, Lost Property 167).

3 "I'm doomed!" Corp muttered to himself, pronouncing it in another way. (Barrie, Tommy and Grizel, p. 122). This shows another way of disguising the word *in print*.

4 Cf. *silly*, French *benêt*, etc.

5 There exists also a word *blarned*, a blending of *blamed* and *damned* (darned).

jectives, shunting off after pronouncing *bl-* into some innocent word like *bloody*, which soon became a great favourite with the vulgar and therefore a horror to ears polite, or *blooming*, which has had the same unhappy fate in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Few authors would now venture to term their heroines "blooming young girls" as George Eliot does repeatedly in "Middlemarch". Similarly Shakespeare's expression "the bloody book of law" is completely spoilt to modern readers, and lexicographers now have to render Old English *blodig* and the corresponding words in foreign languages by 'bleeding', 'bloodstained', 'sanguinary' or 'ensanguined'; but even *sanguinary* is often made a substitute for 'bloody' in reporting vulgar speech.

246. This is the usual destiny of euphemisms; in order to avoid the real name of what is thought indecent or improper people use some innocent word. But when that becomes habitual in this sense it becomes just as objectionable as the word it has ousted and now is rejected in its turn. *Privy* is the regular English development of French *privé*; but when it came to be used as a noun for 'a privy place' and in the phrase 'the privy parts', it had to be supplanted in the original sense by *private*, except in 'Privy Council', 'Privy Seal' and 'Privy Purse', where its official dignity kept it alive. The plural *parts* was an ordinary expression for 'talents, mental ability', until the use of the word in veiled language made it impossible[1].

247. I do not know whether American and especially Boston ladies are really as prudish as they are reported

1 Cf. from America "He-biddy. — A male fowl. A product of prudery and squeamishness". Farmer, Americanisms p. 293. Cf. also Storm, Engl. Philologie, p. 887 (roosterswain).

to be, speaking of the *limbs* of a piano and of their own *benders* instead of *legs* or saying *waist* instead of *body*[1]. But when to *alter* is said in the Southern States instead of to *geld*, and when *ox* is commonly used in America for *bull* (jocosely even *gentleman cow*!)[2], the same tendency may be observed on this side the Atlantic too. At least Mr. F. T. Elworthy, who knows the ways of Somerset peasants better than anybody else, says that the plain old English names for the male animals are going out of use: "It has, perhaps, been taught or implied that such names as Bull, Stallion, Boar, Cock, Ram are indelicate; at any rate, we must no longer call a spade a spade, but there is a very distinct tendency to fine them down, by a weakening process, so that at last the generic word for the animal has commonly got to be used to express the entire male" (Elworthy, Fresh Words and Phrases in the Somersetshire Dialect, p. 6[3]). I am afraid we have here alighted on a trait which does not bear out my description (in the introductory chapter) of English as a masculine language. However, it is possible that the tendency here mentioned may be a passing one only and that common sense will prevail — as it has prevailed in the case of *trousers*, which word is now certainly less proscribed than it was fifty years ago. Perhaps the very absurdity of the taboo, which

1 See Thackeray, Virginians, quoted by Hoppe, Supplementlexicon, s. v. leg; Bartlett's and Farmer's Dictionaries of Americanisms, etc. Cf. also Opie Read, A Kentucky Colonel, p. 11 "He was so delicate of expression that he always said limb when he meant leg".

2 "One sometimes sees a 'lady-dog' offered for sale in England, but 'male-sheep', 'male-hogs', 'gentlemen-turkeys', and 'gentlemen-game-chickens' belong to the natural history of refined Boston only." T. Baron Russell, Current Americanisms 16.

3 Transactions of the Philological Society, 1898.

made people invent no end of comic names (inexpressibles, inexplicables, indescribables, ineffables, unmentionables, unwhisperables, my mustn't-mention-em, sit-upons, sine quâ nons, etc.) has been the reason of the re-instatement of the good old word. Prudery is an exaggeration, but purity is a virtue, and there can be no doubt that the speech of the average Englishman is less tainted with indecencies of various kinds than that of the average continental. —

248. This volume has in so far been one-sided as it has dealt chiefly with Standard English and has left out of account nearly everything that is not generally accepted as such, apart from here and there a nonce-formation or a bold expression which is not recognized as good English though interesting as showing the possibilities of the language and perhaps in some cases deserving popularity just as well as many things that nobody finds fault with. The question how one form of English came to be taken as standard in preference to dialects, has been deliberately omitted as well as all the problems connected with that pseudo-historical and anti-educational abomination, the English spelling. Perhaps I shall some day work up my notes on these subjects and on provincialisms, cockneyisms and vulgarisms, cant, slang, American and Colonial English, Pidgin-English and Negro-English, etc., into the form of a companion volume to this book, under the title, say, of "Varieties of English". This, however must be left for the future; at present I shall conclude with a few remarks on what might be called the Expansion of English.

249. Only two or three centuries ago, English was spoken by so few people that no one could dream of its ever becoming a world language. In 1582 Richard Mulcaster wrote, "The English tongue is of small reach,

stretching no further than this island of ours, nay not there over all". "In one of Florio's Anglo-Italian dialogues, an Italian in England, asked to give his opinion of the language, replied that it was worthless beyond Dover. Ancillon regretted that the English authors chose to write in English as no one abroad could read them. Even such as learned English by necessity speedily forgot it. As late as 1718, Le Clerc deplored the small number of scholars on the Continent able to read English".[1] Compare what Portia replies to Nerissa's question about Fauconbridge, the young baron of England (Merch. I. 2. 72): "You know I say nothing to him, for hee understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latine, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the Court and sweare that I have a poore pennie-worth in the English. Hee is a proper mans picture, but alas, who can converse with a dumbe show?" In 1714 Veneroni published an Imperial Dictionary of the four chief languages of Europe, that is, Italian, French, German and Latin[2]. Now, no one would overlook English in making even the shortest possible list of the chief languages, because in political, social, and literary importance it is second to none and because it is the mother-tongue of a greater number of human beings than any of its competitors.

250. It would be unreasonable to suppose, as is sometimes done, that the cause of the enormous propagation of the English language is to be sought in its intrinsic merits. When two languages compete, the

1 Ch. Bastide, Huguenot Thought in England. Journal of Comparative Literature I (1903) p. 45.

2 Veneroni, Das kayserliche Spruch- und Wörterbuch, darinnen die 4 europäischen Hauptsprachen, als nemlich: das Italiänische, das Frantzösische, das Teutsche und das Lateinische erklärt werden.

victory does not fall to the most perfect language as such. Nor is it *always* the nation whose culture is superior that makes the nation of inferior culture adopt its language: in some parts of Switzerland German is gaining ground at the expense of French, and in others French is supplanting German, yet no one can suppose that the superiority of the two nations is reversed in two adjacent districts. It sometimes happens in a district of mixed nationalities that the population which is intellectually superior give up their own language because they can learn their neighbours' tongue while these are too dull to learn anything but their own: this is said by some to be the reason why in Posen and adjacent districts Polish is gaining ground over German, a fact which others ascribe to the greater fertility of the Poles. A great many social problems are involved in the general question of rivalry of languages[1], and it would be an interesting, but difficult task to examine in detail all the different reasons that have in so many regions of the world determined the victory of English over other languages, European and non-European. Political ascendancy would probably be found in most cases to have been the most powerful influence.

251. However that may be, the fact remains that no other European language has spread over such vast regions during the last few centuries, as shown by the following figures, which represent the number of millions of people speaking each of the languages enumerated[2]:

1 Some excellent remarks may be found in H. Morf, Deutsche und Romanen in der Schweiz (Zürich 1901). See also Will's dissertation, quoted below.

2 See Lewis Carnac, quoted by R. M. Meyer, Indogermanische Forschungen XII, 84; E. Hasse, Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften, "Kolonien und Kolonialpolitik"; Otto

Year	English	German	Russian	French	Spanish	Italian
1500	4(5)	10	3	10(12)	$8^1/_2$	$9^1/_2$
1600	6	10	3	14	$8^1/_2$	$9^1/_2$
1700	$8^1/_2$	10	3(15)	20	$8^1/_2$	$9^1/_2$(11)
1800	20(40)	30(33)	25(31)	27(31)	26	14(15)
1900	116(123)	75(80)	70(85)	45(52)	44(58)	34(54)

Whatever a remote future may have in store, one need not be a great prophet to predict that in the near future the number of English-speaking people will increase considerably. The curse of Babel is beginning to lose its sting, and it must be a source of gratification to mankind that the tongue spoken by two of the greatest powers of the world is so noble, so rich, so pliant, so expressive, and so interesting as the language whose growth and structure I have been here endeavouring to characterize.

Will, Die Tauglichkeit und die Aussichten der englischen Sprache als Weltsprache, Breslau 1903. The numbers given are necessarily approximative only, especially for the older periods. Where my authorities disagree, I have given the lowest and in parenthesis the highest figure.

Phonetic Symbols.

(Alphabet of the *Association Phonétique Internationale.*)

ˈ stands before the stressed syllable.

· indicates length of the preceding vowel.

[a·] as in *a*lms.
[ai] as in *i*ce.
[au] as in h*ou*se.
[æ] as in h*a*t.
[ei] as in h*a*te.
[ə] as in *a*bout, col*ou*r.
[i·] as in French d*i*se.
[ij] as in h*ea*t; practically = [i·].
[ou] as in s*o*.
[ɔ] as in h*o*t.
[ɔ·] as in h*a*ll.
[ʌ] as in h*u*t.
[u·] as in French ép*ou*se.
[uw] as in wh*o*; practically = [u·].
[y] as in French *vu*.
[þ] as in *th*in.
[ð] as in *th*is.
[s] as in *s*eal.
[z] as in *z*eal.
[ʃ] as in *sh*in; [tʃ] as in *ch*in.
[ʒ] as in vi*s*ion; [dʒ] as in *g*in.

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O.E. = Old English ("Anglo-Saxon").
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The titles of Shakespeare's plays are abbreviated as in Al. Schmidt's *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, thus Ado = *Much Ado about Nothing*, Gent. = *The two Gentlemen of Verona*, H4A = *First Part of Henry the Fourth*, Hml. = *Hamlet*, R2 = *Richard the Second*, Tp. = *Tempest*, Tw. = *Twelfth Night*, Wiv. = *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, etc. Acts scenes, and lines as in the Globe edition.

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Phonetic Symbols.

(Alphabet of the *Association Phonétique Internationale.*)

ˈ stands before the stressed syllable.
ˑ indicates length of the preceding vowel.

[aˑ] as in *a*lms.
[ai] as in *i*ce.
[au] as in h*ou*se.
[æ] as in h*a*t.
[ei] as in h*a*te.
[ə] as in *a*bout, col*ou*r.
[iˑ] as in French d*i*se.
[ij] as in h*ea*t; practically = [iˑ].
[ou] as in s*o*.
[ɔ] as in h*o*t.
[ɔˑ] as in h*a*ll.
[ʌ] as in h*u*t.
[uˑ] as in French ép*ou*se.
[uw] as in who; practically = [uˑ].
[y] as in French *vu*.
[þ] as in *th*in.
[ð] as in *th*is.
[s] as in *s*eal.
[z] as in *z*eal.
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